



Department for Transport

Great Minster House
33 Horseferry Road
London, SW1P 4DR

Telephone:
e-mail: transportinfrastructure@dft.gov.uk
Web: www.gov.uk/dft

To: Natural England , National
Highways and all other Interested
Parties

27 March 2024

Dear Sir/Madam

Planning Act 2008 and the Infrastructure Planning (Examination Procedure) Rules 2010

Application by National Highways (“the Applicant”) for an Order granting Development Consent to authorise the widening of an approximately 20.6km stretch of the existing A1 from Morpeth to Ellingham, with approximately 14.5km of online widening and approximately 6.1km of new offline highway (“the Proposed Development”).

1. Updated information provided by the Applicant

The Secretary of State invites **all interested parties** to provide any comments they have on the information provided by the Applicant on [22 November 2023](#) and [25 March 2024](#) in response to [the Secretary of State’s consultation letter of 7 November 2023](#).

2. Updated Ecology Desk Study and Habitat Verification Walkover

The Secretary of State requests comments from **Natural England** on the information provided by the Applicant and in particular the– findings and conclusions set out in its [Updated Biodiversity Air Quality Assessment](#) and the compensation set out in this and the updated [Construction Environmental Management Plan](#).

3. The Levelling-Up and Regeneration Act (2023)

The Secretary of State notes that since the close of examination, sections 11A of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 and 85 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 have been amended by section 245 of the [Levelling-Up and Regeneration Act 2023](#), which came into force on 26 December 2023. The Secretary of State invites **the Applicant** to provide comments on the implications of this amendment and in particular whether and if so, why it considers the Secretary of State could be satisfied that the amended duty on him under sections 11A and 85 would be complied with if development consent were to be given for this scheme.

4. **DCO Drafting**

The Secretary of State requests confirmation from **the Applicant** on the following matters related to the [Final Draft DCO](#).

Hedgerows

The Secretary of State requests that **the Applicant** identifies which of the hedgerows listed in Part 1 (removal of hedgerows) of Schedule 9 (trees and hedgerows) to the draft order are “important hedgerows”.

Addresses

The Secretary of State requests **the Applicant** to confirm that the registered office addresses identified in article 2 (interpretation) and email address identified in Part 4 (for the protection of national grid as gas undertaker) of Schedule 11 (protective provisions) of the draft order remain correct.

Deadline for Response

The deadline for response is 23:59 on Sunday 14 April 2024.

Submissions sent by post may be subject to delay therefore your response on the information requested above should be submitted to the Case Team, if possible, by email to A1inNorthumberland@planninginspectorate.gov.uk

If you will have difficulty in submitting a response by the consultation deadline, or difficulty in submitting a response by email, please inform the Case Team.

Responses will be published as soon as possible after the deadline on the A1 project page of the National Infrastructure Planning website at: [A1 in Northumberland - Morpeth to Ellingham - Project information \(planninginspectorate.gov.uk\)](#)

This letter is without prejudice to the Secretary of State’s decision on the A1 Morpeth to Ellingham Application, and nothing in this letter is to be taken to imply what that decision might be.

Yours faithfully,

Transport Infrastructure Planning Unit