

A1 Birtley to Coal House Improvement Scheme granted development consent

Press release

Today, Tuesday 19 January 2021, the application for the A1 Birtley to Coal House Improvement Scheme has been given development consent by the Secretary of State for Transport.



The project comprises improvements as follows:

The scheme is 6.5 km in length and will consist of online widening of the A1 south of Gateshead to four lanes between junction 65 and 67 on the southbound carriageway and three lanes with lane gain/ drop between junctions on northbound carriageway to provide additional capacity. The scheme will also include the off-line replacement of Allerdene Railway Bridge immediately south of the existing structure to tie into the existing structure at Junction 67 Coal House.

The approved development consent order provides for the upgrading of the A1 in the route which runs adjacent to the Angel of the North including hearing directly from the sculptor, Anthony Gormley. The sensitivity of this location was carefully considered during the examinations and additional requirements added to control lighting and noise to protect the Angel and its setting. The examination was completed to the original timetable using virtual hearings.

The application was submitted to the Planning Inspectorate for consideration by Highways England on 14 August 2019 and accepted for examination on 10 September 2019. Following an examination during which the public, statutory consultees and interested parties were given the opportunity to give evidence to the Examining Authority, a recommendation was made to the Secretary of State on 21 October 2020.

The Planning Inspectorate's Chief Executive, Sarah Richards said:

This marks the 100th Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project and 36th transport application to have been examined and decided

within the timescales laid down in the Planning Act 2008. The Planning Inspectorate is committed to giving local communities the opportunity of being involved in the examination of projects that may affect them. Local people, the local authority and other interested parties were able to participate in the examination where the Examining Authority listened and gave full consideration to local views before making their recommendation.

The decision, the recommendation made by the Examining Authority to the Secretary of State and the evidence considered by the Examining Authority in reaching its recommendation is publicly available on the [National Infrastructure Planning website](#).

ENDS

Journalists wanting further information should contact the Planning Inspectorate Press Office, on: 0303 444 5004 or 0303 444 5005 or email: Press.office@planninginspectorate.gov.uk

Notes to editors:

The Planning Inspectorate, [National Infrastructure Programme of Projects](#) details the proposals which are anticipated to be submitted to the Planning Inspectorate as applications in the coming months.

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