**A66 Northern Trans-Pennine Project**

**Scheme 6 Appleby to Brough Local Community Meeting**

**4 November 2021**

**2pm – 4pm**



**Attendees**

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| **Name** | **Initials** |  |
| Andy Connell | AC | District Councillor for Appleby |
| Cllr William Patterson | WP | Eden District Councillor |
| Colin Harrison | CH | Warcop Parish Council representative |
| Jill Barnes | JB | Office Manager for Neil Hudson MP |
| Paul Taylor | PT | Warcop PC, Business owner in Sandford and resident of Flitholme |
| John Bousfield | JB | Musgrave Parish Council Representative |
| Mark Blackett-Ord | MBO | Resident of Warcop |
| David Keetley | DK | Chair of Warcop Parish Council |
| Andy Johnson | AJ | Project Director for Amey/Arup Partnership |
| Lee Hilliard | LH | Project Director for the A66 |
| Monica Corso-Griffths | MCG | Head of Design and DCO for the A66 |
| Emilly Kitching | EK | Public Liaison Officer – Scheme 6 |
| Oliver Garland | TE | Design Lead – Scheme 6 |
| Paul Carey | PC | Design and Engineering Lead |

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| **Summary of Meeting** | |
| The meeting focused on the Appleby to Brough route and potential different alignments were discussed, including an analysis of the implications of alternative routes involving cost, environmental impacts, how it can be tied into the existing A66, structures, earthworks, drainage, access for landowners, farmers and local residents, utilities, constructability and landownership impacts.  National Highways is confident that the preferred route which was presented in the statutory consultation is the correct choice but are open to hearing all views. The project team have considered northern options for the alignment of the A66 and will be responding to questions raised in the statutory consultation but it is unlikely that these options could be implemented. The project team’s current preference is the preferred route shown in the statutory consultation materials.  The representatives confirmed the consensus of the local community is for the A66 to be north of the current A66 to minimise impact on local residents. It was acknowledged by attendees that the project team are listening. The representatives confirmed they will continue to support a northern option for the A66. | |
| **Discussion** | **Action** |
| DK opened the meeting with the request for what National Highways can do with the proposed route in moving the route further north from its current position. It was noted that the local communities support a northern bypass and do not feel any work has been done to consider this option.  Neil Hudson MP sent a statement which was read by JB. Neil Hudson is supportive of this meeting and thanked those for attending. He expressed support for the project but noted the potential impacts for local communities along the route. He hoped for this meeting to find common ground and a constructive way forward for the project.  LH explained that statutory consultation is a pivotal moment for the project and welcomed all feedback on the project. The preferred route presented at statutory consultation route is something that the team believe would get approval for the Development Consent Order (DCO) whereas there are significant concerns over the consentability if the route was moved further north. All feedback on the project is being considered by the project team and to date, feedback has been taken on board by the team in moving the preferred route further from local villages.  MBO supports this meeting and welcomes this discussion. It was noted that a northern route would be supported but if this is not taken forward, the village will strongly object.  MBO explained there are seven reasons to support a northern route:  1. Avoids destruction of historic monuments at Sandford and loss of MOD playing field and Brough Hill Fair Site  2. Avoids bringing a larger road closer to many residences increasing air and noise pollution  3. Avoids the need for complex junctions and tie ins to the south where the road connects to the existing highway network. This will require the construction of bridges and underpasses which may be damaging to the AONB.  4. Have safety concerns with junctions and multiple accesses to new carriageway  5. Believe preferred route will be more expensive and difficult to construct  6. Believe preferred route will increase flood risk for Warcop village  7. Believe preferred route lacks consideration for walkers, cyclists and horse drawn vehicles  MCG confirmed that whatever the chosen design, it would be safe. MCG noted that any incursion further to the north into the AONB would need to provide additional benefits, as the team already have a route which responds to feedback so far without needing to go further to the north. The team would need to justify the additional harm to the AONB and they also need to consider the MOD operations.  MBO felt that clearing unexploded mines can be completed.  LH confirmed this is not the end of the process of consultation and engagement. PC noted that the team are actively making changes along the route in response to surveys and feedback.  AC noted that the geology of the land changes as you go further north. The project have not completed ground investigation works along the ranges. DK asked if the team have completed any work on northern routes. MCG confirmed that work had been done and is ongoing. DK noted the public health interest of living close to busy roads and would like the route to be as far north as possible.  OG presented a sketch showing an interpretation of the Warcop PC “northern route” and explained that it followed the hillsides and contours of the landscape using required highway design software and standards. This has been used to complete a high level assessment of the route. The assessment of the route considers cost, environmental impacts, how it can be tied into the A66, structures, earthworks, drainage, access for the MOD and farmers, utilities and constructability and landownership impacts. The MOD has seen this route and stated it would impact 7 out of 10 of their ranges.  DK noted the opportunity to help improve Warcop’s flood risk with the EA and Eden Rivers Trust through the project. PC and OG explained that the discharge rates will be the same with the northern route, preferred route and current road.  