

# A1 in Northumberland: Morpeth to Ellingham

**Scheme Number: TR010059**

## **7.6E Statement of Common Ground – Forestry Commission**

Rule 8 (1)(e)

Planning Act 2008

Infrastructure Planning (Examination Procedure) Rules 2010

Infrastructure Planning

Planning Act 2008

**The Infrastructure Planning  
(Examination Procedure) Rules  
2010**

**The A1 in Northumberland: Morpeth to  
Ellingham**

Development Consent Order 20[xx]

---

**Statement of Common Ground – Forestry Commission**

---

<b>Rule Reference:</b>	8(1)(e)
<b>Planning Inspectorate Scheme Reference:</b>	TR010059
<b>Doc Reference:</b>	7.6E
<b>Author:</b>	A1 in Northumberland: Morpeth to Ellingham Project Team, Highways England

<b>Version</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Status of Version</b>
Rev 1	February 2021	Deadline 3

# CONTENTS

---

<b>1</b>	<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1	PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT	1
1.2	PARTIES TO THIS STATEMENT OF COMMON GROUND	1
1.3	TERMINOLOGY	1
<b>2</b>	<b>RECORD OF ENGAGEMENT</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>ISSUES</b>	<b>5</b>

---

## **TABLES**

Table 2-1 - Record of Engagement with the Forestry Commission	4
Table 3-1 - Issues Related to the Whole Scheme	5

# 1 INTRODUCTION

---

## 1.1 PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT

- 1.1.1. This Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) relates to an application made by Highways England (the Applicant) to the Planning Inspectorate (the Inspectorate) under the Planning Act 2008 (the 2008 Act) for a Development Consent Order (DCO). If made, the DCO would grant consent for the A1 in Northumberland, Morpeth to Ellingham (the Scheme). A detailed description of the Scheme can be found in Chapter 2: The Scheme of the Environmental Statement (ES) [APP-037].
- 1.1.2. This SoCG does not seek to replicate information which is available elsewhere within the Application documents. All documents are available on the Inspectorate website:  
<https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/projects/North%20East/A1-in-Northumberland---Morpeth-to-Ellingham/>
- 1.1.3. The SoCG has been produced to confirm to the Examining Authority where agreement has been reached between the parties to it, and where agreement has not yet been reached. SoCGs are an established means in the planning process of allowing all parties to identify and so focus on specific issues that may need to be addressed during the examination.

## 1.2 PARTIES TO THIS STATEMENT OF COMMON GROUND

- 1.2.1. This SoCG has been prepared by (1) Highways England as the Applicant and (2) the Forestry Commission.
- 1.2.2. Highways England became the Government-owned Strategic Highways Company on 1 April 2015. It is the highway authority in England for the strategic road network and has the necessary powers and duties to operate, manage, maintain and enhance the network. Regulatory powers remain with the Secretary of State. The legislation establishing Highways England made provision for all legal rights and obligations of the Highways Agency, including in respect of the Application, to be conferred upon or assumed by Highways England.
- 1.2.3. The Forestry Commission is the government department responsible for protecting, expanding and promoting the sustainable management of woodlands.

## 1.3 TERMINOLOGY

- 1.3.1. In the tables in the Issues chapter of this SoCG, “Not Agreed” indicates a final position, and “Under discussion” where these points will be the subject of on-going discussion wherever possible to resolve, or refine, the extent of disagreement between the parties. “Agreed” indicates where the issue has been resolved.
- 1.3.2. It can be taken that any matters not specifically referred to in the Issues chapter of this SoCG are not of material interest or relevance to the Forestry Commission, and therefore have not been the subject of any discussions between the parties. As such, those matters

can be read as agreed, only to the extent that they are either not of material interest or relevance to the Forestry Commission.

WITHOUT PREJUDICE

## 2 RECORD OF ENGAGEMENT

---

- 2.1.1. A summary of the meetings and correspondence that has taken place between Highways England and the Forestry Commission in relation to the impacts of the Application is outlined in Table 2-1.
- 2.1.2. Discussions have only been held with the Forestry Commission in relation to Ancient Woodland. As there is no Ancient Woodland in close proximity to Part B, engagement with the Forestry Commission was only undertaken in relation to Part A.

