

# A1 in Northumberland: Morpeth to Ellingham

**Scheme Number: TR010059**

**LV.3 Response to WQ LV.1.13**

APFP Regulation Rule 8(1)(b)

Planning Act 2008

Infrastructure Planning (Applications: Prescribed  
Forms and Procedure) Regulations 2009

Infrastructure Planning

Planning Act 2008

**The Infrastructure Planning  
(Applications: Prescribed Forms  
and Procedure) Regulations 2009**

**The A1 in Northumberland: Morpeth to  
Ellingham**  
Development Consent Order 20[xx]

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**Response to WQ LV.1.13**

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<b>Author:</b>	A1 in Northumberland: Morpeth to Ellingham Project Team, Highways England

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## 1 RESPONSE TO WRITTEN QUESTION LV.1.13

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- 1.1.1. The Applicant has reviewed the findings of the assessment as outlined in **Chapter 7: Landscape and Visual Part A** of the ES [APP-044], supported with **Figure 7.6 Visual Effects Drawings Residential Properties Part A [APP-093]**, and the mitigation set out on **Figure 7.8: Landscape Mitigation Masterplan Part A [APP-095]**. The potential additional mitigation measures are outlined below, and consideration is given as to their suitability and the prospect of potentially reducing the significant effects to non-significant:

### **R35 The Cottage (Figure 7.6 Visual Effects Drawings Residential Properties Part A [APP-093] – sheet 5 of 6)**

- 1.1.2. Impacts would arise on this receptor due to the presence of the proposed West Moor Junction in close proximity (less than 10m) , comprising changes arising adjacent to the curtilage of the property (refer to Work No 16D on **Works Plans [APP-007]**), to the receptor and the requirement for the vertical and horizontal realignment West Moor Road. Due to the close proximity to the property itself, the options to identify additional mitigation measures are reduced. Whilst in theory, additional planting could be used as mitigation, and this would need to be immediately adjacent to the building, and large trees could not be planted so close to the building or the highway, therefore in practice there is insufficient space here to deliver this. The planting of large trees would potentially lead to structural issues associated with root damage or loss of light. Whilst additional shrub planting could partially reduce the view of the realigned road, and the edge of the West Moor Junction, the effect would be to also reduce light reaching the north facing elevation of the single storey property; there would be a similar impact were a screen fence to be proposed. Furthermore, additional features within the verge immediately to the north of the property would reduce visibility from its entrance onto the local road which could pose a safety issue for vehicles pulling out of the entrance onto West Moor Road.
- 1.1.3. North of the realigned local road, it would be possible to extend the planting associated with the western facing embankment slope to form a broader belt of shrubs that would reduce views to the north and the western edge of the West Moor Junction, however this would have the negative effect of reducing the open views to the north of the open countryside. The provision of a broader belt of shrubs would potentially reduce the impact of the main components of the West Moor Junction, although it would not screen the realigned local road, and the open aspect to the north would be lost, which would represent a negative effect. Whilst the impacts would be reduced by the creation of the wider belt of planting, the negative impact of the loss of open aspects would, on balance, not change the findings of **moderate adverse (significant)** effects.

### **R36 West Moor House (Figure 7.6 Visual Effects Drawings Residential Properties Part A [APP-093] – sheet 5 of 6)**

- 1.1.4. For the reasons outlined above, which include the distance of the proposed changes to West Moor Road and distance to R35 The Cottage (less than 10m) (refer to Work No 16D

on **Works Plans [APP-007]**), it is not feasible to identify additional mitigation measures (in the form of additional planting) for receptor R35 that would also reduce the effects for R36, there being insufficient room to provide trees and shrubs between R36 (and specifically R35) and the proposed works. Furthermore, if planting was provided, this would result in the loss of the open aspect to the north. The proposed additional mitigation measures would therefore not change the findings of **moderate adverse (significant)** effects.

#### **R37 West Moor House (4 properties) (Figure 7.6 Visual Effects Drawings Residential Properties Part A [APP-093] – sheet 5 of 6)**

- 1.1.5. Impacts would arise on this receptor due to the presence of the proposed works (refer to Work No 16D on **Works Plans [APP-007]**) associated with the West Moor Junction in relatively close proximity (less than 10m to the property boundary) to the receptors to the east, and the requirement for the realignment and the elevation of the vertical alignment of the local road. Impacts would arise primarily as a result of the loss of roadside vegetation, and the presence of the West Moor Junction to the east. Proposed mitigation measures comprise the replacement of the roadside hedgerow and individual trees, which in the design year (2038) would reduce awareness of the West Moor Junction and replace the existing highway elements, including earth embankments and traffic movements. The potential remains for the hedgerow and individual trees to be broadened in width to form a narrow belt of shrubs and trees, which in views to the east would further reduce awareness of the West Moor Junction. However, in establishing this denser belt of planting, views northwards from the four receptors, that incorporates open countryside would be screened and the sense of openness would be lost. The provision of a broader belt of shrubs would potentially reduce the impact of the main components of the West Moor Junction, although it would not screen the realigned local road, and the open aspect to the north would be lost, which would represent a negative effect. Whilst the impacts would be reduced by the creation of the wider belt of planting, the negative impact of the loss of open aspects would, on balance, not change the findings of **moderate adverse (significant)** effects.

