

A66 Northern Trans-Pennine project update

December 2022



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Introduction

National Highways is continuing to progress the A66 Northern Trans-Pennine project and we want to update you on our latest milestones as we continue our work on this important piece of UK infrastructure.

The A66 plays an essential role for journeys across the north of England and provides the most direct route between the central belt of Scotland and the eastern side of England. The route connects cities like Glasgow and Edinburgh with Leeds, Sheffield and Norwich.

It's a critical route for freight, providing links to a number of international ports like Stranraer, Hull and Felixstowe and connects holiday makers to their destination, whether that be in the Yorkshire Dales or Lake District.

The A66 plays an important role in the life of nearby communities, connecting people to jobs, education, health and other essential services.

But sections of the road aren't up to modern standards.

The route carries high levels of freight, with 25% of the traffic being heavy goods vehicles (HGVs), more than twice the national average for a road of this nature.

We're proposing to deliver over one billion pounds worth of investment to dual the remaining single carriageway sections along the 50 mile stretch of the A66 between Penrith in Cumbria and Scotch Corner in North Yorkshire.

Watch our project video on Youtube:

www.youtube.com/watch?v=EBBIUdZd9jA



Development Consent Order accepted

In June 2022, we submitted our Development Consent Order (DCO) application to the Planning Inspectorate (PINS) for the A66 Northern Trans-Pennine project.

In July, the application was accepted which doesn't mean we have permission to build the project but that a more detailed examination of the DCO will take place. We have outlined below the different stages of the DCO process through to potential construction:

Pre-examination stage

The Relevant Representation period, where people could register and write to PINS to summarise their views on the project, has now ended. PINS have now formally appointed a panel of inspectors to serve as the Examining Authority. A meeting was held to discuss procedural issues and the timetable for examination, called the Preliminary Meeting.

This meeting took place on 29 November at The Witham in Barnard Castle.

Examination

We are in this stage. This can be a six-month process when the Examining Authority will examine the DCO application using written submissions and hearings.

Some hearings have taken place and PINS will update their website with information on any future hearings.

More details are available on [infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/projects/north-west/a66-northern-trans-pennine-project/](https://www.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/projects/north-west/a66-northern-trans-pennine-project/)

During this stage, Interested Parties will be invited to provide more details of their views in writing. The Examining Authority will give careful consideration to all the important and relevant matters raised.

Recommendation and decision stage

Following the end of the examination stage, the Examining Authority will write a recommendation report and submit it to the Secretary of State for Transport.

The Secretary of State for Transport then has up to three months to make the final decision on whether to grant a development consent for the project.

Post-decision stage

Following the Secretary of State for Transport's decision on whether to grant consent for the project, the final stage of the process is a six-week window for the decision to be challenged in the High Court. This process of legal challenge is known as judicial review.

If everything is approved, construction is expected to start in 2024.

You can find out more about the DCO process on this web page: [infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/application-process/the-process/](https://www.infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/application-process/the-process/)

Suppliers named to build A66 Northern Trans-Pennine project

Four contractors have put pen to paper to collectively deliver the £1.3bn A66 Northern Trans-Pennine project, under an enterprise-wide collaborative working agreement.

Balfour Beatty, Costain, Keltbray and Kier have signed up to work together and will work on the ten individual schemes which make up the project.

Project Director Lee Hillyard, said:

“We are delighted to welcome Balfour Beatty, Costain, Keltbray and Kier. We have worked with all four contractors previously and know the quality of their work. The signing of the contracts is a huge step in the delivery of such a big scheme and it is an important milestone for the A66 Northern Trans-Pennine project.

“I’d also like to thank Amey Consulting and Arup who played an integral role in designing the plans that were submitted and accepted as part of our DCO application.”





Social value

We are committed to having a positive impact on the communities along the route during the lifetime of the A66 Northern Trans-Pennine project. We want to leave a positive legacy as part of our social value plan.

