PROOF OF EVIDENCE BY JONATHAN SPRUCE, ON BEHALF OF DARLINGTON BOROUGH COUNCIL

The Borough of Darlington (Darlington Station Gateway)
Compulsory Purchase Order 2021
PINS Ref: APP/PCU/CPOP/N1350/3271399

Business Case

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Appendices

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1 Introduction

Qualifications and Experience

1.1 This Proof of Evidence has been prepared by Jonathan Spruce MBA MEng CEng FICE FCIHT, a Director of Fore Consulting Limited.

1.2 I am a Chartered Member and Fellow of the Institution of Civil Engineers (ICE) and Chair of the ICE Policy and External Affairs Committee. I am also a Fellow of the Chartered Institution of Highways and Transportation (CIHT). I have a Masters Degree in Civil Engineering and have worked in the field of transportation for 30 years.

1.3 I have developed business cases for a range of relevant transport proposals during my career, including:

- Middlesbrough Station Improvements (£35 million);
- Tees Valley Bus Network Improvements (£57 million);
- Sheffield City Region Transforming Cities Fund (£183 million); and
- New Tees Crossing (£220 million);

Involvement with the Scheme

1.4 I have led the development of the business case work for the Darlington Station Improvements since 2018 and was responsible for the production of both the Outline Business Case (OBC) in January 2020 and the recent Updated Business Case (UBC) in October 2021.

1.5 Both of these business cases were agreed by the Darlington Station Programme Board, chaired by the Tees Valley Mayor and including the Leader and Chief Executive of Darlington Borough Council (DBC) and have been used to secure the committed funding for the scheme.

Scope of the Evidence

1.6 In this evidence, I will set out the context of, and the background to, the Darlington Station Improvements, in particular the role of the scheme in supporting the economic, social and environmental well-being of the Borough's residents, workers and visitors and how the current scheme has been developed through a robust option assessment process.

1.7 I will then summarise the key elements of the scheme that has led to the Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) before the Inspector and summarise the comprehensive set of assessments that have been undertaken to date, in particular the areas of the business cases listed above that relate to the objections.

1.8 I will then proceed to state responses or rebuttals to the objections raised to the CPO, by taking each matter addressed in evidence and linking it to each individual objection.

1.9 Finally, I will include a brief conclusion with recommendations to the Inquiry.

1.10 This evidence should be read in conjunction with the other evidence provided in relation to the Darlington Station Gateway CPO:

- Strategic Importance: Tom Bryant (Tees Valley Combined Authority);
- Land Use Planning: Dominic Waugh (Fairhurst);
- Architectural Layout: Graeme Dodd (Napper Architects);
- Highway and Transportation Issues: David Colley (Fairhurst);
- Deliverability (funding and programme) of the CPO: Ian Stewart (Lead Officer with the acquiring authority); and
- Land Assembly and Negotiations: Richard Adamson (Estates Officer with the acquiring authority).

Reference is made throughout this document as to where more detail is provided in the complementary evidence.

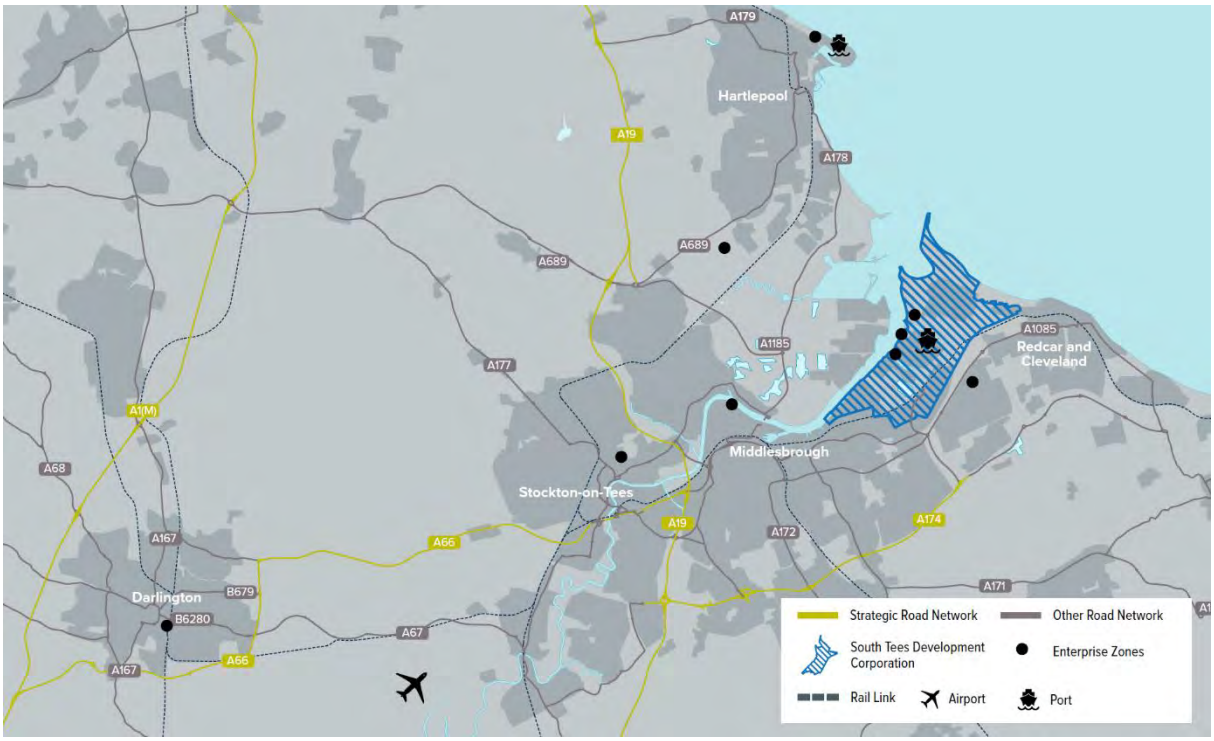
2 Darlington Station Improvements Context

2.1 This section provides the economic and transport context behind the Darlington Station Improvements.

Economic Context

2.2 The economic geography and peripheral nature of the North East region as a whole is one of the greatest challenges, and this is particularly true for the Tees Valley as it contains a number of centres within a small geographical area, as shown in Figure 2.1.

Figure 2.1: Tees Valley Urban Centres, Key Employment Opportunities and Main Transport Connections

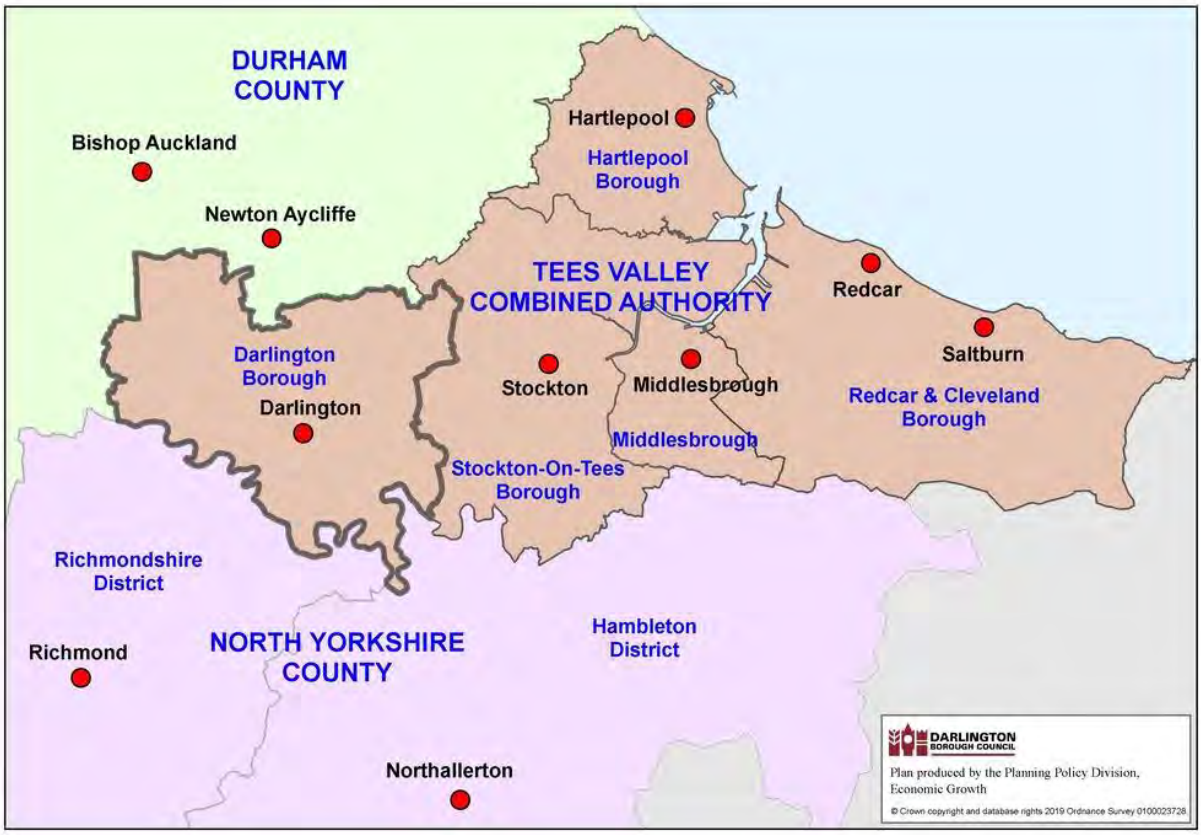


2.3 Figure 2.2 shows the administrative area of the Borough of Darlington and its adjoining authorities.

2.4 This lack of a single dominant commercial centre has transport implications and means that good interconnectivity is vital for the Tees Valley to function effectively. Pages 36 to 38 of the Tees Valley Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) and pages 12 to 19 of Strategic Transport Plan (STP) clearly articulate the need for better transport connections across the City Region, providing businesses and residents with a high quality public transport network (including rail) that is frequent, integrated, reliable and offers a real alternative

to the private car in order to be cleaner and more sustainable. This strategic context and the strategic transport priorities are covered in more detail in the evidence of Mr Bryant.

