

PINS Ref: TR010059

The Planning Inspectorate
Major Applications and Plans
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Lateral
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Date: 10 December 2020

Dear Sir or Madam

A1 in Northumberland: Morpeth to Ellingham

Procedural Deadline A

Please find below a response submitted by Highways England (the “Applicant”) to the Planning Inspectorate (the “Inspectorate”) for Procedural Deadline A of the Examination for A1 in Northumberland: Morpeth to Ellingham (the “Scheme”). This is in accordance with the request set out by the Examining Authority (the “ExA”) in the Rule 6 letter (Infrastructure Planning (Examination Procedure) Rules 2010) dated 19 November 2020.

Preliminary Meeting Participants

The following participants will be attending the Preliminary Meeting on behalf of the Applicant:

- Howard Bassford, DLA Piper
- Michael Greig, DLA Piper
- Mark Stoneman, the Applicant
- Kevin Stubbs, Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) specialist
- David Morrow, Highways Engineer

Written Submissions on Examination Procedure

The Applicant requests that the ExA reconsiders the proximity of Deadlines 1, 2 and 3 in the Examination timetable. The Applicant has discussed the timetable with Northumberland County Council and both parties submit that due to the large volume of documents to be submitted at those deadlines it is unrealistic for parties to respond to submissions within the time period proposed.

The Applicant proposes that Deadline 1 be moved to 18 January 2021, Deadline 2 be moved to 3 February 2021 and Deadline 3 be moved to 18 February 2021.

Proposed Change Request

The Applicant proposes to submit a request for three changes to be made to the Application in order to accommodate changes to the Scheme as follows:

1. Changes to temporary and permanent earthworks within the Order limits along both Part A (between Morpeth and Felton) and Part B (between Alnwick and Ellingham) in order to reduce earthwork movement. These changes are an extension to Parameters 4 and 5 for Part A, as set out in Chapter 2: The Scheme of the Environmental Statement (ES) [APP-037]. There would also be additional temporary and permanent earthworks. These changes to the earthworks strategy would not involve additional land and it is not considered that there would be any new or changed environmental impacts.
2. Stabilisation of the north bank of the River Coquet in order to stabilise the proposed bridge and existing bridge within Part A. The stabilisation works would include the installation of piles in the north bank of the River Coquet and the installation of erosion protection measures on the river bank. Land outside the Order limits would temporarily be required as a working area for the installation of the piles and access to works, as well as for the carrying out of the erosion protection measures. As the installation works would lead to the loss of woodland within the Coquet River Felton Park Local Wildlife Site (LWS), there may also be a requirement for additional compensatory habitat outside the Order limits.
3. Provision of a temporary access to the south bank of the River Coquet by crossing the river from the temporary works on the northern bank. It is anticipated that this would result in improved environmental performance in terms of access that would otherwise be provided from the South bank itself. The engineering solution for such a crossing is to use of a temporary bridge to span over the river. It is anticipated that there would also be some temporary river training works along each riverbank and additional erosion measures on the southern bank. Additional temporary rights would be required for the installation of the temporary bridge.

In line with Advice Note 16, the Applicant is therefore writing to give notice of the intention to make the change request. Further details of the proposed changes, the reasons for making them and the Applicant's proposed approach to dealing with them is set out in the enclosed report. As the first proposed change would not involve additional land or result in different environmental impacts, the Applicant does not consider that this would constitute a material change to the Application. The other two proposed changes would, however, involve additional land, and would therefore be material changes.

Noise and Vibration Re-assessment

An addendum (the 'Noise Addendum') to the Environmental Statement (ES) will be submitted at Deadline 1, which will include an updated operational stage noise assessment of the Scheme. The primary reason for the noise re-assessment is due to a change in the proposed Scheme opening year since the EIA was carried out and also to take account of updated national guidance. The enclosed report provides a summary of the proposed approach.

The Applicant would welcome the opportunity to discuss these points further with the ExA at the Preliminary Meeting on 15 December 2020.

Yours sincerely,



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