

# Sustainable Development - Short Form Strategy

## Purpose & Scope

The Sustainable Development (SD) strategy is a central framework against which the routes and other operational business areas set/deliver their priorities to enable sustainable and responsible business performance. The SD strategy covers a broad spectrum of issues including:

- Environmental responsibility – effective management of natural resources and waste, noise, disturbance and pollution prevention, environmental protection, land (including biodiversity) and buildings management;
- Social responsibility – being a caring neighbour, keeping communities safe, inspiring tomorrow's workforce, making travel accessible, respecting rail history and heritage, creating engaged employees and positive industry partnerships; and
- Enviro/socio economic responsibility – energy and carbon reduction and income generation, weather resilience and climate change adaptation and creating local socio-economic growth and supporting Britain's wider economic development.

Dependencies include effective management systems framework for each key area (environmental management, social performance management and energy and carbon management in particular) as well as a robust asset management system able to respond to climate change considerations. Planning assumptions are detailed in the 'How we will get to the future' area on following page. The planning horizon here looks to the end of CP6, although some areas covered, such as decarbonisation and climate change adaptation considerations, move well beyond that horizon.

## The Future – Where we want to be

CP6 future planning is reliant on realising the full implementation of improvements identified and delivered in CP5. Delivering this is a baseline requirement for delivering responsible business operations in CP6 and beyond. This is an emerging risk agenda where legislation and expectations of stakeholders (funders/government, lineside neighbours, passengers, and TOCs/FOCs) are likely to be much higher than they are today. Apart from the effective management (including continuous improvement) of the above broad SD focus areas. The key signifiers and expected strategic improvement outcomes from now until the end of CP6 period are:

### **Get the basics right (now to end of CP5)**

- Robust baseline of data to inform decisions;
- Pilot projects, to demonstrate business cases, develop tools and methodologies and deliver benefits;
- Targets set and action plans agreed; and
- Key suppliers engaged to deliver environmental, social and socio/enviro economic benefits.

### **Make efficiencies and avoid surprises (now to end of CP6)**

- Environmental, social and socio/enviro economic aspects integrated in the planning and design stages of work;
- Sustainable Development saving targets met; and
- Network Rail is an active and welcomed member of the local community.

### **Be industry leaders (CP6 and beyond)**

- Going beyond compliance to positively impact the environment - including proactively managing weather and climate change resilience;
- Network Rail known as a leader on environmentally and socially responsible activities within its supply chain community; and
- Local community expectations are exceeded.

## The Present – Where we are now

Currently, this is an immature area. The business gains from managing SD risks are largely unrecognised and, as a result, people are not being held to account on performance and limited resources are allocated. Network Rail's performance is behind its peers and supplier base, the CP5 carbon target does not reflect the level of ambition of the Government in signing the Paris Agreement (under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change) and cost saving opportunities are being missed.

For the rest of CP5 Sustainable Development work is therefore focused on getting the basics right, including: developing a robust baseline of data to inform decisions; better understanding the risks and benefits through pilot projects which build business cases for action; testing methodologies for wider-sharing, and setting targets and action plans. All underpinned by support from STE to integrate sustainability in to existing business processes alongside the development of the frameworks, tools and guidance that the operational business units need in order to drive positive change across environmental, social and enviro/socio economic areas.

## How we will get to the future

Delivery of the Environment and Sustainable Development programme including integrating SD work:

- Delivering the Responsible Railway Plan improvement projects on priority action areas
- Leadership engagement
- Competency assessment/training
- Communication & stakeholder engagement
- Management Systems including environment and social requirements for projects, procurement and operations (integrated within the IMS work-stream)

Priority outcomes and improvement focus areas for Network Rail for CP6 are:

### Managing sustainability impacts in line with industry good business practice

- Compliant to ISO14001 (Environmental Management System) & ISO50001 (Energy Management Standard) as part of the Integrated Management System.

### Protecting and enhancing the environment and reducing our environmental impact

- Non-traction carbon emissions reduced by 25% and energy use reduced by 18% (from CP5 exit baseline).
- Zero waste is sent to landfill (non-hazardous), 90% by weight is recycled or beneficially re-used.
- Major infrastructure projects (above £20m) have a net positive effect on GB biodiversity and all maintenance and renewals activities (above £5,000 or 150 metres in length) require a biodiversity risk assessment and evidence of opportunities taken to maximise biodiversity gain.

### Creating a railway that is resilient to climate change

- Demonstrable improvement in performance on adverse compared to normal weather days from increased asset resilience.

### Delivering social value to local communities, passengers and employees

- All projects over £20m, suppliers and contracts have Social Performance Plans in place, with clear measures and evidence of benefits delivered.

### Building and managing our assets sustainably

- All projects above £20m can demonstrate savings in capital carbon.
- Environment and Social criteria are being used in all renewals, maintenance and new build scopes
- Procurement practice is independently assured as being in line with ISO 20400 (Sustainable Procurement).

## Plan of activities (8-year horizon)

The focus of work in the Sustainable Development arena will be on enabling the priority outcomes outlined above. This will ensure the high priority risks facing the business will be effectively managed and the potential for reputational and regulatory impacts (such as through adverse media attention/prosecution for breaching environmental regulations) will be reduced. Implementation of the Environment and Social Minimum Requirements standards for Design, Construction and Maintenance (compliance date March 2019) and Goods and Services (in development) will go a long way to supporting this work over the course of CP6. Continued engagement across the business to promote sustainability leadership and development of competency and capability will raise the level of environmental and social performance across the board. Development of long-term targets and underpinning strategies to further reduce carbon emissions in line with UK and global commitments will necessitate a major step-change in operational practice and application of new and emerging energy systems and technologies.

Key activities over the next eight years include:

- Make environmental management part of the Integrated Management System compliant to ISO14001 and support the business to manage resource consumption, responsible sourcing and better management of lineside habitat to reduce ecological surprises.
- Include social performance management in the Integrated Management System to improve reputation, manage our impact on lineside neighbours, maximize opportunities for socio-economic growth and invest in local communities through our employee volunteering programme.
- Deliver energy & carbon strategies to enable business units to implement efficiency programmes to reduce energy costs, capital carbon, generate income and reduce carbon footprint and implement an energy management system.
- Deliver a weather resilience and climate change adaptation action plan – enhance asset and infrastructure resilience to current and future weather conditions and streamline preparation for, response to, and recovery from extreme weather events.
- Drive environment and sustainability awareness through leadership training, competence development and awareness campaigns.

In addition to the work outlined above, national projects that will most effectively help us to responsibly manage our natural environment and add social value to the communities we serve and help us achieve our vision of a “Railway Fit for the Future” will be included in the Responsible Railway Plan (RRP).

## Material changes in this version

- Local dependency map, Continuous Improvements and Related Documents sections updated
- Minor phrasing changes to priority outcomes for CP6 (intent unchanged)
- Update to 8-year horizon plan of activities
- Minor text amendments

## Continuous improvement

This strategy and work is reviewed and improvements implemented through the following groups and plans:

- Environment Improvement Group
- Social Performance Improvement Group
- Energy Management Steering Group
- Weather Resilience Group
- QHSE Integration Group
- Responsible Railway Plan projects

## Related documents

[Environment and Social Policy](#)  
[Rail Sustainable Development Principles](#)  
[Environment and Social Appraisal](#)  
[Environment and Social Management Plan](#)  
[Tools and guidance on Safety Central](#)  
 Responsible Railway Plan