The themes we'll be focusing on are:

Economic prosperity



Investing in new skills, jobs, supply chains and delivering improvements in every region across England.

Improving the environment



Making sustainable decisions that conserve natural resources and enhance ecosystems.

Community wellbeing



Addressing health-related issues and improving connectivity, amenities, education and heritage programmes for communities.

Equality, diversity and inclusion



Supporting the creation of a more equal society by increasing opportunities for under-represented groups and providing a road network that is accessible for all.

We want to work with local schools and colleges to develop and promote career opportunities for local people and work with charities to identify initiatives we can support.

Our social value working group is already hard at work building relationships with key local partners. We will continue to work with local communities, careers hubs and business groups to explore social value opportunities throughout the lifecycle of the project.

We're also dedicating 15,000 hours of volunteering time within the local community. We've already been working with Newton Rigg College which is a newly established training provider offering a variety of agricultural courses in Cumbria. We helped out by decorating some of the classrooms ready for new students starting in September.

We're planning on more opportunities at locations across the A66 in the coming weeks and months.



A66 maintenance work

Our operations colleagues in the North West and Yorkshire and North East regions work hard to improve and maintain the full stretch of the A66 throughout the year.

On Monday 24 October 2022, work finished on the A66, between Stainmore and the boundary with County Durham.

The project was carried out in two phases. The first involved resurfacing the eastbound carriageway from Stainmore Café to Black Riggs.

During the second phase, signs were installed to warn drivers when a vehicle is turning out of Stainmore Café and across the flow of traffic to the westbound carriageway. Road markings were also refreshed and solar light road studs were fitted at the Stainmore Café junction to improve safety.



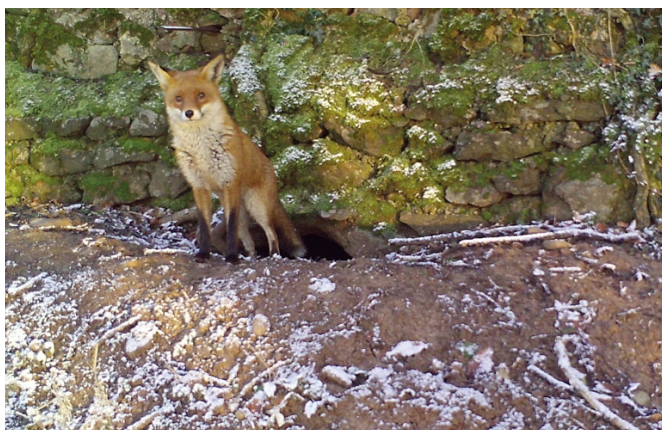
Environment and cultural heritage

Over the past few months, our environment team have been busy carrying out a number of specialist surveys to get a better understanding of the ecology, archaeology and ground conditions in the area. This work is important as it helps us to identify and protect key features should we be granted permission to start building the project.

We've found a number of areas along the route where the likes of bats, common lizard, great crested newt and red squirrels live.

We've been able to place trackers on nearly 300 bats which will help us understand the types of habitat they are roosting in, where they feed and general flight patterns, including where they fly over the A66.

We've also placed cameras along sections of the route to monitor local wildlife. You can see what the cameras caught below.



This information will help us plan what we need to do make sure any impacts potential construction has on the local wildlife is minimal. For example, we're looking at building a special bridge so it is safer for wildlife to cross the A66 as well as putting up bat boxes.



The team have also been carrying out ground investigations along the A66 to see what type of archaeology is found. We've used diggers to excavate areas of land and record any interesting finds.

We've discovered an 'ankle breaker' which was likely to have been an early deterrent to would be attackers, a potential axe head from the Neolithic period and part of a Roman Road near to Warcop. These roads were often stone-paved and metaled, whilst also being arched to help with drainage.

