



Meeting note

File reference	A1 Alnwick to Ellingham
Status	Final
Author	Robert Ranger
Date	28 September 2017
Meeting with	Highways England (HE)
Venue	Temple Quay House
Attendees	Highways England (HE) Ellie Briggs (WSP Stakeholder Manager) (telephone) Anita Coppelstone (WSP DCO Lead) Jo Mahoney (HE Project Manager) (telephone) David Morrow (WSP Project Manager) Kevin Stubbs (WSP Environment) The Planning Inspectorate (the Inspectorate) Helen Lancaster – Senior EIA and Land Rights Advisor Gareth Leigh – Infrastructure Planning Lead Robert Ranger – Case Manager
Meeting objectives	Inception Meeting for A1 Alnwick to Ellingham scheme
Circulation	All

Summary of key points discussed and advice given:

The Planning Inspectorate explained the duties placed upon it under section 51 of the Planning Act 2008 (as amended) (the PA2008). A note of the meeting would be taken recording the key points discussed and any advice issued by the Planning Inspectorate. The note would be published on the Planning Inspectorate's website. Any advice issued by the Planning Inspectorate would not constitute legal advice upon which the Applicant, or others, could rely.

HE briefly described the scheme. The A1 Alnwick to Ellingham is the second section of a scheme described in the Road Investment Strategy, the dualling of the A1 in Northumberland. The A1 Alnwick to Ellingham project is some 10 miles distant from the A1 Morpeth to Felton, which is the first section of the overall scheme, separated by an existing dual carriageway section.

The A1 Alnwick to Ellingham project is some 8km or 5 miles long, and constitutes the dualling of currently single-carriageway road. It also incorporates an accommodation bridge for farm use and non-motorised users at Broxfield, and a complex junction at South Charlton.

The overall scheme has a March 2020 start of works target. Each of the two sections will be the subject of a separate application for a DCO.

Consultation on the A1 Alnwick to Ellingham took place in December 2016, with a preferred route for the overall scheme announced in September 2017. A scoping request for the A1 Morpeth to Felton project is expected at the end of October 2017. The Inspectorate advised that a shape file be submitted at least 10 days in advance of a scoping request, and that a project page on the National Infrastructure Planning website will need to be set up for the project.

The Inspectorate asked if HE had arranged the access to land necessary for surveys. HE confirmed that access was being achieved by agreement with landowners. The Inspectorate advised that any application for access to land via section 53 of the Planning Act could take several months to consider.

HE explained that the principle driver of the scheme is economic growth. There are no exceptional congestion issues on the A1 Alnwick to Ellingham, although there is a high proportion of HGVs; and a large number of side roads, a reduction in which will bring safety benefits.

HE provided an overview of the complexities of the project.

HE explained that they consider the project to be EIA development.

HE do not expect the project to have any effects on European sites or SSSI's. The closest designated site is a Local Nature Reserve at 1.5km distant. There are no anticipated protected species issues. There is an undesignated barrow and 3 areas of ridge and furrow that may be affected, but no scheduled monuments.

There is an area of high landscape value nearby and likely significant effects on landscape. The use of low-noise surfacing is likely to result in long-term noise benefits, but there are likely to be significant noise effects on nearby properties during construction.

There are no Air Quality Management Areas near the project, and no anticipated air quality impacts.

There are 15 public rights of way that are likely to need to be stopped up or diverted, and the project will require some 16 hectares of grade 3 agricultural land. There are no anticipated water quality issues.

In response to a question from the Inspectorate, HE confirmed that the total construction period was anticipated to be about 18 months.

HE explained that there is no identified National Trust or Crown land affected by the project. The land is predominantly farmland.

In response to a question from the Inspectorate, HE confirmed that proposals for alternative access routes will be included in the DCO as associated development.

The Inspectorate asked if the traffic model was being discussed with Northumberland Council, and HE confirmed that it was.

The Inspectorate asked if there was any anticipated consultation overlap. HE confirmed that the consultation for each project within the overall scheme is being handled entirely separately.

HE confirmed that they would be following the 2017 EIA regulations, because a screening (in this case internal) did not trigger the transitional provisions. The Inspectorate advised that this was the correct approach.

HE asked about the presentation of technical supporting information in the Environmental Statement. The Inspectorate advised that this was a matter for the applicant, but supporting an assessment with technical appendices is the normal approach.