

11<sup>th</sup> September 2023

Mark Harper, MP  
Secretary of State for Transport  
& Richard Holden, MP  
Great Minster House  
33 Horseferry Road  
London  
SW1P 4DR

Dear Sirs

**Re: Application by National Highways for an Order granting Development Consent for the proposed A66 Northern Trans-Pennine Project**

I write both as a local County Councillor and as Deputy Leader of Durham County Council to make a final plea to you before you decide on this proposal. While we all support dualling of the A66, the proposed changes to the junctions near Barnard Castle have drawn strong criticism from the landowner (Rokeby Estates) and the people of Startforth and Barnard Castle. In a nutshell, National Highways' proposed 'Black route' will cause more harm to the Listed Rokeby Park, and reverse the balance of traffic entering Barnard Castle, sending the majority down a narrow, constrained route at the Sills, Startforth (which has a record of pedestrian injuries) and The Bank , Barnard Castle.

DCC's position is that while it does not formally object to the Black route it would prefer the Blue.

There has been a very active local campaign to 'Back the Blue' , supported by Dehenna Davison MP, and we have given evidence at the Planning Enquiry (though we have found that a difficult process to engage with and I hope we have been involved at the right stages). All the details of our objections should be on file and I would be very happy to furnish them if required.

Meanwhile I would urge you to listen to the people, Council and 'Back the Blue'

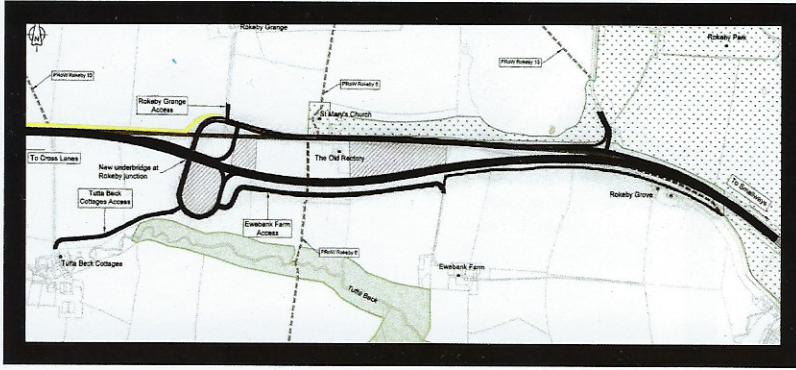
Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]

Cllr Richard Bell  
Deputy Leader of the Council & Portfolio Holder for Finance

# A66 DUALLING PLANS CONSULTATION

## BACK THE BLUE



Highways England have chosen the **Black Route** as their preferred route for the Cross Lanes and Rokeby junctions.

This route would cause **harm to our community** by directing traffic for Barnard Castle to the Cross Lanes junction and via Startforth and County Bridge.

### THIS WILL:

- **Significantly increase traffic along the Sills and The County Bridge with consequent risk to all road users, particularly pedestrians, as there is no adequate pavement**

- **Increase traffic congestion at The County Bridge, Bridgegate and The Bank, harming livelihoods and the integrity of our historic Town**

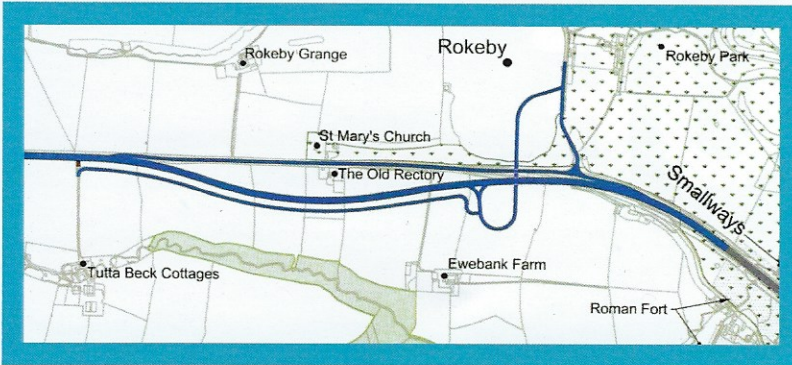
The **Blue Option** will keep the current balance of traffic into Barnard Castle much the same.

**Blue Option** will require the clearance of a small amount of the Church Plantation at Rokeby. Historic England have challenged the use of this woodland.

**Black Route** will cause significant harm to the communities of Startforth and Barnard Castle.

**YOUR VIEWS ARE IMPORTANT** – the statutory consultation is YOUR chance to have YOUR say on this **IRREVERSIBLE** development which will affect generations to come.

If you are unable to attend one of the public consultations, please send views before 6th November



More information on plans are at: <https://highwaysengland.co.uk/our-work/a66-northerntrans-pennine/>

## BACK THE BLUE