

Planning Act 2008

Application by Highways England for an Order Granting Development Consent for the A1 in Northumberland – Morpeth to Ellingham
Case Ref: TR010059

Examining Authority’s Note of Unaccompanied Inspection of Sites to which the Application Relates (USI2)

Background

The Examining Authority (ExA) undertook its second unaccompanied site inspections (USI2) on 19 & 20 May 2021 in connection with the application for development consent for the A1 in Northumberland – Morpeth to Ellingham (the Application) made by Highways England (the Applicant). The purpose of the inspections was for the ExA to understand the route of the existing A1 between Morpeth and Ellingham (Part A and Part B) and to understand the extent of the Application on the local area. This involved looking at specific locations to consider the impacts of the Application particularly in terms of noise, design, visual and landscape considerations, ecology, the historic environment, economic and social considerations, transport impacts, the water environment and the compulsory acquisition and temporary possession aspects of the Application.

Inspections were undertaken by car and on foot from publicly accessible land including highways and public rights of way. With the exception of one property (described below), no inspections were undertaken on private land and no other persons were in attendance.

The inspections were undertaken to view the proposed application site as shown on the Land Plans [REP6-003], Works Plans [REP6-004] General Arrangement Plans [REP6-005] and Rights of Way and Access Plans [REP6-006] submitted with the Application.

Particulars of the Inspection

USI2 was undertaken by the Examining Inspector Mr Kevin Gleeson.

USI2 took into consideration the Applicant’s Revised Itinerary for Accompanied Site Inspection [REP5-031], Northumberland Council Council’s comments on the Applicant’s proposed itinerary [REP4-075] and representations made by other IPs at Deadlines 1, 3 and 4.

Day 1: 19 May 2021

The Inspection commenced at 8.45am in the vicinity of High Highlaws Road and concluded at 16:00 at the River Coquet Bridge. The weather in the morning was sunny with good visibility; in the afternoon conditions were showery with visibility poor at times.

Locations visited on Unaccompanied Site Inspection:

- A697 to High Highlaws Road, Coronation Avenue, Hebron Road and Hebron;
- Northgate Farm*, Warreners House and Northgate House;
- St. Andrews Gardens, Northgate Hospital, West View and Fairmoor;
- Jacksons Garage Layby, Priest Bridge House, River Lyne, Floodgate Burn, start of offline section;
- Tritlington School and junction with A1;
- Fenrother, proposed Fenrother Junction, Fenrother Lane junction with A1;
- New Houses Farm and offline section;
- Causey Park Bridge, offline section and proposed detention basin;
- Causey Park Road and proposed Causey Park overbridge;
- Burgham Park Road, Burgham Park Golf Club, proposed Burgham Park underbridge and proposed detention basin;
- Helm, Eshott, East and West Forest;
- Brockenfield Loop, proposed detention basins, Longdyke Burn;
- Northumbrian Woodland Burials, Felmoor Park, Bockenfield Holiday Park;
- Bywell Road junction with A1;
- West Moor Road and proposed West Moor Junction;
- Felton Road and proposed West Moor Junction, proposed main site compound and Thirston New Houses;
- Felton Conservation Area, St Michael and All Angels Church, Felton Park;
- Public Right of Way 115/009 to existing River Coquet/ A1 bridge;
- A697 between Longhorsley and the junction with the A1.

*At the Compulsory Acquisition Hearing 2 on 20 April [EV-040] [EV-041] the ExA raised the matter of a site inspection to consider the effects of the Proposed Development on Northgate Farm as requested by Mr Mark Hawes. Mindful of the ongoing COVID 19 restrictions and the need to prevent unnecessary travel, the ExA proposed that subject to the agreement of Mr Hawes and the Applicant the visit could take the form of an Access Required Site Visit which could go ahead without any accompanying parties. The Applicant confirmed that the proposed site inspection was supported, provided appropriate weight would be assigned to the assessment and views from a private property [REP6-044]. On this basis the site inspection to Northgate Farm was undertaken with access provided by Mr. Hawes. No discussion took place about the Application during the visit.

Day 2: 20 May 2021

The Inspection commenced at 10.00 at Lionheart Enterprise Park. It concluded at the southern end of Part B at 14:00 having covered the mainline A1 and parallel routes. The weather in the morning was initially sunny with good visibility; heavy rain dominated the late morning and afternoon with poor visibility.

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Locations visited on Unaccompanied Site Inspection:

- Lionheart Enterprise Park;
- A1 Layby at southern extent of Part B;
- Drive by view of proposed location of Heckley Fence Overbridge;
- Access to Rock South Farm from the A1;
- B6347 Charlton Mires Junction and Charlton Mires Farm;
- Patterson Cottage and West Linkhall;
- North Charlton and Middlemoor Wind Farm;
- South Charlton, B6341 via Rock Lodge, Heiferlaw Bank and Heckley House to Alwick to view mainline in landscape context;
- B1340 via Denwick, Rennington and Rock;
- B6347 Rock Midstead;
- Charlton Hall Road, Shipperton Burn and access to East Linkhall.