Figure 2.2: Darlington Borough Council Administrative Area



2.5 Much of the recent activity from the Tees Valley Combined Authority (TVCA) and the constituent local authorities of Darlington, Hartlepool, Middlesbrough, Redcar & Cleveland and Stockton-on-Tees, has been aimed at addressing the challenges of job losses in the industrial economy, issues of high unemployment and social exclusion and the difficulties within the local housing market.

2.6 However, there are still high levels of disadvantage across the Tees Valley. The Index of Multiple Deprivation combines different aspects of deprivation, including income, employment, education and skills, health and disability. Compared with other Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) areas, Tees Valley has the second largest proportion of lower super output areas[1] (LSOAs) within the most deprived 10% in England, at just over a quarter (27%). Compared with other highly deprived LEP areas, Tees Valley also has large

[1] LSOAs are the smallest geographical area for which Census details are provided

numbers of LSOAs that are within the 20% least deprived and ranks third out of the 39 LEPs in this respect[2].

2.7 Whilst overall gross value added (GVA) is low, GVA per employee in the production sector is well above the LEP average and that of other major LEP geographies such as Leeds, Manchester and Birmingham. Production industries (such as process or advanced engineering) contribute over 50% more of Tees Valley's economic output than the sector does for England as a whole. Both Construction and Public Services also account for a higher share of the City Region's total GVA than they do nationally.

2.8 Unemployment is a persistent issue, with youth unemployment, deprivation and barriers to work being particular problems. Long term unemployed people face multiple and complex barriers when accessing work. To reduce unemployment, it is vital to ensure education, training and job opportunities are easily accessible, particularly in the identified growth and high demand sectors. Increasing the mobility of residents will help to support the workforce offer of the Tees Valley – it will increase the accessibility of employment sites and contribute to releasing capacity on the transport network to accommodate future development.

2.9 The TVCA has ambitious plans to grow the economy over the next ten years, aiming to create 25,000 new jobs and 23,000 new homes, making the Tees Valley an even better place for residents and businesses. To deliver on these ambitions, the TVCA recognises a need to build on existing strengths and world-class expertise in areas such as advanced manufacturing (particularly oil and gas, metals and automotive), chemicals and process and logistics, and invest in growing capability in new industries - biologics, subsea, digital/creative and the low carbon economy.

2.10 Businesses within these sectors are spread right across the Tees Valley and the existing rail network in the Tees Valley serves all of the Enterprise Zones, the newly designated Freeport, Teesside International Airport, all five of the principal urban centres as well as the South Tees Development Corporation site (now known as Teesworks). Teesworks is the UK's largest and most connected industrial zone, home to diverse, sustainable and low-carbon activity. The 4,500-acres site offers immediate connectivity to Teesport, the North Sea, Europe and beyond, unlocking global markets for sustainable innovators and global pioneers.

2.11 Darlington's economy has performed strongly over recent years shifting from its past reliance on manufacturing to one with a wider, more resilient base. Health and social care and wholesale and retail are the most significant employers, whilst a relatively high proportion of the local workforce (29%) are in professional, senior or managerial roles, or skilled jobs (9.4%). The Borough has a projected increasing potential workforce, with

[2] https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/english-indices-of-deprivation-2019

relatively high skills and higher education achievements, and has economic activity and overall employment rates consistently above city regional and regional levels.

2.12 Trends before the COVID-19 pandemic showed an improving picture regarding the skills and productivity of Darlington's residents, with an increase in total GVA per annum, a rise in the employment rate and an upturn in the number of residents educated to degree level or equivalent (NVQ4 or above). Darlington has the second highest proportion of residents with an NVQ4 of the Tees Valley Local Authorities. This showcases the success of the Borough's focus on developing the higher level skills required for economic and business success.

2.13 To re-establish the growth of the Darlington economy following the COVID-19 pandemic, there is a need to attract and retain the right calibre of people and organisations to the Borough by providing business infrastructure and quality of life that is second to none. Therefore, the Borough needs to widen its economic base and deliver housing growth and improvement, if it is to continue to increase the number and quality of jobs available for its residents across all sectors, increase wage levels and meet the housing aspirations and needs of the population.

2.14 The proposals for the Skerningham Community Village and Burtree Garden Village will see around 6,500 new homes provided over the next 20-25 years, alongside recent employment growth at Symmetry Park and the expansion of the Newton Aycliffe Business Park. There is also the recent announcement of HM Treasury North Campus in Darlington, which will see 400 staff from this key Government department - around a quarter of the whole department - relocate over five years, along with 350 staff from other Government departments.

2.15 DBC prepared an Economic Strategy for the period 2012 to 2026, with the Darlington Partnership and through consultation with local employers, business support organisations, trade bodies, education providers, investors and local entrepreneurs. The strategy indicates that Darlington is focusing on the key potential growth sectors of Biologics, Subsea, Advanced Engineering and Manufacturing, Logistics and Public Sector/Service Sector, on increasing workforce skills, and supporting start-up businesses and growth within SMEs. Page 10 of the Economic Strategy identifies one of the barriers to future growth is congestion within and across the Borough.

2.16 Darlington is in a unique position and should exploit the economic benefit of its strategic location in relation to national and international networks for the benefit of the wider Tees Valley area. However, this will mean improving the connections of the town, particularly to the east where there is a higher proportion of deprived wards and supporting its role as a gateway to the wider city region, as well as to the north.

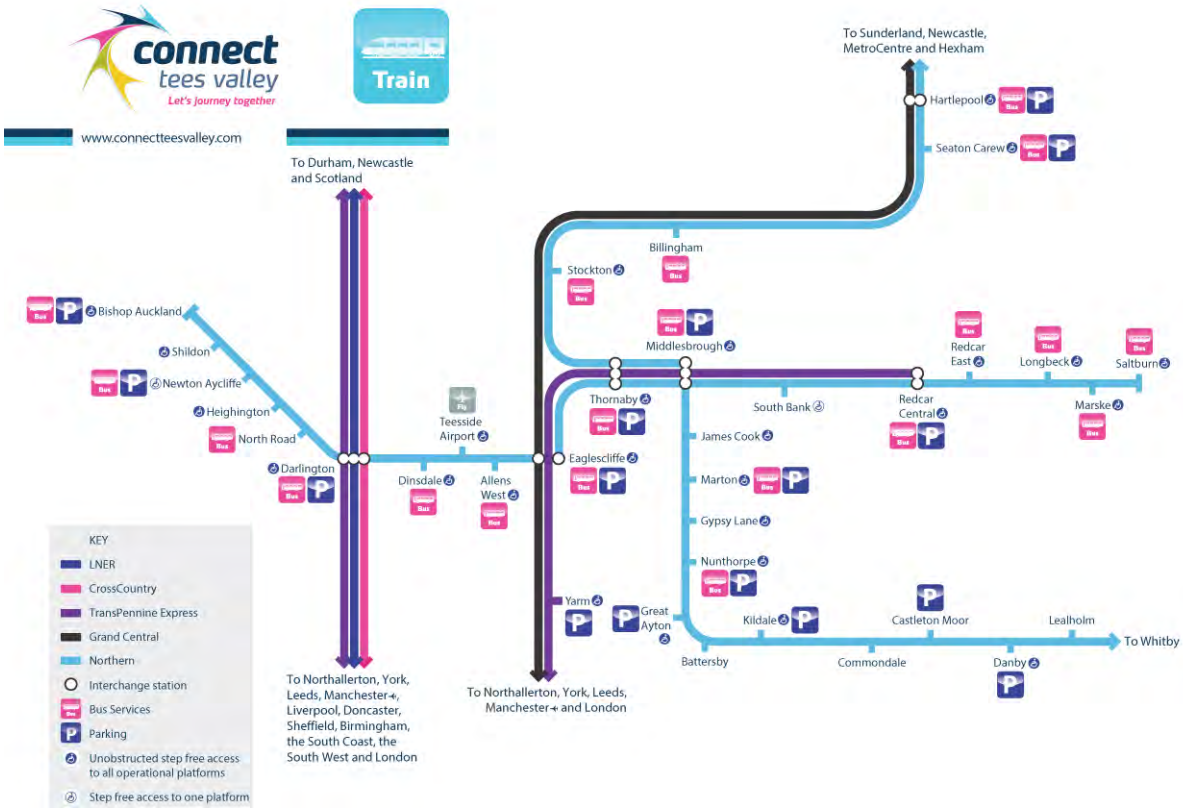
Transport Context

2.17 90% of the current working population have jobs within the Tees Valley area and 65,000 people cross an administrative boundary within the City Region to get to work – this emphasises the polycentric nature of the Tees Valley, but also the role of the rail network in providing effective public transport links across the City Region, more so than for a traditional urban area served by radial routes where bus services can provide effective public transport links.