#### **R58 Joiners Cottage/R59 The Bungalow (Figure 7.6 Visual Effects Drawings Residential Properties Part A [APP-093] – sheet 3 of 6)**

- 1.1.6. These two receptors lie in a shallow hollow in the Causey Park hamlet, and both have west facing elevations towards the Scheme. The Scheme (refer to Work No 1A and 2B, and 11D on **Works Plans [APP-007]**) would be passing approximately 100m to the west on a slight embankment, with a noise barrier at the top of the embankment, however an attenuation basin, and access road (refer to Work No 11D on **Works Plans [APP-007]**) would be constructed closer than this, the pond being approximately 50m distant. Currently proposed mitigation measures in the form of hedgerows and individual trees would be planted alongside the Scheme at the foot of the embankment, as such, and in the design year 15, the view of the embankment and noise barrier would be interrupted by the maturing trees, whilst traffic movements on the A1 would be substantially screened by the noise barrier. The **moderate adverse (significant)** effect would arise as a result of the presence of

engineered slopes, the noise barrier and the loss of the broader views of open countryside to the west.

- 1.1.7. Additional mitigation measures might comprise further planting to reinforce the screening capacity of the proposed hedgerow to form a linear belt of shrubs and trees, connecting to the existing waterside trees that follow the local watercourse that runs through Causey Bridge. This would have the effect of reducing any remaining views of the embankment and noise barrier, but would not alter the fact that the broader views of the open countryside to the west would be screened entirely by the Scheme. Alternatives of earthworks or false cutting would draw the slopes closer to the receptors and would result in the effect of foreshortening the view. Furthermore, to screen the noise barrier and the traffic movements beyond, would require a substantial earthwork, which in the intervening ground would reduce the capacity to deliver the required drainage attenuation measures.
- 1.1.8. A screen fence on the property boundary would substantially reduce awareness of the Scheme to the west, however, this would further reduce views of the countryside, albeit impacted by the Scheme to the west.
- 1.1.9. As outlined above, several additional measures could be implemented to further reduce the effect on the occupants of these receptors. However, the only measure that may warrant further consideration would be further planting between the drainage attenuation feature and the embankment to the elevated road. Despite this the final effect in the design year 15 (2038) would likely remain **moderate adverse (significant)** as the loss of the open views of the countryside to the west would still be represent a significant effect.

#### **R68 Tindale Hill (Figure 7.6 Visual Effects Drawings Residential Properties Part A [APP-093] – sheet 3 of 6)**

- 1.1.10. The receptor is located on the crest of a low hill, and the occupants would have some existing views approximately 150m distance to the north and northwest, within which the Scheme, comprising Work No 2a, 2B on **Works Plans [APP-007]**) would be a noticeable new feature. Currently proposed mitigation measures, comprising Bunds 10 and 11 and associated woodland, and a hedge (refer to **Figure 7.8 Landscape Mitigation Masterplan Part A [APP-095]**) have been designed to reduce awareness particularly to the northwest, where the carriageway of the Scheme passes the closest within the available views (approximately 150m). Furthermore, measures that comprise screen mounding and woodland planting comprising Bunds 10 and 11 and associated woodland (refer to **Figure 7.8 Landscape Mitigation Masterplan Part A [APP-095]**), which in the design year 15 (2038) would have established and substantially reduce awareness of the Scheme, would also elevate the line of sight beyond the Scheme to the open countryside beyond. Despite this it is expected that awareness of the Scheme would remain to the north due to the slightly elevated position, within which measures to provide screening and integration of the Scheme comprise hedges alongside the top of a shallow cutting.
- 1.1.11. Additional mitigation measures that could be considered might include – extending the proposed woodland associated with bund 10 to the north – strengthening and extending the

screening into the transition of the Scheme into cutting. Furthermore, a more focused planting of hedgerow trees to tie into the woodland between chainages 16300 – 16550, refer to **Figure 7.8 Landscape Mitigation Masterplan Part A [APP-095]**, would reinforce the boundary to the Scheme, although this is not anticipated to provide substantial additional screening. Finally, the removal of the proposed hedge and arable field margin grassland between the above chainages, would permit a wider belt of trees and shrubs that tie the woodland associated with bund 10 and 11 refer to **Figure 7.8 Landscape Mitigation Masterplan Part A [APP-095]** (sheets 8 and 9). These measures would marginally reduce the degree to which features of the road would be visible, nevertheless, the presence of a new large infrastructure corridor within what are existing far reaching views of open countryside would not significantly reduce the magnitude of impact and resulting significant effect and the **moderate adverse (significant)** effect would remain.