MCG and OG explained that the northern route would be more expensive due to increased earthworks, lands costs, topographical challenges and clearance of unexploded ordnance for example. MBO noted that this route follows the Parish Council route proposed and he believed could be built better alignments elsewhere to mitigate the topography.  OG presented another sketch that interpreted the suggestion for a route further into the AONB as suggested by Billy Welch and Warcop PC. OG noted that the ammunition store (and associated infrastructure) would need to be re-provided to the north in the AONB further damaging setting of AONB. OG also noted that the route presented does not include drainage infrastructure or environmental mitigation. Environmental surveys have been undertaken in this area and there is significant wildlife, flora and fauna.  PC noted this route does solve some issues. It leaves the local road between the Walkmill cottages and The Gatehouse/Turks Head and retains the MOD playing field, and leaves the Brough Hill Fair field and is outside of the flood plain. It was also noted that environmental mitigation could help enhance the current environment.  This route has not yet been discussed with the MOD, the AONB partnership and Natural England however the conversations will take place. Therefore, confidentiality was asked for (with no distribution due to being work in progress) and accepted by the representatives. DK welcomed the openness and transparency of the team.  JB and PT were supportive of this route as it removes the impacts on the Flitholme and Musgrave villages. LH explained that the team have done what was asked in exploring these potential routes to the north, however these routes would be difficult to promote due to consentability constraints outside of National Highways control.  This route impacts the AONB and the MOD and National Highways believe they cannot promote this route at this time as the team do not believe this is a consentable scheme as not enough public benefits have been identified to justify the exceptional circumstances.  LH noted that the whole A66 project is one single DCO application that will be submitted. To include a more northern route within this application, this would require the agreement with the MOD and Natural England. It was noted that the ‘black-blue-black’ route is not risk free and still requires the agreement of Natural England and the MOD.  LH asked if there was any compromise or work which could be done to help improve the preferred route.  DK suggested National Highways gain additional support from MPs and other ministers/departments to support the Billy Welch ”northern” route. MBO would support the Billy Welch route but noted that it would still impact the Bronze Age Barrows at Sandford .  It was noted that National Highways have a route outside of the AONB and this would likely be the most consentable route (the ‘black-black-black’).  The team want to work with the local communities to find a route everyone can support. LH explained the Billy Welch route may be possible but is considered to have a very low probability of achieving consent.  DK raised concerns for residents at Sandford with the four lane road with balancing ponds required.  OG presented a sketch for an alternative alignment at the western end of the scheme that took a more northern route leaving the old A66 for walking, cycling and horse riders. This route would require additional earthworks, potential blight for Café 66, require drainage ponds (potentially in the same places as shown in the consultation brochure) and could impact the views of the AONB. This would also move the route closer to the Scheduled Ancient Monument.  The project team have also considered a route using the old A66 as the new westbound carriageway building a new eastbound carriageway to the north, this would result in the loss of woodland, require drainage ponds (potentially in the same places) and could impact the views of the AONB. This has not been drawn up yet.  LH agreed to share the drawings with the attendees. When the notes are shared this will be the green light to share the plans discussed. Confidentiality was asked for (including no distribution as work is draft and in progress) by those attending and agreed by all. MBO and DK welcomes the plans and work completed by the team.  LH is confident in the preferred route which was presented in the statutory consultation. The team are responding to questions raised in the statutory consultation and having regard to all feedback. To date the project have not moved positions and the current stance is still the preferred route shown in the statutory consultation materials. However, the team are happy to share the work completed to date surrounding other options. LH explained it would be very difficult for the team to go north for the reasons already stated.  It was confirmed the consensus of the local community is for the A66 to be north of the current A66. It was acknowledged by attendees that the project team are listening and have actioned what they were asked to do in considering northern route options. The attendees appreciated the team are bound by what is consentable and the legal requirements the team are working within. MBO said the project team are able to explain the local communities’ view with the MOD, Natural England and the AONB Partnership. The project team are meeting with these organisations next week.  MCG explained that any further feedback is welcome and should be included in a statutory consultation feedback form. MCG explained this feedback should be regarding information published with the consultation materials.  PC explained that if changes were to be made to the route, targeted consultation would be required. This would be focused to this scheme. All consultation feedback is placed into a Consultation Report as part of the DCO application. The Consultation Report will be publicly available. Every response will be considered by the project team and responded to. MCG noted that the previous Consultation Report for the last consultation is available on the website.  AJ noted that consultation and engagement continues after the close of the statutory consultation. MBO and DK welcomed the meeting with the project team and found it helpful.  EK will circulate the minutes from the discussion. | LH will share PDF copies of the plans discussed with dates of when the plans can be circulated more widely  EK to share minutes of the meeting |