2.18 Improvements to the Tees Valley rail network will support the economic prosperity of the City Region through enhanced connectivity, but there are existing constraints (explored in more detail in Section 3) that threaten the planned improvements - overcoming these constraints will be vital to support the economic growth ambitions.

2.19 Darlington is one of the Tees Valley's principal rail gateways and is strategically located on the East Coast Main Line (ECML). It is a regional transport hub that not only serves the Tees Valley but also a much wider catchment including South Durham and North Yorkshire, providing access to key rail services. Figure 2.3 shows the existing rail network in the Tees Valley in diagrammatic form.

Figure 2.3: Tees Valley Rail Network



2.20 Table 2.1 shows the change in usage at the Tees Valley's two principal rail gateways over the five years preceding the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, highlighting the consistent growth at Darlington in particular.

Table 2.1: Passenger Usage Trends at Tees Valley Rail Gateways

Station	2014 15	2015 16	2016 17	2017 18	2018 19
Darlington	2,243,233	2,250,978	2,276,238	2,329,991	2,394,446
Middlesbrough	1,348,960	1,333,222	1,357,420	1,314,379	1,289,866

2.21 Rail links to London and Scotland via the services on the ECML, principally those operated by London North Eastern Railway (LNER) are critical for business and leisure travel. This is highlighted by research for the Strategic Outline Business Case (in 2018) which showed that existing ECML services at Darlington benefit the Tees Valley economy by £400 million. It is important that these links are retained and enhanced to offer optimum provision for Tees Valley passengers and to support the economy.

2.22 Connectivity to the Midlands and beyond to the south west, as well as to Yorkshire, is also important and is currently provided by Cross Country services. There are 742,000 Cross Country journeys per year from Darlington, which equates to almost one third of all rail demand at the station.

2.23 East-west connectivity across the North is provided by the TransPennine Express franchise from Darlington and Middlesbrough (plus Redcar Central, Thornaby and Yarm), connecting to York, Leeds, Manchester and Manchester Airport. The economic linkages between the Tees Valley and the Leeds and Manchester city regions are important to the economic vitality of the area – there are strong economic, social and cultural links between Tees Valley and Leeds. The service to Manchester Airport is critical in that it is currently the only direct link between the City Region and the North's major international airport for businesses that require a high level of international connectivity.

2.24 Local rail connectivity within the Tees Valley, for both passenger and freight services, is also vital to the economic growth plans to ensure that key centres of population and economic activity are well connected together as well as to the national rail network. Whilst there is relatively good east-west local rail connectivity, it is not as good north-south or between, say, Darlington and Hartlepool, which have no direct rail connection during weekdays.

2.25 Continued growth in road traffic will have significant negative consequences in terms of congestion and the environment, both of which will stifle future growth. Ensuring that the Tees Valley has a rail network that has the requisite capacity and resilience to cater for

future demands, which result in a reduction in the historic growth of motor vehicle traffic, is essential.

2.26 Freight movements by rail have continued to increase as epitomised by the growth in container traffic into and out of the Ports of Tees and Hartlepool, which increased by an average of 7% per annum over the five years preceding the COVID-19 pandemic. The future development of the Teesworks site could also open up further opportunities for freight growth in this area.

2.27 However, the highway network is the more natural choice for freight operators, as road-based connections are generally lower cost at source, although the overall cost to society in terms of safety and the environment in particular, is much greater. Freight is, and will remain, a vital component of the Tees Valley economy - the aim will be to ensure that rail-based freight operations become the natural choice to support future growth.

Summary

2.28 In summary, the economic and transport context described in this section demonstrates:

- The Tees Valley contains a number of centres within a small geographical area - the lack of a single dominant commercial centre means that good interconnectivity is vital for the Tees Valley to function effectively;

- The Tees Valley SEP contains the target for 25,000 new jobs and 23,000 new homes by 2026, but to ensure the proposed economic growth and additional jobs are delivered will mean that the transport network will have to cope with a greater demand for travel to/from and around the City Region;

- There is the opportunity to increase the number of people in employment by ensuring easy and affordable access to jobs, education and training by providing a high quality, cleaner, quick, affordable, reliable, integrated and safe transport network for people and freight;

- There has been strong recent growth in both private vehicle traffic and rail passengers across the Tees Valley, but continued growth in road traffic will have significant negative consequences in terms of congestion and the environment, both of which will stifle future growth unless there is a suitable public transport alternative;

- Darlington is in a unique position and should exploit the economic benefit of its strategic location in relation to national and international networks for the benefit of the wider Tees Valley area.

3 Darlington Station Improvements Development

3.1 This section describes some of the issues and constraints with the local rail network and at Darlington Station in particular, before outlining the development of the preferred option for the Darlington Station Improvements.

Issues and Constraints

3.2 The preceding context emphasised the requirement for a reliable and resilient rail network to support the economic, social and environmental aspirations of the TVCA and DBC. However, the capacity and capability of the passenger and freight rail networks that serve the Tees Valley is now becoming a serious concern in terms of the impact this will have on these aspirations.

3.3 There was an emerging picture of falling performance across all train operating companies between 2016/17 and 2017/18, based on Average Public Performance Measure (PPM) and Right-Time figures published by the Office of Rail and Road. More recent performance figures (prior to the COVID-19 pandemic) were even lower for the Northern Trains and TransPennine Express franchises as a result of the well documented problems related to the introduction of the May 2018 timetable changes.

3.4 The ECML north of York, and in particular north of Northallerton where it becomes a two track only railway, is now at or very close to capacity with train operators struggling to deliver franchise commitments as a direct result. For example, from May 2018 not all of the new TransPennine Express services between Newcastle and Manchester Airport were able to make calls at Darlington due to lack of capacity on the ECML. Recent proposals from LNER for timetable changes on the ECML have been delayed due to a negative response to proposals to reduce service calls at Darlington from 2022 due to capacity constraints. These short term capacity issues will only get worse in the future.

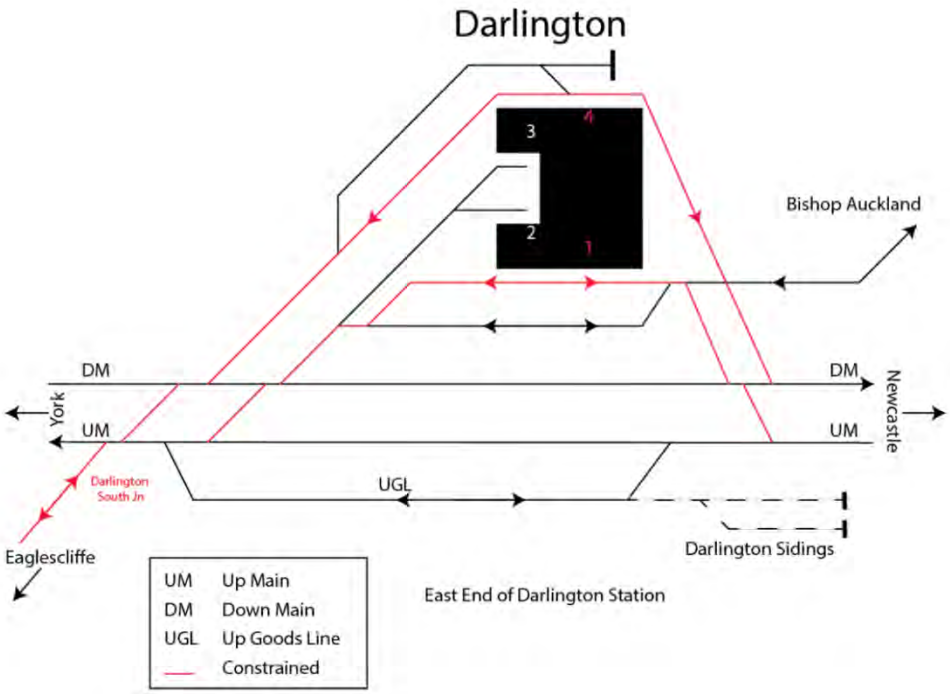
3.5 The existing layout at Darlington station exacerbates problems with capacity and resilience. All local rail services between Darlington/Bishop Auckland and Saltburn are required to cross the ECML at Darlington South junction. The 'free' operational capacity of this junction is low, meaning that any changes to service levels would have to be made using trade-offs between trains in different service sectors, and/or by adjusting stopping patterns and the destinations served.