#### **R70 Earsdon Moor Farm (Figure 7.6 Visual Effects Drawings Residential Properties Part A [APP-093] – sheet 3 of 6)**

- 1.1.12. Views from the receptor are comparable to the above R68 receptor, but the occupants would have slightly more elevated views approximately 400m to the west and south west to the Scheme, comprising Work No 2a, 2B and the northern extents of 9E on **Works Plans [APP-007]**, with far reaching views of open countryside beyond. Views of the Scheme would arise as it emerges from a slight cutting, along the top of which is proposed a hedgerow with trees along the eastern side of the Scheme, to raise the line of sight beyond.
- 1.1.13. Options to provide additional mitigation could be focused on the planting of additional trees within the hedgerow between chainage 15140 - 15920, refer to **Figure 7.8 Landscape Mitigation Masterplan Part A [APP-095]**, which as the tree planting is indicative could be achieved at the detailed design stage. A further alternative would be the removal of the proposed hedge and arable field margin grassland between the above chainages. This would permit a wider belt of trees and shrubs that tie the woodland north of the Fenrother Junction with the southern tip of woodland associated with bund 10, refer to **Figure 7.8 Landscape Mitigation Masterplan Part A [APP-095]** (sheets 8). This would however result in a strong linear woodland across a significant proportion of the view within what is currently a relatively open and unwooded landscape and this would appear at odds with the existing landscape.
- 1.1.14. Finally, the option remains to provide a screen fence on the boundary of the property which for the single storey property would screen views of the attractive open countryside to the west and south west for its occupants. It is considered that this would substantially and negatively impact the views experienced and would result in an effect greater than that currently predicted to arise.
- 1.1.15. The reinforcement of the proposed hedgerow with frequent hedgerow trees, that would interrupt views of traffic movements, would remain the appropriate solution. Despite this, the presence of the Scheme within slightly elevated views and across a substantial proportion of the view would remain noticeable, which on a receptor that is considered to be highly



sensitive to development of this type would still result in a **moderate adverse (significant)** effect.

**R71 Portland House/R72 Welbeck House (2 properties) (Figure 7.6 Visual Effects Drawings Residential Properties Part A [APP-093] – sheet 3 of 6)**

- 1.1.16. These are set immediately adjacent to the A1, with west and south elevations having existing views of the A1 immediately adjacent, and the occupants of both having an existing awareness of traffic in close proximity to the dwelling.
- 1.1.17. The Scheme would require a new link road to be constructed to tie into the existing A1 comprising Work No 9I, 10A and 10B on **Works Plans [APP-007]**, that are within 10m of the property boundary, and which extend to the west to tie into the proposed Fenrother Junction.
- 1.1.18. Options to provide additional mitigation, over and above the existing hedges proposed either side of the local road diversions (Work No 9I and 10B on **Works Plans [APP-007]**), are indicated on **Figure 7.8: Landscape Mitigation Masterplan Part A [APP-095]** are limited due to the intervening distance and lack of suitable space within which additional planting could be provided. Increased frequency of trees within the proposed hedge on the western side of the A1 diversion would provide some additional screening of the Fenrother Junction in the distance, however the key features of the view in the immediate context would not be changed, and the **moderate adverse (significant)** effect would be unchanged.

**R93 Strafford House (Figure 7.6 Visual Effects Drawings Residential Properties Part A [APP-093] – sheet 2 of 6)**

- 1.1.19. Strafford House (R93) is located immediately adjacent to the A1, and the access drive, which will be stopped up, currently opens directly to the road. The requirement to provide a new access drive (comprising Work No 8J on **Works Plans [APP-007]**) would require existing trees and shrubs, that currently provide a visual screen to be partially removed, exposing the external spaces and north facing elevation to newly exposed views of the A1 and the access drive.
- 1.1.20. Key to reducing potential effects is the retention of as much of the existing vegetation as is possible, however in addition there is a proposed 2m screen fence that would be erected between the A1 and the access drive, which would provide some visual screening from external spaces at ground level.
- 1.1.21. Additional mitigation measures would be challenging to include at this location due to the very limited space available within which additional planting could be provided. It might be feasible to provide a more densely arranged line of trees within the verge, however this may be subject to further design constraints during the detailed design phase as a result of structural constraints such as drainage infrastructure or the need for visibility splays. Nevertheless, the loss of existing mature tree cover would remain a noticeable loss within the view and awareness of the A1 beyond the access drive and screen fence would likely



remain, therefore the **moderate adverse (significant)** effect is predicted to remain in the design year 15 (2038).

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