

Date: 27 October 2023
Our ref: 15928
Your ref.: TR010062



A66dualling@planninginspectorate.gov.uk

BY EMAIL ONLY

Hornbeam House
Crewe Business Park
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Dear Sir / Madam,

APPLICATION BY NATIONAL HIGHWAYS FOR AN ORDER GRANTING CONSENT FOR THE A66 TRANS-PENNINE DUALLING PROJECT

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.

Natural England understands that National Highways intend to submit two options for draft provisions for the Development Consent Order in order to secure blanket bog compensation and maintenance. Natural England would like to document that it strongly prefers the second option ("Option 2"), attached for ease of reference to the bottom of this letter, which details that no part of the mainline A66 shall commence until a detailed blanket bog and maintenance plan is prepared in consultation with Natural England. This option ensures that NE have sufficient opportunity at a meaningful stage to ensure that the blanket bog compensation will be appropriate and well secured before works commence.

We understand that National Highways will say that they prefer their proposed alternative drafting, but Natural England have concerns that their alternative approach could mean that the road's construction may be very advanced before full detail of the compensation plan is approved and implemented, whilst the risk may be low, this option could create a timing difficulty if the compensation plan cannot ultimately be approved.

We are happy to continue engagement with NH and their colleagues surrounding the ongoing search for compensation land and the detailed blanket bog management plan when a site is selected. We remain confident that a site will be found and discussions over a draft management plan are progressing well.

We would be happy to comment further should the need arise but if in the meantime you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact us.

For any queries relating to specific advice in this letter only, please contact Niamh Keddy at [REDACTED] [@naturalengland.org.uk](mailto:niamh.keddy@naturalengland.org.uk). For any new consultations, or to provide further information on this consultation please send your correspondences to consultations@naturalengland.org.uk.

Yours sincerely,
Niamh Keddy
Sustainable Development Senior Advisor

Option 2:

“(11) No part of the mainline A66 is to be commenced until a detailed blanket bog compensation and maintenance plan, prepared in accordance with the outline blanket bog compensation and maintenance plan, has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Secretary of State, following consultation with Natural England.

(12) The mainline A66 must not be completed and opened for public use until the approved detailed blanket bog compensation and maintenance plan has been implemented to the Secretary of State’s satisfaction following consultation with Natural England.

(13) Following implementation of the approved detailed blanket bog compensation and maintenance plan to the Secretary of State’s satisfaction the undertaker must maintain the restored blanket bog in accordance with the approved detailed blanket bog compensation and maintenance plan.

(14) The consultations referred to in paragraphs (11) and (12) are to be carried out in accordance with the procedures contained in paragraphs 1.4.17 to 1.4.34 and paragraphs 1.4.38 to 1.4.40 of the first iteration EMP, except that the functions of the “Principal Contractor” or “PC” may be performed by the undertaker.”

In article 53(12), after the definition of “the first iteration EMP” insert the following definitions—

““the mainline A66” means the A66 carriageway to be constructed or improved as part of Work Nos. 0102-1, 03-1, 0405-1, 0405-2, 06-1, 07-1, 08-1, 09-1 or 11-1;

“the outline blanket bog compensation and maintenance plan” means the document listed in Schedule 10 certified by the Secretary of State under article 49 as the outline blanket bog compensation and maintenance plan for the purposes of this Order;”.