3.6 Pages 17 to 20 of Network Rail's independent capacity analysis, published in June 2019, indicated that neither Darlington South junction, nor the two through platforms at the station have the capability to accommodate the future train services envisaged for the ECML. Figure 3.1 is an extract from this analysis and shows (in red) those locations where capacity issues were identified in the future. Figure 3.2 is a more detailed representation of the forecast problems at Darlington.

Figure 3.1: Locations of Forecast Capacity Constraints on the Tees Valley Rail Network

3.7 The capacity analysis concluded that *"a potential solution to resolve the over capacity utilisation of Darlington South Jn is to double track Darlington South Jn and install another platform east of Darlington, such that the Saltburn - Darlington and Sunderland - Darlington services do not interact with the ECML"*. This formed the starting point for an analysis of the options for improvement.

Figure 3.2: Constrained Sections around Darlington Station



3.8 Whilst the configuration of the rail infrastructure limits the ability to increase the station's local, regional and national connections, it is also the case that the station itself is not a suitable gateway to the Tees Valley, with a lack of retail facilities compared to other similar stations across the network and accessibility and connections issues that do not necessarily provide safe, high quality links between the station and the surrounding area, as shown in the photographs below. The photograph on the left shows the existing footbridge connecting the station to the east side, whilst the photograph on the right is the existing subway that connects station users to the west side.

Options for Improvement

3.9 The role that rail stations can play in the promotion of an area given that it often provides the first impression, is becoming more understood, drawing on recent investment in stations such as London King's Cross, Birmingham New Street and Leeds. In addition to the capacity constraints at Darlington, the passenger experience and the facilities offered should be representative of the economic ambitions of the Borough and the wider Tees Valley City Region. This is particularly important given the enhanced role that Darlington Station will play in welcoming visitors to the area as part of the 2025 celebrations for the 200th anniversary of the first passenger railway journey between Stockton and Darlington.

3.10 A Masterplan for Darlington Station was completed in 2016 (Document SD7) and the work followed a logical sequence which identified potential constraints and examined a number of options for improvement. The principal aim of the Masterplan in terms of rail performance was to develop a holistic solution to the identified national, regional and local passenger and freight issues described previously. The work was informed by workshops with stakeholders at that time.

3.11 The option development process is summarised in Figure 3.3, which considered the infrastructure interventions against future train service patterns. The summary of the option assessment, in terms of the principal station layout options considered that provide the additional platforms required, is set out in Table 3.1.

Figure 3.3: Option Development and Assessment Process

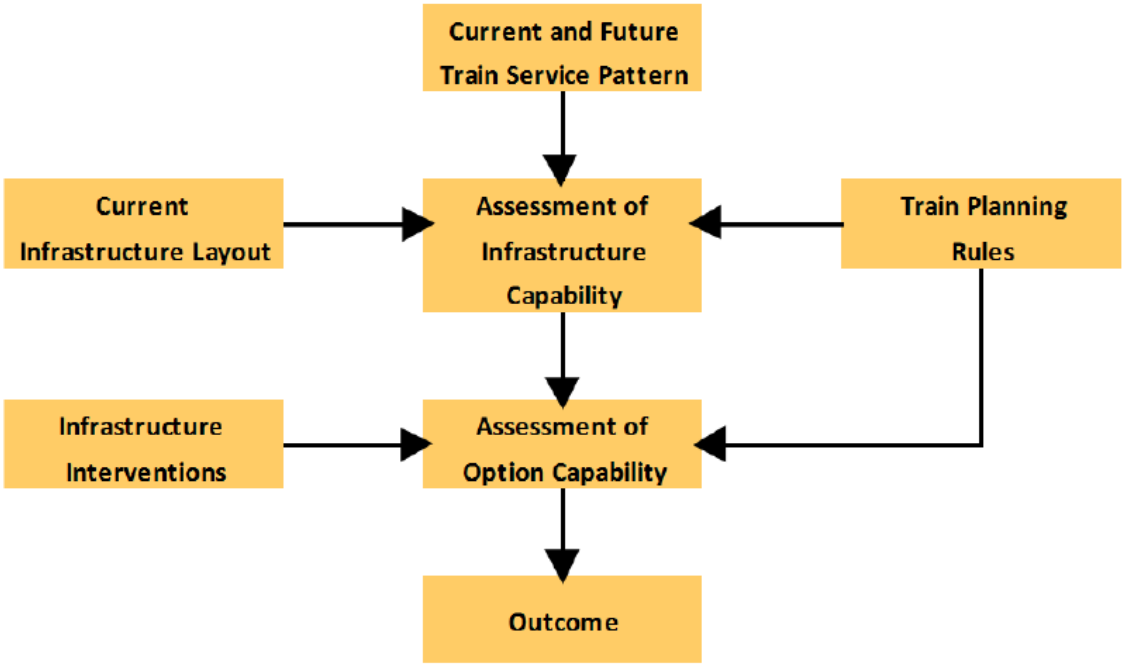


Table 3.1: Darlington Station Option Assessment Results

Option	Impact on Existing National Rail Services	Capacity to Support Future National Rail Services (HS2/NPR)	Impact on Local Services
Current Layout (four platforms)	None	Not Possible	None Increased Frequencies Not Possible
Local Platforms Only (six platforms)	Enhanced Resilience	Some Future Service Accommodated	Enhanced Resilience Increased Frequencies Possible
Local and National Platforms (seven platforms)	Enhanced Resilience Reduced Journey Times	Future Services Accommodated	Enhanced Resilience Increased Frequencies Possible

3.12 The need to address the issues at Darlington South junction whereby all local services cross the ECML to enter Darlington Station necessitated that any new platforms should be provided to the east of the existing station. Providing new platforms to the west, or within the existing station footprint, was shown not to be technical feasible through the work summarised in Appendix G to the Masterplan, nor would it solve the capacity issues at Darlington South junction.

3.13 Further to this initial option assessment, a technical options workshop was held in August 2019 with representatives from Network Rail, (then) Northern Rail, TVCA and DBC. The aim of the workshop was to agree high level options for the proposed scheme and record the options considered and the reasoning behind decisions taken, in line with required Network Rail procedures.

3.14 The workshop considered the track layout connecting the existing Tees Valley rail line to the new platforms, the platform layout and provision (aimed primarily at not requiring any of the existing track to the east of the station to be altered), the means of connecting into the existing station and the types of passenger facilities that should be provided at each station entrance, based on an assessment of the principal function of each entrance and its relationship to the surrounding area. It involved considering a number of options for each as a development of the design work done for the Masterplan.

3.15 At this point, the Department for Transport (DfT) also requested that the option assessment process consider how the requirements for the Northern Powerhouse Rail scheme (as proposed at that time) could be accommodated within the emerging options for Darlington Station and to ensure that there would be no abortive work to implement a

further phase of the scheme to accommodate these services. This work was completed to the satisfaction of DfT.

