

Inspector's Note & Correspondence Re: L&B Appearance at Hearings

Email from James Shorten (representing the Lynton & Barnstable Railway) to the Inspector via Programme Officer. 13 June 2016

F.A.O. the Inspector into the Exmoor Local Plan

Whilst it is understood that normally only objectors to the policies of the plan will be invited to appear at the Hearing, I am writing to you on behalf of the Lynton & Barnstaple Railway to request that in respect of question 5.4 "*Is there justification for the provisions in policies RT-D13 and RT-S2 regarding the reinstatement of the Lynton & Barnstaple railway?*" that you exercise your discretion and allow representatives of the Railway to also appear for this session.

There are unusual and special circumstances in play here.

First, as background, applications relating to Phase IIA of the reinstatement of the Railway, with most of its total length within the National Park, are currently lodged with the National Park Authority for determination. The objectors scheduled to appear at the Hearing, from a single family, are owners of some of the land required to reinstate Phase IIA of the Railway. They are also objecting to the planning applications.

We appreciate that these matters are tangential to the examination of the Plan, however there are many linked issues as the plan policies specifically address the reinstatement of the Railway within the National Park and are therefore a principal consideration in the determination of the planning applications. The applications are extensive and complex and comprise the largest planning proposal ever considered within the National Park.

At earlier stages of the Plan's preparation we did object to some elements of the policies, and amendments were made, such that we decided not to object to the form of the policies now before you.

When considering the soundness of the policies accurate information on the Railway - past, present and the future phases which the policies directly address - is important. It is on this basis which we request to attend - for the most extensive and accurate information on the Railway to be available to you at the hearing from us, the organisation that knows the most about the Railway. We are also concerned that, as there are live undetermined applications, the Authority could be regarded by other parties as compromised or partial were it the only source of information countering the objections (in defence of their policies) at the Hearing. That would not be the case if we also attend and provide information which the Authority would otherwise need to provide.

On this basis we respectfully formally request that we attend the Hearing also. The attendees would be myself, James Shorten the Railway's agent, and Ian Cowling, their Director.

James Shorten
Geo Ltd

Response from Inspector to L&B representative James Shorten of Geo Ltd via Programme Officer. 13 June 2016

Mrs Self

I am prepared to allow representatives of the L&B Railway to attend hearing session 5 on the basis that their specialist knowledge will assist me in determining the soundness of policies RT-D13 and RT-S2.

Thanks

Roger Clews
Inspector