

Date: 24 April 2024
Our ref: 472988
Your ref: TR010059



A1 in Northumberland – Morpeth to Ellingham Case Team
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BY EMAIL ONLY



Dear A1 in Northumberland – Morpeth to Ellingham Case Team

Consultation: Application by National Highways for an Order Granting Development Consent for the A1 in Northumberland – Morpeth to Ellingham Project
Interested Party Reference number: 20026931

Thank you for your consultation on the above dated 16 April 2024 which was received by Natural England on 16 April 2024.

Natural England is a non-departmental public body. Our statutory purpose is to ensure that the natural environment is conserved, enhanced, and managed for the benefit of present and future generations, thereby contributing to sustainable development.

SUMMARY OF NATURAL ENGLAND'S ADVICE

- Natural England advises that the location and extent of proposed additional compensation planting is appropriate and acceptable.
- Natural England is content with the proposed amendment to Requirement 15 of the Development Consent Order.
- Natural England is content with the proposed amendment to Measure A-B3 of the Outline Construction Environmental Management Plan.

Detailed Advice

Proposed Additional Compensation Planting

The Applicant has set out a proposal for additional woodland planting as compensation for the impacts to the River Coquet and Coquet Valley Woodlands Site of Special Scientific Interest arising from elevated ammonia concentrations. This proposal is for 2.4ha of additional woodland planting, located immediately to the west and connected to the previously agreed area of compensation woodland planting.

Natural England considers the proposal acceptable in terms of extent and location. The connection to the area of existing compensation planting and, therefore, the SSSI will maximise the long-term ecological functionality and viability of the new and existing woodland.

However, we note that the agreement is yet to be confirmed. If it becomes necessary to identify another area of land to serve this purpose, we would welcome discussions with the Applicant to assess the suitability of its location and extent.

Requirement 15 of the Development Consent Order (DCO)

Natural England has reviewed the proposed amended wording for Requirement 15 of the DCO and is content that it includes the key provisions. We have discussed this with the Applicant and are in agreement that the wording is satisfactory. We do not have further comments on this matter.

Measure A-B3 of the Outline Construction Environmental Management Plan (OCEMP)

Natural England has reviewed the proposed amended wording for Measure A-B3 of the OCEMP and is content that it includes the key provisions. We have discussed this with the Applicant and are in agreement that the wording is satisfactory. We do not have further comments on this matter.

Landscape Environmental Management Plan (LEMP)

Natural England has reviewed the OCEMP and the Ancient Woodland Strategy, and is satisfied that these documents provide the detail required for the long-term management of the compensation planting that is connected to the SSSI. We can confirm that our previous recommendation, that a LEMP should be provided, is not necessary for the compensation planting that is connected to the SSSI. As such, we have no further comments on this matter.

Correction

In our previous letter, ref. 471140 (dated 11 April 2024), we incorrectly stated that “the total area [of the SSSI] subject to elevated ammonia concentrations would be 2.5ha”. This should state 2.4ha.

For any queries relating to the specific advice in this letter only please see contact details below. For any new consultations, or to provide further information on this consultation please send your correspondences to consultations@naturalengland.org.uk.

Yours sincerely

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