

# A66 Northern Trans-Pennine project update

Spring 2023



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# Introduction

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](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EBBIUdZd9jA)



# Development Consent Order examination ends

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 and a more detailed examination of our proposals took place. This included stakeholders and members of the community putting forward Relevant Representations and summarising their views on the project.

The Examining Authority organised two sets of public hearings in November, December 2022 and March 2023.

Between January and February, we held a public consultation on design change proposals to our DCO. Following feedback received, 24 of the 32 proposals were put forward to the Examining Authority for their consideration. Of those 24 changes, 22 were accepted into the examination.

The examination period ended on 29 May and the Examining Authority will write a recommendation report and submit it to the Secretary of State for Transport by the end of August.

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 in November 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 and our examination on these links: [infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/application-process/the-process/](https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/application-process/the-process/)

[infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/projects/north-west/a66-northern-trans-pennine-project/](https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/projects/north-west/a66-northern-trans-pennine-project/)

## Project phone number update

Throughout the early stages of the project, we have used a dedicated phone number. The bespoke line was established as a platform to gather feedback on the project directly during the design development stages.

As we move into the next stage of the project and await a decision from the Secretary of State, this phone number will no longer be in use as of 1 July 2023.

If you need to contact the project team, you can either email [A66NTP@nationalhighways.co.uk](mailto:A66NTP@nationalhighways.co.uk) or phone the National Highways call centre on **0300 123 5000**.

For any operations work that isn't related to the project, you can email [info@nationalhighways.co.uk](mailto:info@nationalhighways.co.uk)

# Wetheriggs Country Park closure

From 5 June, we needed to complete trial pits and borehole drilling work in Wetheriggs Country Park.

For us to do this safely, we needed to close a small section of the park.

The work we carried out will go towards helping with the final design of the A66 Northern Trans-Pennine project.

We apologise for any inconvenience our work may have caused but it was essential a section of the park was closed to help us complete the surveys safely and ensure there was no risk to those who use it.

Should you have any questions or concerns, please contact the team directly on [LandAccessA66@rsk.co.uk](mailto:LandAccessA66@rsk.co.uk) or [A66NTP@nationalhighways.co.uk](mailto:A66NTP@nationalhighways.co.uk)





# Social value

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

As part of our social value and volunteering commitment, we've taken part at a careers event at Durham New College, delivered mock interviews at The Queen Katherine School, helped maintain Foxglove Nature Reserve and decorate part of Newton Rigg College.

We took part in an 'Industry Day' which is part of a project funded by the Careers and Enterprise Company and National Highways. It has been designed in conjunction with Cumbria Careers Hub.

The aim of the collaboration is to work with teachers by exploring ways of enriching the curriculum; connecting learning in lessons to how it is applied in the workplace demonstrating how subjects such as English, Maths, Geography, History and Science are used in shaping and constructing major projects.

Teachers will then be able to create engaging resources and content for their pupils, helping raise awareness of the various educational avenues that could lead to a career in designing, developing and building roads.

Teachers from more than 18 secondary schools across Cumbria will take part in the project. Those teachers will also experience a day in industry to help create relevant teaching resources which will impact on a minimum of 5,000 year 9 pupils in Cumbria.

By using the A66 Northern Trans-Pennine project as an example, it brings learning to life, makes it more relatable to both teachers and students, and embeds careers into the school curriculum.

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



# Maintenance work

Our maintenance colleagues are carrying out essential repair work on the bridge that carries the M6 over the River Lowther, just south of junction 40.

The bridge is now over 50 years old and requires substantial repairs to future proof it for many years to come.

It involves replacing the bridge's expansion joints, waterproofing the bridge decks and improving drainage. The road will be resurfaced and old road markings will be replaced on the bridge decks, further prolonging the life of the structure.

There will also be several overnight closures of the M6 from junction 39 to junction 40 while the work takes place. They will be publicised in advance on the dedicated scheme webpage [www.nationalhighways.co.uk/M6-Lowther-Bridge](http://www.nationalhighways.co.uk/M6-Lowther-Bridge) and National Highways North West social media channels.

If you have any questions or concerns, you can email [info@nationalhighways.co.uk](mailto:info@nationalhighways.co.uk) or the team on **0300 123 5000**.



# Survey work

Between March and August, we will be carrying out several surveys across the A66 between Penrith and Scotch Corner.

Survey work includes digging exploratory holes and examining the ground conditions. We've also been using drones and mobile mapping which involves fitting a scanning unit onto the roof of a vehicle.

All this work helps us understand what's in the ground and the quality before any potential work takes place.

You will likely see members of our team out and about at the side of the road during the day and night.

Temporary traffic lights will be put up in some areas and will be operational overnight. We apologise if this affects your journey time in any way.



Bridge repair work

# What happens next

Now that the examination period has ended, the Examining Authority will write a recommendation report. This will be submitted to the Secretary of State for Transport by the end of August.

The Secretary of State decision is expected in November. If the project is approved, construction will start in 2024.

## Application process



For more information about the DCO process, please visit:  
[infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/application-process/the-process/](https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/application-process/the-process/)

# Keep in touch

You can contact us by email on [A66NTP@nationalhighways.co.uk](mailto:A66NTP@nationalhighways.co.uk) or call us on **0300 123 5000**.

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

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