

From: Miller, Michael [REDACTED]
Sent: 18 December 2020 12:53
To: A1 in Northumberland: Morpeth to Ellingham
<A1inNorthumberland@planninginspectorate.gov.uk>
Cc: Courage, Cara [REDACTED] Cussen, Bob
<[REDACTED]> Whitehead, Andrew
<[REDACTED]>
Subject: A1 Northumberland. Morpeth- Ellingham Part B Examination representation.

Dear Sir/Madam,

I write on behalf of Natural England following recent discussion regarding changes to the proposed scheme within Part B of the A1 upgrades in Northumberland.

I write to highlight concerns with alterations to the scheme.

Our main concerns relate to the proposed changes relating to the in the bridge design set out in Highways England's document titled A1 in Northumberland: Morpeth to Ellingham, Scheme No. TR010059 – Summary of Proposed Changes to Application. Natural England's main concerns relate to the following design changes:

- Alteration of the location of the southern pier of the bridge potentially move it 2m closer to the river's edge which will increase the structures impact on flow dynamics during high flow events.
- The addition of a considerable length of bank protection (possibly rock armour although other solutions will be looked at) on the north bank of the river to address the risk of fluvial erosion and instability of the sloping land north of the riverbank.
- The addition of rock armour on the southern bank of the river for erosion control purposes where it is not clear where any significant erosion exists.
- Use of river training and a temporary bridge from the north to the south side of the river for approximately 15 months.

Natural England's main concerns relate to both the permanent loss of riverbank associated with the proposed areas of rock armouring and the impacts that this may have on the fluvial geomorphology of this relatively unmodified section of the river. All of the proposed works fall within the River Coquet and Coquet Valley Woodlands SSSI which is notified for both woodland and river interest features, the latter of which cover both the form and function of the bed and banks of the river. As the proposed permanent use of bank protection on this reach would destroy/severely damage the bank habitat and geomorphological process, the loss of these elements of the sites interest features would require suitable compensation elsewhere on the river system.

While the use of the temporary bridge (last bullet point above) will negatively impact on the SSSI, Natural England accepts that the impacts of this will largely be temporary in nature and we acknowledge that it's use would potentially reduce the need for a larger permanent foot print on the south bank of the river. Overall we concur this would result in a reduction of works required within the ancient and semi-natural woodland interest feature of the SSSI on the south side of the river.

In conclusion, Natural England are of the opinion that these changes to the crossing over the river constitute significant changes to the scheme which have the potential to have significant impacts on the designated sites at the River Coquet.

If you have any further questions regarding this issue, please do not hesitate to contact me on the details below.

Regards

Michael Miller

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