

## Planning Act 2008

# DCO Application for A1 Birtley to Coal House Improvements

## Introduction

Royal Mail Group Limited (Royal Mail) hereby wishes to notify the Examining Authority under section 89(2A) b of the Planning Act 2008 that Royal Mail is to become an Interested Party to the Examination into A1 Birtley to Coal House Improvements.

Relevant information and Royal Mail's position on the DCO application for A1 Birtley to Coal House Improvements is summarised below.

## Statutory and operational information about Royal Mail

Under section 35 of the Postal Services Act 2011 (the "Act"), Royal Mail has been designated by Ofcom as a provider of the Universal Postal Service. Royal Mail is the only such provider in the United Kingdom.

The Act provides that Ofcom's primary regulatory duty is to secure the provision of the Universal Postal Service. Ofcom discharges this duty by imposing regulatory conditions on Royal Mail, requiring it to provide the Universal Postal Service.

The Act includes a set of minimum standards for Universal Service Providers, which Ofcom must secure. The conditions imposed by Ofcom reflect those standards.

Royal Mail is under some of the highest specification performance obligations for quality of service in Europe. Its performance of the Universal Service Provider obligations is in the public interest and this should not be affected detrimentally by any statutorily authorised project.

The Government imposes financial penalties on Royal Mail if its Universal Service Obligation service delivery targets are not met. These penalties relate to time targets for:

- collections,
- clearance through plant, and
- delivery.

Royal Mail's postal sorting and delivery operations rely heavily on road communications. Royal Mail's ability to provide efficient mail collection, sorting and delivery to the public is sensitive to changes in the capacity of the highway network.

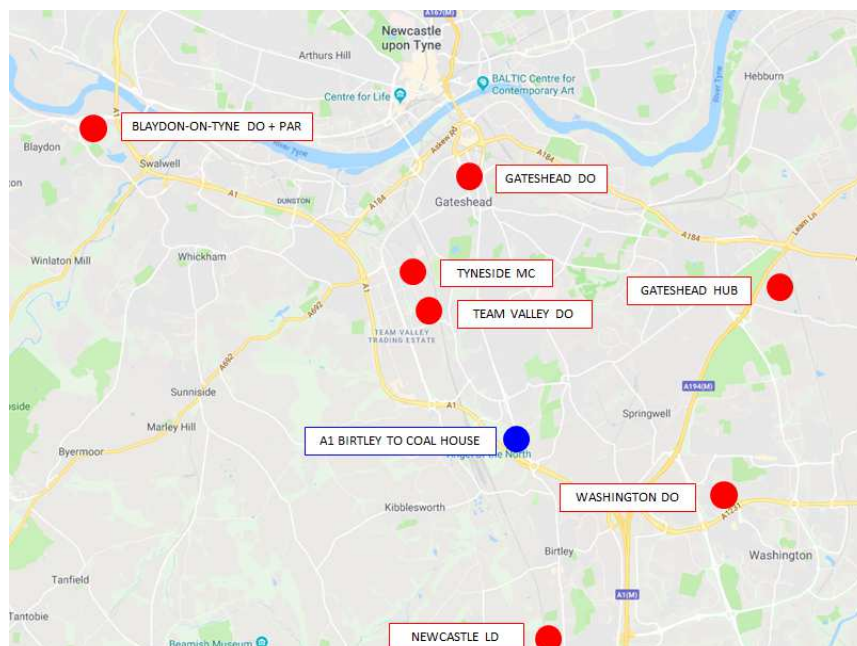
Royal Mail is a major road user nationally. Disruption to the highway network and traffic delays can have direct consequences on Royal Mail's operations, its ability to meet the Universal Service Obligation and comply with the regulatory regime for postal services thereby presenting a significant risk to Royal Mail's business.

## Affected Properties

This section of the A1 is a highly important strategic distribution route for Royal Mail operational traffic running between its various operational depots in the surrounding area, the locations of which are shown below:

BE 3270	Team Valley DO	Station Approach, Gateshead, NE11 0UE	2.6 miles
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BE 2772	Tyneside MC	Lindisfarne House Earlsway, Gateshead, NE11 0YY	3.3 miles
BE 2766	Gateshead DO	High West Street, Gateshead, NE8 1PD	4.7 miles
BE 2765	Washington DO	Windlass Lane, Washington, NE37 1BL	5.5 miles
BE 3881	Newcastle LD	Unit 3 Drum Ind Estate, Durham Road, Chester Le Street, DH2 1AE	5.7 miles
BE 3456	Gateshead HUB	Unit 15a Follingsby Avenue, Gateshead, NE10 8YF	6.4 miles
BE 2767	Blaydon-on-Tyne DO	Cowen Road, Blaydon-on-Tyne, NE21 5DD	7.4 miles
BE 4119	Blaydon-on-Tyne PAR	Cowen Road, Blaydon-on-Tyne, NE21 5TW	7.6 miles



## Operations

Every day, in exercising its statutory duties Royal Mail vehicles use all the main roads that may potentially be affected by additional traffic arising from the construction of this improvement stage. Any periods of road disruption / closure, night or day, have the potential to impact operations.

## Royal Mail's position on A1 Birtley to Coal House Improvements

Royal Mail supports the improvement scheme. However, Royal Mail wishes to ensure the protection of its future ability to provide an efficient mail sorting and delivering service to the public in accordance with its statutory obligations that may be adversely affected by the construction of this proposed scheme.

Royal Mail requests that the final DCO includes a specific requirements that that:

1. The forthcoming DCO application offers a requirement that Royal Mail is pre-consulted by Highways England on any proposed road closures/ diversions/ alternative access arrangements, hours of working and the content of the final CTMP. As well as, where possible provide potential alternative access arrangements for impacted Royal Mail sites and other business road users.

2. The forthcoming DCO application offers a requirement that the final CTMP includes provision for a mechanism to inform major road users about works affecting the local network (with particular regard to Royal Mail's distribution facilities in the area surrounding the DCO application site).

Royal Mail reserves its position to object to the DCO application if the above requests are not adequately addressed.

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