



Environmental Impact Assessment

Project

A new railway to Royal Portbury Dock

Client

The Bristol Port Company

Background

Royal Portbury Dock, sited on the Severn Estuary at the outfall of the River Avon, is one of the fastest growing ports in the UK. Constructed in the 1970s, the Dock lacks rail infrastructure and relies on the motorway network for inland distribution. Prompted by the UK Government's commitment to sustainable development in the 1998 White Paper "A New Deal for Transport Better for Everyone", the Bristol Port Company examined the feasibility of linking the Port with the national railway network. The feasibility study led to preparation of a planning application and Environmental Impact Assessment, submitted to North Somerset Council. Landmark led the assessment team, and produced the Environmental Statement.

Description

The proposed railway is over 2 kilometres long and will link the Dock with the Bristol to Portishead railway. The route crosses open countryside designated as Green Belt before entering the Port estate. Several alternative routes were assessed to determine the line of least impact on the local community and landscape and on the nearby Severn Estuary, an internationally designated site of nature conservation interest.

Landmark produced and edited the Environmental Statement, researching ecological, landscape and planning issues and co-ordinating studies from a number of disciplines, including rail engineers, air pollution, traffic and acoustic specialists. The Assessment found that the railway would create real environmental benefits, including a reduction of over 91,000 HGV movements per year from the local road network and significant opportunities for habitat creation. Implementation of impact mitigation measures would ensure that no adverse effects would be caused to the Severn Estuary European Site of wildlife value.

Client benefits

A rigorously researched Environmental Statement informs all those involved in project planning, meanwhile enhancing the reputation of the developer and speeding the decision-making process.