

# A428 Black Cat to Caxton Gibbet Factsheet

## Borrow pits

One of the changes we're consulting on is the introduction of four borrow pits to help us construct the scheme. In our consultation booklet, these proposed changes are identified as numbers 4, 16, 65 and 69.



### What are borrow pits and how will they be used?

All large infrastructure projects require materials such as soil, gravel, sand and clay for construction purposes. Borrow pits are areas where suitable material has been found and is then excavated for use on site. Ideally borrow pits are located close to where the materials are required as this can provide significant benefits both to the scheme and the environment including:

- a reduction in the need to transport construction materials to the scheme;
- a reduction in construction traffic on public roads;
- a reduction in fuel use and carbon emissions from construction traffic and associated beneficial impact on air quality;
- security of supply of construction material from local sources, reducing reliance on external sources; and
- cost savings to the scheme (and ultimately the taxpayer) by sourcing materials on site.

Across the length of the scheme (not just in the borrow pit areas), the top layer of soil (topsoil) will be removed and stored on site to allow access to the material required in order to build the new road and junctions. Top soil is suitable for agricultural use and depending on where it is needed, will be stored in temporary mounds (known as bunds) for the duration of the works. Storing soil in this way can help minimise construction noise and dust and other emissions.

At each borrow pit, once the topsoil is removed and safely stored for later re-use, we will extract the material beneath that is suitable for construction. Following construction of the scheme, the material we've removed which isn't suitable for road construction purposes will be placed in the borrow pit and the stored topsoil will then be spread across the borrow pit areas to return them to a usable state.

## Locations of the proposed borrow pits

The proposed borrow pits are located close to four areas where we have identified a significant lack of suitable material to build the scheme (changes 4, 16, 65 and 69). Our ground surveys identified areas where we could obtain suitable material.

## Alternatives

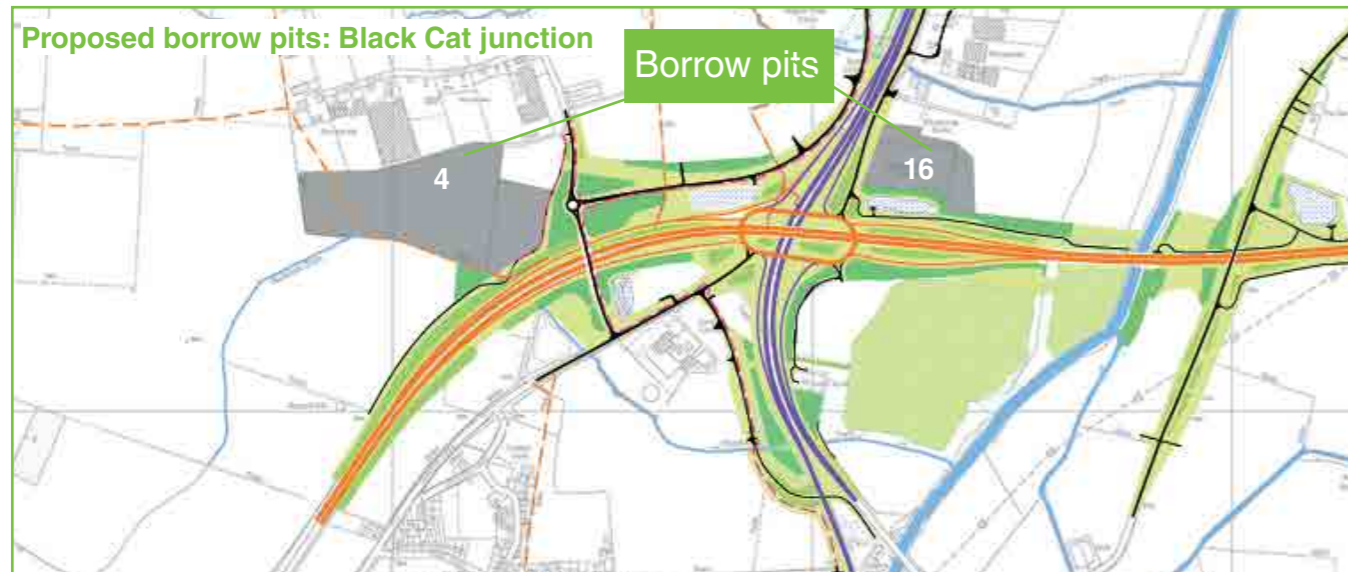
The use of borrow pits is a well-established approach in projects of this type. They are often used where additional construction materials are required and suitable sources are available nearby.