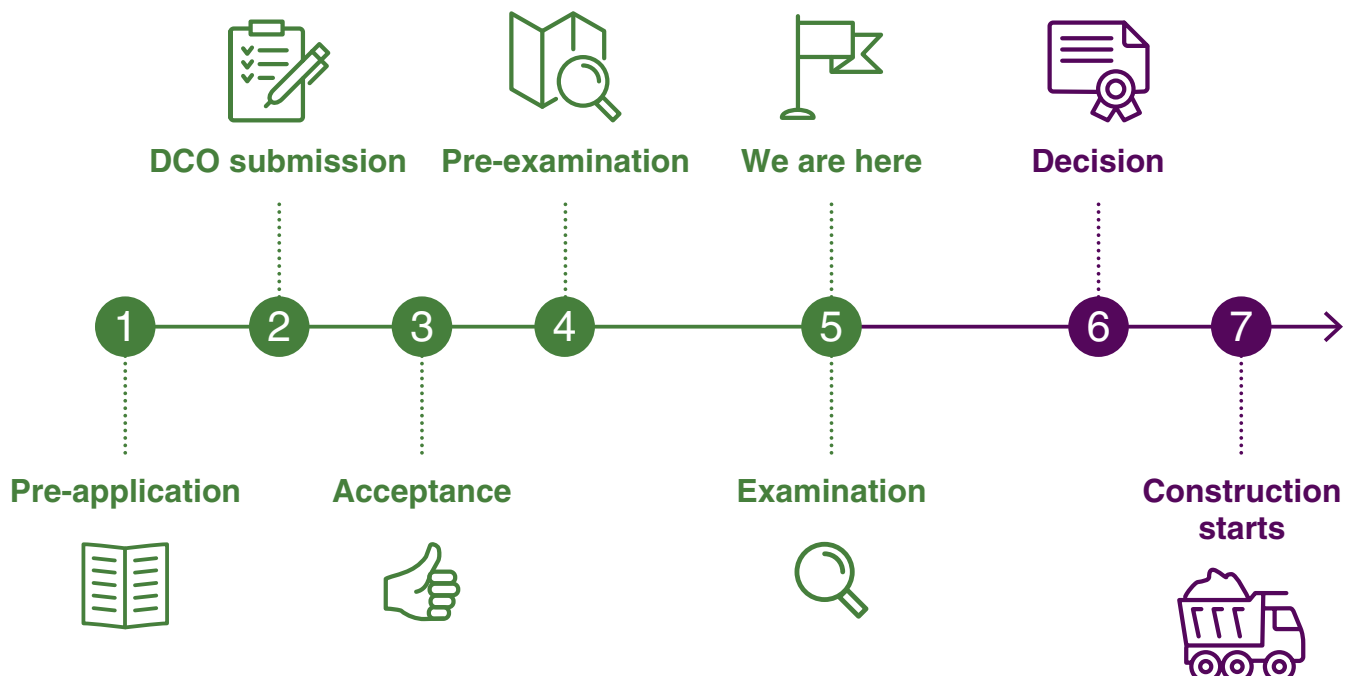


What happens next

Over the coming weeks and months, you may see more people out and about along the route. We will be carrying out surveys on land by the A66 using drones and the latest technology. Mobile mapping surveys will be carried out by fitting a scanning unit onto the roof of a standard vehicle. This is then driven along a route of existing roads and tracks, at regular traffic speeds, remotely collecting accurate 3D data as it travels.

As mentioned at the beginning of this update, we are currently in the examination stage. This can take up to six months before the Secretary of State has three months to make a decision. If the project is approved, construction will start in 2024. The Planning Inspectorate's web site will provide updates on the process.

Application process



For more information about the DCO process, please visit:
infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/application-process/the-process/

Keep in touch

You can contact us by email on A66NTP@nationalhighways.co.uk or call us on **0333 090 1192**.

For more information on the A66 Northern Trans-Pennine project please visit our website: www.nationalhighways.co.uk/A66-NTP

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