

## Maintenance of bus stop and locality datasets

### Department for Transport

RPC rating: **validated**

#### Description of proposal

The National Public Transport Access Nodes dataset is a national dataset containing a record of each bus stop across England, Scotland and Wales, as well as records for rail, metro, ferry and air terminals. It is complemented by the National Public Transport Gazetteer. Both datasets are owned by the Department for Transport but are maintained voluntarily by local transport authorities. They underpin existing journey planning tools such as Traveline, Citymapper and Google. The proposal will give the Secretary of State the power to mandate the maintenance of the datasets in the future, should the voluntary approach no longer be effective.

#### Impacts of proposal

The Department explains that the responsibility for maintaining the datasets will fall either on local authorities or bus operators. It does not expect there to be a hybrid system where both parties fulfil this duty. The impact assessment explains that the maintenance of the datasets is very likely to remain the responsibility of the local transport authorities. In that case, there would be no impact on business. However, the Department explains that it possible, but unlikely, that the requirement to maintain the datasets could fall on public transport operators in the future, should this become necessary.

Should the requirement fall on business, the Department estimates that 835 private sector operators would face familiarisation costs of around £40,000 in total. In addition, it estimates that these businesses would face ongoing costs of between £87,000 and £114,000 in total. This is based on evidence from local authorities concerning the costs they currently incur in maintaining the datasets.

The Department has identified a number of potential benefits (compared to a counterfactual where the datasets were no longer available) but has not been able to monetise them. Benefits include: improved journey information; simpler journeys; increased revenue for bus operators; and improved environmental and congestion impacts.

In accordance with the better regulation framework manual, the estimated equivalent annual net direct cost to business (EANDCB) is based on the most likely scenario,

whereby all costs fall on local government. The RPC verifies that this is a qualifying regulatory provision with an estimated EANDCB of zero.

### Quality of submission

The Department has correctly scored the impacts in accordance with the guidance contained in the better regulation framework manual. It is pleasing that the IA has explored the wider impacts of the measure. However, the IA would have benefitted from exploring in more detail the potential risk of the current voluntary arrangements ending. It would also have benefitted from assessing more fully the likelihood of the proposal having impact on business, although this impact would be small. The Department has indicated that the secondary legislation will specify who should provide the information. This should have been set out in the IA. If any costs are imposed on business at secondary legislation stage, these should be scored against the business impact target.

The IA would also have benefitted from presenting further evidence to support the estimated impact on business, even though this would be small. In particular, it could have more clearly set out that the information provided purely relates to the location of bus stops.

The IA could also have set out a stronger rationale for the policy, in particular the consequences of the datasets no longer being maintained. The Department has subsequently indicated that the data is essential for journey planning purposes and that at least one area has previously stopped maintaining the data. This information should have been included in the IA.

This is a fast track proposal so a small and micro business assessment is not required. Nonetheless the assessment would have benefitted from exploring exemption and mitigation options for small and micro businesses in the event that any costs fall on business.

### Departmental assessment

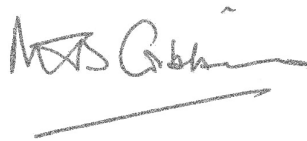
Classification	Qualifying regulatory provision
Equivalent annual net direct cost to business (EANDCB)	Zero
Business net present value	Zero

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Societal net present value	Not quantified
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**RPC assessment**

Classification	Qualifying regulatory provision
EANDCB – RPC validated	Zero
Business impact target (BIT) Score	Zero
Small and micro business assessment	Not required (fast track low-cost regulation)



**Michael Gibbons CBE**, Chairman