WITHOUT PREJUDICE

**Table 2-1 - Record of Engagement with the Forestry Commission**

Date	Form of Correspondence	Key Topics Discussed and Key Outcomes
31/10/18	Meeting with Natural England and the Forestry Commission	<p><b>Key Topics</b></p> <p>The Applicant presented the following points to the Forestry Commission:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Scheme overview as of October 2018 and key design elements;</li> <li>– Overview of arboricultural resource and key receptors; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Duke’s Bank Wood.</li> <li>• High and Medium value features.</li> <li>• Coronation Avenue.</li> </ul> </li> <li>– Overview of arboricultural resource and key receptors;</li> <li>– Ancient woodland salvage and ancient woodland compensation;</li> <li>– Felling licences and other local Forestry Commission interests; and</li> <li>– Ash dieback impacts constraints and licencing.</li> </ul> <p><b>Key Outcomes</b></p> <p><b>Scheme overview and overview of arboricultural resource and receptors</b> - The Forestry Commission consider the partial loss of part of Duke’s Bank Wood undesirable but accept the effects of the Scheme on Duke’s Bank Wood.</p> <p><b>Ancient woodland salvage and ancient woodland compensation</b> – The Forestry Commission have been engaged in compensation as part of the Ancient Woodland Strategy, in particular, the need for a suitable ratio for replacement (confirmed as 12:1) and the need for a management plan was emphasised by the Forestry Commission. This has been addressed within the Ancient Woodland Strategy [APP-247].</p> <p><b>Felling Licence</b> – Presently a felling licence is not expected where trees are removed as part of planning consent, as they are exempt. The likely requirement for a felling licence for the River Coquet GI works was discussed and considered unlikely to be needed due to exemption under planning consent. This was to be confirmed in writing by FC. No response has been received.</p> <p><b>Ash die back impacts, constraints and licencing</b> - Although ash dieback typically presents a significant constraint to soil translocation as it will contain infected material, the Forestry Commission agreed that translocation is desirable, and the risks were low, given the short distance of translocation and mode of infection by Ash dieback. The Ancient Woodland Strategy [APP-247] sets out that suitable biosecurity controls are to be detailed in a Biosecurity Method Statement to be developed at detailed design. This Biosecurity Method Statement would also detail actions to be followed to prevent the spread of ash dieback. Action at detailed design stage - agree a Statutory Plant Health Notice (SPHN) with the Forestry Commission.</p> <p>Completion of a method statement and agreement for a SPHN to enable controlled and biosecure processing and transportation of ash material.</p>
08/02/21	Email from Callum Throw (WSP, on behalf of Highways England) to Jim Smith and Richard Pow of the Forestry Commission.	<p><b>Key Topics</b></p> <p>Callum Throw of WSP (on behalf of Highways England) issued a copy of the Deadline 1 Forestry Commission SoCG by email 08/02/21.</p> <p><b>Key Outcomes</b></p> <p>No response has been received to date, and Callum Throw has emailed the Forestry Commission again to arrange a meeting to progress the SoCG.</p>

### 3 ISSUES

**Table 3-1 - Issues Related to the Whole Scheme**

Item	ES Chapter	Paragraph Reference	Forestry Commission Comment	Highways England Response
1.	Environmental Statement - Appendix 7.5 Arboricultural Report Part A	Whole Document	<p>1. Both the Forestry Commission and Natural England consider the partial loss of part of Duke's Bank Wood undesirable.</p> <p>2. Both the Forestry Commission and Natural England highlight the effects of the Scheme on Duke's Bank Wood.</p> <p>3. The requirement for a management plan with regards to replacement planting was raised by the Forestry Commission and Natural England.</p> <p>4. The Forestry Commission and Natural England agreed that translocation of ancient woodland soils is desirable despite the presence of Ash dieback and the risks were low, given the short distance of translocation and mode of infection by Ash dieback.</p>	<p>1. The Applicant acknowledges this and accepts a requirement to mitigate the impacts of the Scheme on Duke's Bank Wood.</p> <p>2. The Applicant accepts this, and considers that some impact on this wood is an unavoidable feature of the Scheme. Through the design of the bridge footings and construction working areas the applicant has sought to minimise the loss of ancient woodland as far as it is practical to do so. The applicant has also worked in consultation with Natural England and the Forestry Commission to develop the proposals for compensating for the loss of ancient woodland at the River Coquet. Following discussion between the Applicant's ecology, arboriculture team and Natural England, a strategy of mitigation and compensation, alongside other objectives, has been produced.</p> <p>As recorded in Chapter 9 of the ES [Doc Ref REP1-031], the applicant undertook extensive discussions with Natural England over the draft Ancient Woodland Strategy. During a meeting on 1 March 2019, Natural England agreed to the approach taken within the Ancient Woodland Strategy, which was used to form the foundation of the Ancient Woodland Strategy. This is recorded in the Natural England SoCG [REP1-029] and is captured in the Ancient Woodland Strategy [APP-247] submitted with the DCO application. The strategy would be secured through measure A-L6 of the Register of Environmental Actions and Commitments contained within the Outline Construction Environmental Management Plan (Outline CEMP) [APP-346] and Requirement 5 of the draft DCO.</p> <p>3. A 12:1 replacement planting ratio of additional woodland to be provided for ancient woodland lost was requested by The Forestry Commission and agreed by the applicant. The submitted Ancient Woodland Strategy [APP247] incorporates the agreed 12:1 replanting ratio and sets out the requirements of indicative management plan for this replacement planting.</p> <p>4. The Applicant acknowledges a requirement for this to be developed at the detailed design stage. The Ancient Woodland Strategy [APP-247] sets out that suitable biosecurity measures to control the risk of Ash dieback are to be detailed in a Biosecurity Method Statement.</p>



Item	ES Chapter	Paragraph Reference	Forestry Commission Comment	Highways England Response
			5. The translocation of materials was therefore considered acceptable in principle, with an agreed method of movement of ash material, under the approved terms of a Statutory Plant Health Notice (SPHN) issued by the Forestry Commission.	5. Noted and agreed that the translocation of material is considered acceptable in principle. The Applicant agrees that a SPHN with the Forestry Commission as part of the Biosecurity Method Statement in order to enable controlled and biosecure processing and transportation of ash material. The applicant confirms willingness to apply for a SPHN with the Forestry Commission to address this issue.

WITHOUT PREJUDICE

© Crown copyright 2021.

You may re-use this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence:

visit [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/)

write to the **Information Policy Team, The National Archives,**

**Kew, London TW9 4DU**, or email

[psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk).

This document is also available on our website at [www.gov.uk/highways](http://www.gov.uk/highways)

If you have any enquiries about this document  
[A1inNorthumberland@highwaysengland.co.uk](mailto:A1inNorthumberland@highwaysengland.co.uk)

or call **0300 470 4580\***.