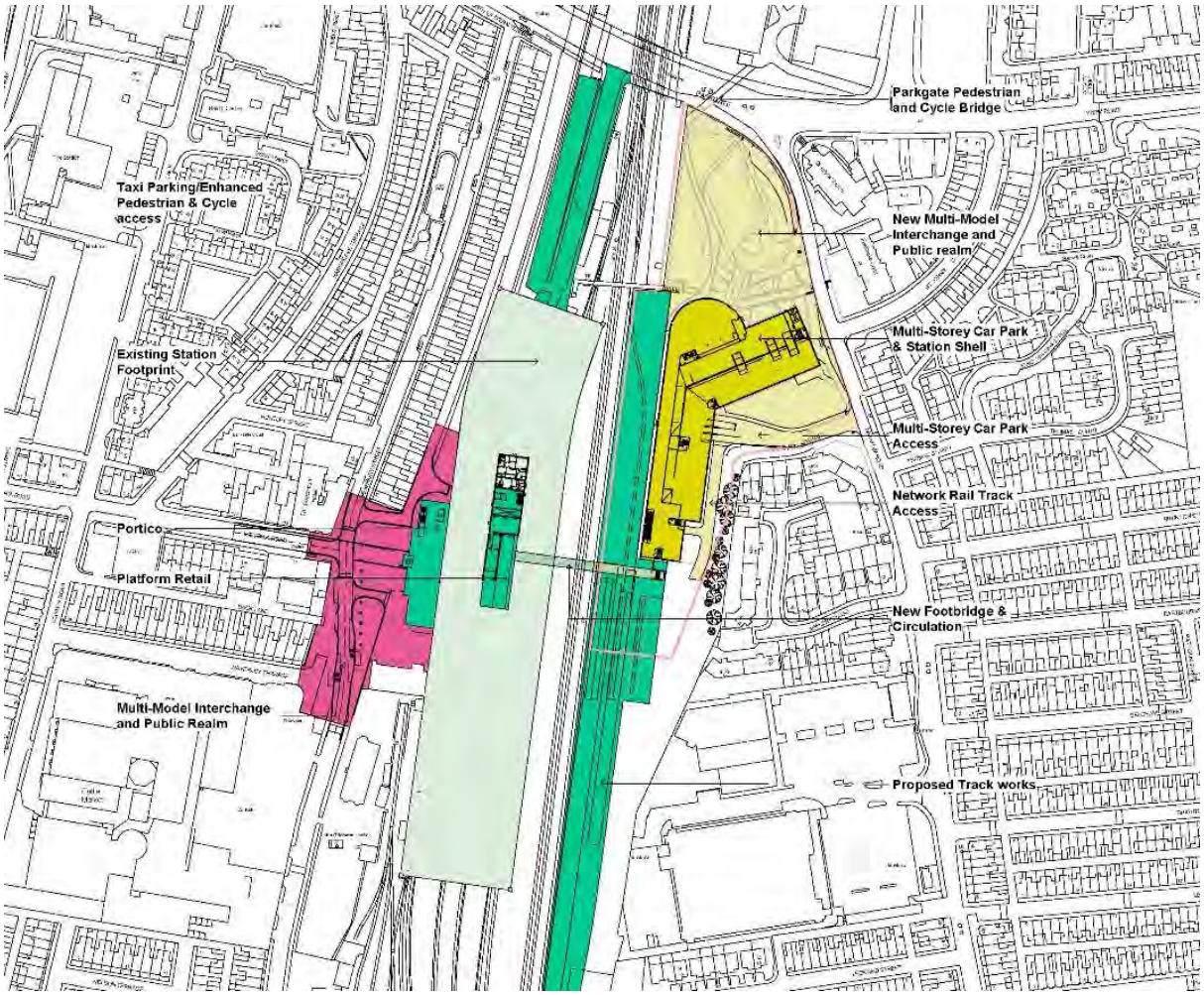
3.16 The requirement for the new platforms to be on the eastern side of the existing station and the option development work to identify the best location for the platforms to ensure that all of the operational railway requirements are met, meant that the most suitable location encompassed much of the existing surface car parking area at Darlington Station. This area is owned by Network Rail but is part of the station lease area, leased to LNER on a 99 year basis, with LNER taking the revenue from the car parking in this location.

3.17 Therefore, there was a requirement to identify a suitable location and form, both for replacement parking, but also to accommodate any forecast future growth in parking demand at the station. More detail regarding this calculation is provided in multi-storey car park (MSCP) Demand Study (Document SD19). The methodology undertaken follows the standard demand forecasting approach set out in the Passenger Demand Forecasting Handbook (PDFH) and takes account of accurate records of existing car parking capacity and demand.

3.18 In order to comply with the terms of the station lease, at least as many parking spaces in total should be provided in the future as there are available in this area at the present time. Work undertaken for the Masterplan in 2016 considered how this number of spaces as a minimum could be accommodated at a suitable location within the vicinity of the station such that interchange times were not too onerous. This concluded that new car parking facilities to the east was the preferred option and that no other alternative sites were considered suitable for a replacement MSCP. For example, the Cattle Market site was not considered suitable in terms of either visual amenity or proximity to the station. More details on the architectural considerations relating to the new MSCP are included in the evidence of Mr Dodd.

3.19 Given the layout of the existing station, the provision of new platforms on the east side also required a new station entrance, associated station facilities and suitable onward connections, including a pick-up/drop-off area and space for rail replacement bus services, as well as improved connections for scheduled bus services passing the station. These required facilities have all been included within the development of the scheme, alongside improved walking and cycling connections to the town centre, the adjacent Central Park site and the local community, and are shown on the block plan included as Figure 3.4. More detail on the location and form of these facilities is provided in the evidence of Mr Dodd.

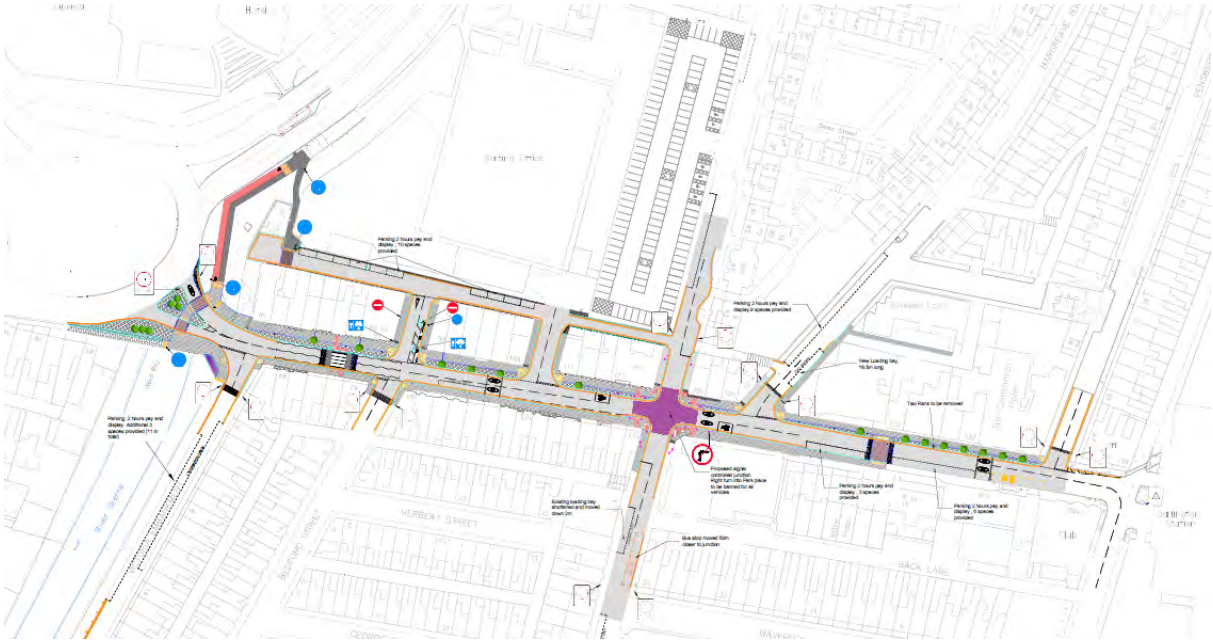
Figure 3.4: Block Plan of Proposed Darlington Station Improvements



3.20 Finally, the overall option development identified a clear need to improve connections by active travel and public transport to the west of the station, complementing the improved public realm and new pedestrian crossing facilities recently implemented along Victoria Road, as shown in Figure 3.5. Even with the new platforms and facilities to the east, this entrance will continue to be important, particularly in providing links to the town centre for rail services to/from Bishop Auckland as well as having a number of passing scheduled bus services. More detail on the form of these facilities is provided in the evidence of Mr Colley.

3.21 Non-rail alternative options to provide enhanced local connectivity (with national and regional rail services taking precedence in terms of the available capacity at the station in the future) were discounted at an early stage in the option assessment process. Bus-based alternatives would have a significant increase in travel times, up to 50% higher, compared to existing rail services between Darlington and, say, Middlesbrough, causing a significant disbenefit to passengers if such a solution were pursued.

Figure 3.5: Victoria Road Improvements



Summary

3.22 In summary, the issues and constraints described in this section demonstrate:

- The capacity and capability of the passenger and freight rail networks that serve the Tees Valley is now becoming a concern in terms of the impact this will have on future economic growth;

- To deliver the sort of step change in journey opportunities needed to support economic growth envisaged, Network Rail's capacity analysis and East Coast Route Study identifies a package of investment that would be necessary to enable the future service level of eight or nine trains per hour on the route - this includes the requirement to improve capacity and resilience at Darlington Station; and

- Darlington Station is not a suitable gateway to the Tees Valley, with a lack of retail facilities compared to other similar stations across the network and accessibility and connections issues that do not necessarily provide safe, high quality links between the station and the surrounding area.

3.23 The preferred solution to address these issues and constraints was developed through a robust option assessment process and consists of three key elements:

- Darlington Station Gateway - a new station building, improved access and interchange facilities (including a new MSCP);

- Operational Rail Improvements – new platforms and track layout on the approach to the station to address current constraints and accommodate planned growth in demand for passenger and freight services;

- Station Enhancements - a refurbished station building and new footbridge.

3.24 The option assessment process was undertaken with the support of a range of stakeholders, including Network Rail and Transport for the North, to identify a preferred option. This option comprises a package of improvements that will achieve the objectives agreed by the Darlington Station Programme Board within the OBC and provide a holistic solution to the identified issues and constraints described previously.

