

Environmental Impact Assessment

Project

A new railway to link the Land Rover Works with the West Coast Main Line

Client

Land Rover

Background

To streamline production of 4WD products, Land Rover began a programme of major re-organisation of its Solihull Works during the late 1990s, including a review of distribution networks in the UK and worldwide. Currently all products and materials use the highway network, an inefficient system which contributes to road congestion and global warming. Studies found that use of the rail network would be both the most economic and least environmentally damaging means of handling components and distributing finished vehicles.

Landmark was commissioned in 2002, to lead the team to produce the Environmental Statement to accompany an application under the Transport and Works Act for authorisation to construct a rail link between the Works and the West Coast Main Line.

Description

Prior to construction Land Rover needed to be assured of both the economic and environmental viability of the new line. The proposed railway would cross 4 kilometres of open countryside designated as Green Belt. Several alternative routes were assessed to identify the one with least impact on local communities and businesses, landscape, nature conservation, archaeology and hydrology. The environmental assessment found that a rail terminal within the Works, linked with the West Coast Main Line, would both improve distribution efficiency and help to remove over 120,000 HGV movements per year from the road network.

Extensive mitigation measures were recommended to reduce noise impacts and ensure compatibility of the railway with the natural landform. Landmark produced and edited the Environmental Statement, also undertaking research into planning, ecology, landscape, recreation and community issues and co-ordinating studies from a wide range of disciplines including rail engineers, and air pollution, traffic and acoustic specialists.

Client benefits

Rigorous Environmental Impact Assessment informs and speeds the decision-making process. The local planning authority recommended approval of the rail link and commended Land Rover for the clarity and objectivity of its' Environmental Statement.



A detailed model was constructed to aid in the route planning process