

Planning Inspectorate Deadline 2 December 15th 2023

A66 NTP project TR00162

Dr Mary Clare Martin, also on behalf of Mrs Joy Thompson, mother and resident

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Proposed changes to the Langrigg Junction (see item below)

We welcome the proposal to remove the Langrigg Junction as described in letter REPI-008 (16 December 2022) of which advance notice was given by National Highways to the Examining Authority . We also appreciated the instruction given by the ExA to NH at ISH1 on 1st December 2022 to redesign the proposed plans. While this sounds a huge improvement on the existing plans, it is hard to judge, however, without seeing the designs. My parents would still prefer the dual carriageway to go north of the current A66, as it would avoid having engineering works and the associated noise, air pollution and disfigurement to the landscape in the same field as the house and would overall be less of an obstruction to the views for everyone. Please note that the petition by Warcop and Musgrave Parish Councils for the dual carriageway to go north of the current A66 now stands at 979 signatures.

We hope the requested Accompanied Site Visit on February 28th will take place, so the Inspectors can see the army land and so-called AONB north of the current A66 and compare the impact of the current plans for the dual carriageway to go south on the landscape and residents.

Consultation arrangements made by National Highways on the above

While recognising the limitations of time, it should be noted that only one venue and date in the Appleby-Brough area has been provided, (Warcop Parish Hall, Feb 1st, 3pm to 7 pm). This is surprising given the level of public interest in this particular section of the road, as evidenced by the Relevant Representations submitted by September 4th.

While recognising the cost implications, it remains the case that people without computer access cannot see hard copies of the documents and that summaries of key documents would enable such people to be included. Another strategy would be to have summary hard copy versions in more local libraries.

We note that the ExA have now asked for the consultation to take place before the revised DCO documents are submitted . We are grateful for their request that this be conducted as soon and as openly as possible. It would be useful to have confirmation from PINS that the examination timetable will remain the same.

Please note that as the changes to the DCO documents were unexpected, many people who have interests in the matter will not have registered as Interested parties and will therefore be unable to submit comments at this and subsequent deadlines or participate in face to face hearings. While I appreciate such people will be able to participate in the consultation (assuming this is widely publicised), their ability to take advantage of the democratic process will have been limited because the post-DCO changes were not a usual procedure.

Landscape, Environment and Safety

As noted by Friends of the Lake District, Lake District National Parks do not wish to have any more visitors in cars, more thought should be given to protecting the landscape in the Penrith to Scotch Corner area, rather than continuing with the plan for the speed limit to be 70 mph the full length of the route. A related point, made at ISH2, the issue of the impact of the new overpasses and bridges on the views was raised, and the need for more photomontages to assess their impact.

I reiterate my query as to why there are no speed cameras on the current road, as this would have a significant impact on safety (as on the A9 in Scotland), which is a major motivation amongst local people for supporting the dual carriageway. Why wait several years and incur more deaths and injuries when there is such a preventive measure available, which has had a huge impact elsewhere?

The environmental appraisal documents need to be updated to reflect current net zero targets and traffic projections.

We were very concerned about the proposed changes by NH to enable changes to be made to the Environmental Management Plan without the approval of the Secretary of State, as this could leave residents very vulnerable to contractors' interest in haste. Therefore, the proposal to reverse this proposal is very welcome (NH 7.3, REPI 009, pp. 16-18.) We are, however, concerned that the third iteration would not need the approval of the Secretary of State,

Letter NH to ExA, 16 December 2023.

34. An example of such a change is the proposed Removal of Langrigg Westbound Junction, revision to Langrigg Road link and earlier tie-in of Flitholme Road (Scheme 6). This proposed change, the need for which was raised and discussed at the Issue Specific Hearing 1 held on 30 November 2022, would involve the removal of the current westbound junction proposals at Langrigg, meaning that traffic would no longer be able to leave and join the new A66 mainline at this location. As a result of the removal of the westbound junction on the A66 mainline, the Langrigg Road link would be moved northwards, to lie principally adjacent to the westbound carriageway of the A66 mainline dual carriageway. The Langrigg Road link would extend westwards, staying in close proximity to the A66 mainline, to connect to Flitholme Road at the earliest opportunity in order to retain as much of the existing Flitholme Road as possible. The connection from the Langrigg Road Link to Langrigg Road would be through a simple T-junction. Associated infrastructure, such as the balancing ponds, could be reduced in size and could be moved northwards (in comparison to the original proposal in the preliminary design), away from the identified fen habitat and houses.