4 Darlington Station Improvements and the CPO Scheme

4.1 The preferred option for the Darlington Station improvements set out in the OBC (Document SD6) and recently confirmed in the UBC (Document SD38) included the following components within each of the three elements identified in Section 3:

1. Darlington Station Gateway:
    a. A new station building, with multi-modal connections, to the east of the existing station building;
    b. A new transport interchange and MSCP adjacent to the new station building, serving rail users and potentially, adjacent developments;
    c. Improved transport interchange facilities on the western side of the station.
2. Operational Rail Improvements:
    a. Two new bay platforms on the east side to accommodate existing and future Tees Valley local services;
    b. The track between these platforms and Darlington South Junction designed to ensure the local services can operate independently from the ECML, removing current capacity and reliability issues at Darlington South Junction;
    c. Another new platform adjacent to the Up Goods Line, to be used by southbound long distance high speed services calling at Darlington, giving a much faster, unconflicted approach and departure in both directions, saving valuable time on the ECML;
    d. Bishop Auckland services to use the current platform 4, operating independently (conflict free) in the future, if desired;
3. Station Enhancements:
    a. A new accessible footbridge linking the new platforms and station building with the remainder of the existing station;
    b. Enhancement to the existing station portico.

4.2 The broad location of these components is shown on Figure 3.4. Further design and development work has been undertaken on each of these components, and in the case of the operational railway improvements, this work is continuing in accord with Network Rail's requirements.

CPO Scheme

4.3 The CPO Scheme applies to element 1. identified in paragraph 4.1. Appendix JS1 includes more detailed site plans for the planned improvements within the Darlington Station Gateway. Appendix JS2 shows the CPO Land required for the CPO Scheme.

4.4 All of the areas of land shown on the plan at Appendix JS2 are essential for the delivery of the Darlington Station Gateway, for which there is a strong and clear strategic need, providing:

- A fit for purpose gateway station at Darlington – this will ensure that the Tees Valley's external public transport connectivity is enhanced, thus supporting future growth plans;
- Much improved facilities for passengers, improved accessibility both within and to/from the station, improved car parking and better interchange facilities and integration with other modes of transport – this will encourage increased use of public transport, with consequent social and environmental benefits, and increase the access to the public transport network for a larger section of the local community; and
- A rail station that links better with the town centre and the adjacent Central Park Enterprise Zone site – this will support future growth plans and enhance opportunities for the local community.

4.5 The Guidance on Compulsory Purchase Process (2021)[3] identifies the negotiation-related matters to be addressed in consideration of the case for the CPO, namely:

- The confirming authority will expect the acquiring authority to demonstrate that they have taken reasonable steps to acquire all of the land and rights included in the Order by agreement (paragraph 2);
- Public sector organisations should make reasonable initial offers, and be prepared to engage constructively with claimants about relocation issues and mitigation and accommodation works where relevant (paragraph 3);
- Acquiring authorities are expected to provide evidence that meaningful attempts at negotiation have been pursued or at least genuinely attempted (paragraph 17); and
- Steps should be considered to help those affected by a compulsory purchase order, such as to funding landowners' reasonable costs of negotiation (paragraph 19).

[3] https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1026178/CPO_guidance_-_with_2019_update.pdf

4.6 Further detail confirming how DBC has satisfied all of these requirements is provided in the evidence of Mr Adamson.

Finance and Costs

4.7 Section 4 of both the OBC and the UBC provide information on the Financial Case, principally the cost estimate for the Darlington Station Improvements and the funding contributions required to deliver the scheme. In Section 4.1 of the OBC, information is included on a base cost estimate, as well as how this estimate has been adjusted to include risk and inflation to provide an outturn cost estimate, as required by DfT and HM Treasury. An allowance was also made for operating and maintenance costs within the cost estimate.

4.8 The continuing validity of this cost estimate is recorded in Section 4.1 of the UBC.

4.9 Section 4.3 of the OBC identifies the various funding contributions for the proposal and identifies where such contributions have been committed. The outstanding contribution was being sought through the DfT in relation to the OBC, and the letter dated 22 July 2021 and provided by the DfT (Document SD39) supports this process. The deliverability of the scheme is covered further in the evidence of Mr Stewart.

Governance and Delivery

4.10 A sound governance structure has been in place throughout the life of the Darlington Station Improvements scheme, and Network Rail has been closely involved in its development since inception, assisting with the economic analysis presented in this evidence. This governance structure will be retained for the next stage of scheme development, through the Darlington Station Programme Board, chaired by the Tees Valley Mayor, providing for a co-client relationship in the next stage of works between the two principal funding parties.

4.11 A project plan was developed for the OBC and was updated for the UBC. The current project plan envisages completion of the scheme by mid-2024, with entry into service by December 2024, but the Programme Board will seek opportunities to expedite the process where possible to meet this date.

4.12 Responsibilities under the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations are split between Network Rail and DBC according to the lead organisation. For the Darlington Station Gateway, DBC (Capital Project Team) is the Client, whilst for the works on the east side, Napper Architects is the Principal Designer and Willmott Dixon is the Principal Contractor, and on the west side, Fairhurst is the Principal Designer and DBC is the Principal Contractor.

4.13 Network Rail has its own procedures for undertaking the development and construction of new infrastructure projects. These follow the Guide to Railway Investment Projects (GRIP) process to provide an effective, consistent and repeatable standard by which to manage projects across the organisation. This minimises variation and ensures delivery to the desired standard, on time and on budget.

4.14 Network Rail as rail system owner and operator would adopt all the works on the operational railway and operate and maintain these enhancements as part of its wider network responsibilities. Under its Full Repairing and Insuring lease with Network Rail as landlord, LNER is responsible for operation and maintenance of Darlington Station for a period of 99 years.

4.15 A detailed development agreement will be signed with Network Rail for the delivery of the scheme and it should be noted that Network Rail's previous objection to the CPO Scheme has been withdrawn. The deliverability of the scheme is covered further in the evidence of Mr Stewart.

5 Contribution of the CPO Scheme to the Economic, Social and Environmental Well-being of the Area

5.1 Paragraph 106 of the CPO guidance identifies that one of the factors that the Secretary of State can be expected to consider includes:

"the extent to which the proposed purpose will contribute to the achievement of the promotion or improvement of the economic, social or environmental wellbeing of the area"

5.2 For transport schemes, the assessment of the economic, social and environmental impacts are considered as part of a business case, which is expected to adhere to guidance set down by Government.

5.3 The OBC and UBC prepared for the Darlington Station Improvements were prepared in accord with the Transport Business Case guidance, Strategic Case Supplementary Guidance: Rebalancing Toolkit and the Transport Appraisal Guidance (TAG) issued by the DfT, as well as guidance issued by Network Rail, HM Treasury's Green Book and associated supplementary guidance on public sector business cases.

5.4 Paragraphs 2.2.2 to 2.2.4 of the TAG for the Senior Responsible Officer[4] summarise the elements that should be considered to determine the economic, social and environmental benefits. Both business cases clearly articulate these benefits for the Darlington Station Improvements in line with the guidance, which underpin the need for the CPO Land and CPO Scheme. These benefits are summarised below.

Economic Benefits

5.5 Paragraphs 7.7.6 to 7.7.9 of the Statement of Case summarise the quantifiable economic benefits for the Darlington Station Improvements and Section 3 of the OBC includes more detail on how these benefits were derived. In particular, Section 3.2 of the OBC references the methodology and assumptions used, and how these were derived from TAG, as required by the DfT.

5.6 A new version of the TAG databook was released in July 2020 following the completion of the OBC – this reflected the projected impact of COVID-19 pandemic and the March 2020 OBR economic forecasts – in combination, this equates to approximately 20% reduction in rail demand over the appraisal period. It also includes a higher carbon price valuation for a

[4] https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/938762/tag-guidance-for-senior-responsible-officer.pdf

scheme's greenhouse gas impact. Therefore, the UBC includes an updated economic analysis to reflect these changes.

5.7 The quantifiable benefits for the scheme come from the following key areas:

- Journey Time Benefits, leading to User Benefits, Non User Benefits and Revenue Benefits;
- Reliability and Rail Delay Payment Benefits; and
- Wider Economic Impacts.

5.8 Section 3.4 of the OBC describes in more detail how these benefits have been derived. The Darlington Station Gateway elements contribute directly to the first and third of these quantifiable benefits.

5.9 The outcome of the most recent economic analysis was summarised in a value for money statement included as Table 3.4 of the UBC and reproduced here as Table 5.1. It is clear from these results that the Darlington Station Improvements continue to provide high value for money, based on the categories set out the DfT Value for Money Framework. The sensitivity analysis undertaken to date (and reported in Section 3.7 of the UBC) also provides confidence that even with further refinement to the design of the scheme ongoing), there is considered to be enough headroom to ensure this remains the case.