The alternative to using borrow pits is to import materials from sources such as commercial clay pits or quarries, other construction projects or industrial by-products.

None of these sources are available locally and importing material to build the scheme would be more costly and damaging to the environment.

## Construction

The excavation and use of material from the borrow pit areas is expected to take place during the construction period for the scheme. We will sign up to the Considerate Constructors Scheme as part of our commitment to minimise nuisance to neighbours and promote best construction practices.



## Proposed borrow pits

Map reference	Location of the proposed change	Summary of change	Reason for change
4	West of Roxton Road to the north of the existing A421	Addition of land for a borrow pit.	Material from the borrow pits will create the new embankments for Roxton Road and on the approaches to Black Cat junction. This material needs to be sourced close to where it will be used.
16	East of Black Cat junction	Change of use of land from temporary soil storage area to a borrow pit east of the Black Cat junction.	Material from the borrow pits will create the new embankments for the new dual carriageway on the approach to the River Great Ouse. This material needs to be sourced close to where it will be used.
65	North west of Caxton Gibbet junction	Addition of land for a borrow pit.	To create the new embankments for the west side of Caxton Gibbet junction, fill material is needed. To minimise construction traffic movements this material needs to be sourced close to where it is needed.
69	North east of Caxton Gibbet junction	Addition of land for a borrow pit.	To create the new embankments for the east side of Caxton Gibbet junction, fill material is needed. To minimise construction traffic movements this material needs to be sourced close to where it is needed.

## Restoring the borrow pit areas

The proposals for the restoration of the borrow pits will be completed as part of the detailed design phase following approval of the Development Consent Order. The full landscape specifications, tree planting, fencing and other works will also be defined at this stage. The final choice of the long-term use for the borrow pit sites will be reflected in the final design and specification.

## Safety

Safety is always our highest priority and no work will happen until we are certain it can be done safely. We will ensure that the site risks associated with any work at the borrow pit locations are identified, assessed and managed. We will assess the contractors' health and safety performance, and security will be managed at all stages, so sites are safe and secure during and outside of working hours and do not attract anti-social behaviour.

## Reducing environmental impacts

The borrow pit locations have been influenced by the need for materials in certain areas and the availability of those materials nearby. We've also considered the archaeological potential of the land.

Using borrow pits will reduce some of the environmental impacts associated with construction of the scheme, however it is also likely to temporarily increase environmental impacts in the local area. Although additional land is required, the use of borrow pits will reduce the need to transport construction materials, leading to a reduction in construction traffic on public and local roads and associated reductions in fuel use and vehicle emissions.

Use of this additional land for borrow pits will result in the temporary disturbance of agricultural land, temporary closure of a public right of way (change 4), and changes to the local landscape and views at least for the duration of the construction. During construction there is also likely to be a temporary increase in noise levels and emissions at nearby properties due to the operation of construction vehicles and machinery. It is anticipated that the likely impacts associated with construction vehicles and machinery can be mitigated, and the overall effects of using borrow pits on air quality and climate will be beneficial. We are proposing to reduce impacts to adjacent properties by building soil barriers (known as bunds) to reduce disturbance. The bunds will store the topsoil removed from the borrow pits, which will be returned to the borrow pit areas once construction of the scheme is complete.



We will also apply good practice site management measures during the works, such as keeping barriers and fencing clean where there is a risk of dust build up, and regularly maintaining vehicles, equipment and machinery to reduce emissions.

We'll also control the quality of water discharged from the borrow pit areas into nearby watercourses during this time.

All of the measures we will take to minimise the impact of the proposed borrow pits on the environment will be detailed in an Environmental Management Plan.

We have completed surveys to understand what species may be impacted and these will continue up until submission of the application for development consent. Any protected species encountered will be relocated when necessary away from all areas where construction will take place. We will protect wildlife such as badgers from any disturbance using fencing, where appropriate.

## Contact us



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