Table 5.1: Initial and Adjusted BCR Calculations for the Preferred Option (2010 prices)

	Assessment	Comments/Notes
Present Value of Benefits (PVB) (£m)	209.53	Cumulative benefit of journey time benefits for ECML and local services, reliability benefits for all services and high level safety benefits
Present Value of Costs (PVC) (£m)	80.72	From information in the Financial Case and assuming required level of Optimism Bias at OBC stage
Initial Benefit : Cost Ratio (BCR)	*2.60*	
Wider Economic Impacts (£m)	31.0	As set out in the OBC
Adjusted PVB (£m)	240.53	
Adjusted BCR	2.98	

Social Benefits

5.10 Section 3.6 of the OBC considers the potential social impacts of the Darlington Station Improvements, using the approach set out in the Network Rail Aspects and Impacts Guidance Note[5]. These are summarised in Table 3.5 of the OBC, reproduced here as Table 5.2, with the Proposed Impacts stated relating specifically to the Darlington Station Gateway elements.

Table 5.2: Social Impact Assessment

Theme	What does this mean?	Proposed Impacts
Supporting Britain's economic development	Harnessing the power of rail to create social and economic opportunities for people and businesses.	The new and improved station will act as a connectivity gateway for the wider Tees Valley City Region enabling improved connections from the Tees Valley to London and other key economic centres. The improvements will also promote connectivity for those working and living in the Tees Valley through journey time savings and enhanced accessibility to the rail network. Redevelopment of the station will provide construction jobs, supply chain boosts, etc.
Respecting cultural heritage and rail history	Appreciating cultural history and rail heritage - both the physical heritage and the people's history.	The proposed station rationalisation and future development, is proposed to respect and complement existing historic assets and offer improvements and enhancements where possible. The aim is to deliver the scheme to celebrate a significant anniversary for the Darlington to Stockton railway in 2025, to coincide with a wider programme of events to celebrate this.
Making rail a great experience	Creating a life-enhancing railway experience for all who use it.	The improvements to Darlington Station will improve journey times, punctuality, station accessibility and facilities, increasing the overall experience of travel for passengers.

[5] https://safety.networkrail.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/Aspects-and-impacts-Guidance-Note-1.pdf

Theme	What does this mean?	Proposed Impacts
Inspiring tomorrow's workforce	Enabling access to the right skills, at the right time, from the UK's diverse talent pool.	Tees Valley wide STEM skills and training are promoted. Projects such as Darlington Station show practical examples of these skills offering inspiration to future engineers, but, potentially through engagement, practical STEM project experience.
Keeping communities safe	Keeping everyone safe around the railway, every day.	The redevelopment of the existing underpass, portico and the public realm improvements will increase the inclusivity and perceived safety of the station. Segregating car parking and pedestrian areas as well as public realm rationalisation will improve passenger movement safety throughout the station.
Creating positive industry partnerships	Developing relationships, in the supply chain and beyond, that are ethical, responsible and have a positive social impact.	The proposed redevelopment of the station may bolster the supply chain linkages and create work for SMEs.
Making travel accessible	Making rail infrastructure and information available to everyone.	The scheme will deliver faster and more frequent train journeys, whilst increasing accessibility for all demographics through more pedestrianised public space. Accessibility improvements will open the station up to those who have previously experienced issues accessing the site. Station rationalisation and signage improvements will ensure that the site is easier to navigate.
Creating engaged employees	Be a business that people are proud to work for.	Employment opportunities are likely to be generated during construction of the proposed works and following increased operations associated with the proposed new station. An enhanced working environment through an improved station and gateway to the town will help to instil pride of place into workers within the station and also those travelling to the wider town.

Theme	What does this mean?	Proposed Impacts
Connecting communities with the environment	Working to protect and enhance our lineside surroundings and the wider environment.	The proposed works will increase access to high quality public realm for the town of Darlington, the wider Tees Valley and all those who use the station.
Being a caring neighbour	Promoting positive relationships with our lineside communities.	Provision of new services within the station may benefit neighbouring occupiers. Visual amenity and public realm improvements associated with the scheme will improve amenity for neighbouring occupiers.

5.11 A further high level assessment of the key societal benefits identified for the scheme was provided in Table 3.6 of the OBC – these benefits have been ranked by their impact and likelihood of occurrence to provide an overall score, using a scale based upon and adapted from the table identified as 'Environmental and Social Risk Matrix- Opportunity' within the Network Rail Environmental and Social Management Plan. Both assessments clearly demonstrate that there are considerable social benefits from the scheme.

Environmental Benefits

5.12 Section 3.5 of the OBC includes a detailed assessment of the environmental impacts of the Darlington Station Improvements, alongside a consideration of relevant planning policy. The clear alignment with planning policy is covered further in the evidence of Mr Waugh.

5.13 The detailed analysis undertaken in summarised in a tabular format in the OBC for each of the sub-sections within the environmental assessment required by TAG, using a Red/Amber/Green rating to highlight the impact(s) assessed. Under each heading, impacts during both construction and operation of the proposal have been explored, alongside risks and opportunities. This analysis is summarised in Table 5.3, with the Comments stated relating specifically to the Darlington Station Gateway elements.

5.14 None of the sub-sections are rated 'Red' and a more detailed analysis of those considered 'Amber' has been undertaken in various documents supporting the Statement of Case, such as the Landscape General Arrangement (Document SD15), Heritage Statement (Document SD29) an Amended Landscape Masterplan (Document SD30). Mitigation measures are also covered in the evidence of Mr Dodd.

Table 5.3: Summary of Environmental Impact Assessment

Topic	RAG Rating	Comments
Noise		There is the potential for an increase in noise levels at nearby noise sensitive receptors due to demolition, construction and operation, arising from mobile and stationary sources. However, the nearest noise important area is approximately 690m north west of the proposed scheme.
Air Quality		It is considered that the scheme presents a low risk to air quality, although construction activities have the potential to generate dust due to earthworks, construction and demolition. However, there are no air quality management areas within 2km of the proposed scheme.
Greenhouse Gases		The scheme will enable more journeys to be taken by public transport, which would reduce the number of car journeys required and therefore lead to a reduction in greenhouse gases.
Landscape and Townscape		In the short term, construction activities have potential to impact upon the townscape and landscape surrounding the site. However, the scheme will lead to improvements in townscape and landscape, providing high design quality additions to the town of Darlington.
Biodiversity		Two SSSIs are located at a distance from the site (2.5km and 4km) and are considered highly unlikely to experience any impacts as a result of the construction of the scheme. There is the potential for ecology mitigation, enhancement measures and carefully designed compensation areas to achieve a net gain in biodiversity.
Historic Environment		There are a number of Grade I and II Listed Buildings located within 1km of the site, including the existing Bank Top Railway Station, which is a Grade II* Listed Building. There are opportunities to improve the setting of the existing historic assets and the scheme has the potential to rationalise the overall station and restore original uses and feelings of space within the station. Similarly, public realm improvements have the potential to rationalise the setting of the building enhancing the environment around the listed assets.
Water Environment		There are no watercourses located within or adjacent to the proposed scheme.

5.15 Section 3.4 of the UBC concludes that *"The amendments made to the preferred option since the OBC has not materially altered the qualitative environmental and social impacts set out in the OBC"*. It is therefore considered that the analysis of environmental and social impacts provided in support of the scheme remain robust and valid at this time.

Environmental Benefits

5.16 In deciding to make and promote the CPO, DBC has taken into account the provisions of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) and the Human Rights Act 1998, and in particular Section 6 of the latter, which prohibits public authorities from acting in a way which is incompatible with the ECHR.

5.17 In considering the proportionality of promoting the CPO, DBC has amongst other things borne in mind the following considerations:

- That no more land than is required to facilitate the CPO Scheme has been included in the CPO;
- That there is no viable alternative in a foreseeable period to obtaining title to the CPO Land other than by way of compulsory acquisition;
- That acquisition of freehold title to the CPO Land is necessary to facilitate the CPO Scheme, as other legal procedures would not provide clear and secure methods for ensuring control of and in perpetuity or for the adoption of the required parts of the CPO Land; and
- That the CPO is made and will proceed under a statutory procedure with built-in safeguards that protect the rights of landowners and other persons, including the right to challenge decisions in court and otherwise with the entitlement to fair compensation.

5.18 The acquiring authority considers that compulsory acquisition of the CPO Land is necessary given the dearth of alternatives to securing title in a timely fashion to the land required for the Darlington Station Improvements, and that if and where there is interference with protected rights by acquisition of the CPO Land, the public benefit and need for the CPO Scheme outweighs any private loss arising from the acquisition.

5.19 It is also the case that DBC has undertaken, and will continue to take, a number of steps in order to mitigate the impact on those affected as part of the fair balance that has been struck between the public interest and the individual rights. In particular:

- DBC has paid for access to independent surveyors and ensured that information is available in everyone's first language;
- DBC has housing powers and duties which it is willing to use (albeit the residential occupiers have rejected Council housing);

- DBC has been flexible in its offers to purchase and has in appropriate cases offered more than strict market value to assist relocation;

- DBC has offered Alternate Dispute Resolution and has engaged with landowners throughout in order to negotiate a sale and to understand occupiers' concerns so that it can help address them; and

- DBC commissioned an Equality Impact Assessment in order to understand the impact of the CPO Scheme fully and to guide its interactions with affected landowners.

5.20 Further detail on the process by which DBC has discharged the lawful authority and the additional steps undertaken, is contained in the evidence of Mr Adamson.

6 Response to Objections

6.1 The Statement of Case includes a number of outstanding objections to the Darlington Station Gateway CPO. The following paragraphs take each of these in turn insofar as they relate to the scope of this evidence.

Objection No 1, Plot 27 (United Parking)

6.2 This objection notes that:

- 1. The economic, environmental and social benefits of the CPO Scheme have not been identified;
- 2. The causal link between such benefits and CPO Scheme are not identified; and
- 3. No evidence to support the need for an additional 234 parking spaces (given the reduction in demand attributable to the COVID-19 pandemic).

6.3 In response to 1., as identified in Section 5, the economic, social and environmental and impacts of the Darlington Station Improvements have been thoroughly assessed in line with the guidance at the time and updated in October 2021 to account for any change in circumstances. The benefits, along with any potential mitigation measures where they may be an adverse impact, are clearly set out in the OBC and the UBC. The CPO Scheme is a fundamental part of the Darlington Station Improvements and so there is a clear statement of the economic, social and environmental benefits. Those specifically relating to the Darlington Station Gateway elements are identified in Section 5 of this evidence and set out in Tables 5.2 and 5.3.

6.4 In response to both 1. and 2., as indicated in paragraph 4.4, the CPO Scheme is required to deliver the stated benefits of the Darlington Station Improvements, given the holistic nature of the proposals - removing one or more of the elements listed in paragraph 4.1 would compromise the delivery of the anticipated benefits.

6.5 In response to 3., as indicated in paragraphs 3.17 and 3.18, the calculation of the required number of car parking spaces followed prescribed DfT methodology and took account of the requirements of the lease agreement between LNER and Network Rail so as to negate any compensation events that would follow. The MSCP Demand Study (Document SD19) was prepared in January 2021 and therefore remains robust at this time having been prepared after the onset of the pandemic, but still in line with DfT requirements.

6.6 Therefore, it is considered that these matters of objection are not valid.

Objection No 2, Plot 12 (Mr Singh Dhatt & Mrs Kaur)

6.7 This objection notes that:

- 1. There is no need to acquire the property for the CPO Scheme;
- 3. A family home is threatened by the Scheme; and
- 4. Loss of the business would be the loss of a facility integrated with the local community

6.8 In response to 1. and 3., Plot 12 is covered partially by the location of the access to the proposed pick-up/drop-off area and the rail replacement bus service facility. This access is designed in accordance with all necessary highway standards and is therefore required to be in this location, particularly to ensure safe and satisfactory visibility splays, as covered in the Transport Assessment (Document SD12) and the evidence presented by Mr Colley.

6.9 In response to 4., the Darlington Station Gateway provides the opportunity to create new commercial space within the new station building, as well as re-purposed space within the existing station building, both of which should enhance the offer to the local community.

6.10 Therefore, it is considered that this matter of objection is not valid.

Objection No 5, Plot 43 (Nicola Allan, as Advocate)

6.11 This objection notes that:

- 2. The causal link between this part of the CPO Scheme and plot 43 not identified (lack of scheme definition causing uncertainty why the plot in question is needed);
- 3. The acquiring authority admits it is difficult to quantify benefits of the Gateway, so the need for this part of the CPO Scheme is brought into question;
- 5. Neighbourhood benefits though desirable are not necessarily sufficient justification;
- 6. The link between good transport links and improvements in appearance are nebulous; and
- 10. Lack of "justification or quantification" of social benefits, which may therefore affect viability.

6.12 In response to 2., the Darlington Station Improvements and the CPO Land and CPO Scheme that form part, are clearly defined, and the drawing at Appendix JS1 shows the

requirement for plot 43 to deliver a safe and satisfactory highway layout – this is covered in more detail in the evidence of Mr Colley.

6.13 In response to 3., as indicated in paragraphs 4.4 and 6.4, the CPO Scheme is required to deliver the stated benefits of the Darlington Station Improvements, given the holistic nature of the proposals – removing one or more of the elements listed in paragraph 4.1 would compromise the delivery of the anticipated benefits.

6.14 In response to 5. and 10., the detailed analysis of the quantitative and qualitative benefits of the Darlington Station Improvements set out in the OBC and reinforced in the UBC clearly show a significant level of benefit, both for rail users and the local community. Tables 5.1, 5.2 and 5.3 both show a high level of quantitative and qualitative benefits arising from the Darlington Station Improvements, of which the CPO Land and the CPO Scheme are a fundamental part. The neighbourhood and social benefits specifically relating to the Darlington Station Gateway elements are identified in Section 5 of this evidence and set out in Table 5.2.

6.15 In response to 6., two of the criteria used to assess the benefits of transport schemes are "Safety" and "Access to the Transport System", and in both cases, improvements to the appearance of an area such as those planned through the Darlington Station Gateway are said to have positive benefits in the qualitative analysis required by the DfT. This is re-inforced by the social benefits summarised in Table 5.2.

6.16 Therefore, it is considered that this matter of objection is not valid.

Objection No 8, Plots 27 and 28 (Dewton Ltd)

6.17 This objection notes that:

- 1. Insufficient information has been provided to enable a proper understanding of why the land has been included in the CPO; and
- 2. No evidence to demonstrate the advantage in using the objector's land as opposed to alternative sites.

6.18 In response to 1., as indicated in paragraphs 4.4 and 6.4, the CPO Scheme is required to deliver the stated benefits of the Darlington Station Improvements, given the holistic nature of the proposals – removing one or more of the elements listed in paragraph 4.1 would compromise the delivery of the anticipated benefits.

6.19 In response to 2., a thorough option assessment process was undertaken as part of the development of the Darlington Station Improvements and this process is summarised in Section 3 of this evidence. Alternative locations were considered for a number of elements, but with specific reference to plots 27 and 28, the following is pertinent:

- The location of the proposed new station footbridge (sited within plot 27) is determined by the use of the existing roof structure of the listed existing station building and the requirement to provide as direct a connection as possible through to the portico on the western side. The work undertaken for the Masterplan in 2016 considered a number of alternative locations for a new footbridge and determined that this was the most appropriate. This is covered in more detail in the evidence of Mr Dodd.

- Land in plots 27 and 28 is required to provide access to, and to facilitate, the new MSCP, which itself is required to replace existing parking provision that would be lost to accommodate the new platforms and operational railway. It is considered preferable to provide access to/from the new MSCP from a re-aligned Garbutt Square in order to avoid conflicts between motorised vehicles and pedestrians/cyclist in front of the new station entrance and to prioritise active travel and public transport connections, as well as improved public realm, in front of the new station entrance. This is covered in more detail in the evidence of Messrs Colley and Dodd.

6.20 Therefore, it is considered that this matter of objection is not valid.

7 Conclusion

7.1 I have reviewed the objections to the proposal in relation to the business cases prepared in support of the Darlington Station Improvements and, in my view, they are not valid for the following reasons:

- A comprehensive analysis of quantified and qualitative economic, social and environmental impacts of the Darlington Station Improvements, of which the CPO Land and CPO Scheme are a fundamental part, has been undertaken in accord with the relevant guidance at the time and clearly set out in both the OBC and the UBC. The benefits of the Darlington Station Gateway elements are therefore very clear and have been re-iterated in this evidence.

- The work undertaken to develop the Darlington Station Improvements to this point has followed a rigorous option assessment process that accords with the requirements of the DfT and Network Rail, meaning that all of the land identified within the CPO Scheme is required in order to deliver the significant quantitative and qualitative benefits that will result from the CPO Scheme, as well as the wider benefits arising from the Darlington Station Improvements. Removing one or more of the elements of the scheme would compromise the delivery of the anticipated benefits.

7.2 The Inspector is therefore respectfully requested to confirm the CPO on the basis that the land identified as being required is necessary to facilitate the Darlington Station Improvements and the clear economic, social and environmental benefits that will result from its implementation.

8 Declaration

8.1 I confirm that I have made clear which facts and matters referred to in this proof of evidence are within my own knowledge and which are not. Those that are within my own knowledge I confirm to be true. The opinions I have expressed represent my true and complete professional opinions on the matters to which they refer and I confirm that I have understood my overriding duty to the Inquiry in this regard.

8.2 I confirm that my evidence includes all facts which I regard as being relevant to the opinions I have expressed and that attention has been drawn to any matter known to me that would affect the validity of those opinions.

8.3 I confirm that my evidence has been prepared, and is given, in accordance with the guidance of my professional institutions.