

Introduction

Highways England is publishing this Statement of Community Consultation (SoCC) in connection with the proposed improvements to the A19/A1290 Downhill Junction in Sunderland. The purpose of this document is to set out how we will consult the local community about our proposals. The document also provides background to the project and how the application to build it will progress.

The Application

Highways England is developing this scheme under the Planning Act 2008 and is publishing this statement under Section 47 of that Act. We have consulted South Tyneside Council and Sunderland City Council, the local authorities responsible for the areas where the project will be built, about our plans to consult the local community.

The Planning Act 2008 requires Highways England to make an application to the Secretary of State through the Planning Inspectorate for a Development Consent Order (DCO) to build the scheme. The Secretary of State's role is to consider whether authorisation should be given for major infrastructure projects like this scheme. Highways England anticipates that a DCO application for the scheme will be published in spring 2018. The Planning Inspectorate will examine the DCO application and the Secretary of State will decide on whether the scheme should go ahead.

Government policy relating to the development of the national road network is set out in the National Networks National Policy Statement (NNNPS). This provides the framework for DCO applications to be considered against.

When Highways England submits its DCO application, the Secretary of State must consider whether our consultation has been adequate. This pre-application consultation will be important in relation to the examination process that follows after an application is accepted by the Planning Inspectorate. Therefore, the best time to provide feedback on this scheme is now by taking part in this consultation.

You can find more information about the Planning Inspectorate and the Planning Act 2008 on the Gov.uk website:

<http://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk>

or by calling the Planning Inspectorate on 0303 444 5000

The Project

The improvements to the Downhill Lane junction, which is approximately 1km in length, include construction of a new bridge south of the existing bridge. Together with the existing bridge this will form a more traditional roundabout junction layout above the A19. The existing north-bound and south-bound A19 slip roads will be realigned to tie in with the new elevated roundabout arrangement. To the north of the junction, these will serve as link roads between Downhill Lane Junction and the proposed new Testos junction roundabout. The slip roads south of the junction will also be realigned but will continue to provide direct access to and from the A19. On the west side of the junction the A1290 will be re-aligned and to the east, the layout of Downhill Lane and Washington Road will also be amended to suit the new junction. Temporary access roads, temporary highway works, temporary construction compounds and work sites will be required during construction of the scheme. Routes for walkers, cyclists and horse riders will be designed to provide overall improvements in safety and connectivity where possible.

In line with Highways England's Strategic Outcomes, the aims of the Project are to:

- To improve journey times on this route of strategic national importance.
- Improve network resilience and journey time reliability.
- Improve safety
- Facilitate future economic growth.
- Improve provision for walkers, cyclists and other non-motorised users.
- Maintain access for local traffic whilst improving the conditions for strategic traffic

The Project supports these aims by improving traffic flows and reducing queues. This will improve the environment for the local community and transport users will benefit from improved journey times, road quality and safety. This will support the overall competitiveness and productivity of the local, regional and national economy through time savings and improved reliability for business users.

The Project forms part of a wider strategy to upgrade the A19 through the east of Tyneside which includes the A19 Coast Road Improvement and A19 Testos junction Improvement. These improvements, along with the A19 Downhill Lane Junction Improvement, will support development of the International Advanced Manufacturing Park (IAMP) to the north of the Nissan plant, regeneration at the Port of Tyne, Newcastle Airport and further development at Cobalt Business Park, and complement other recent improvements to the local network such as the second Tyne crossing.

Consulting the community

In accordance with section 47 of the Planning Act 2008, Highways England is consulting people living in the vicinity of the proposed scheme.

Highways England has already undertaken a consultation exercise between November 2016 and January 2017. Consultees were asked for their views on a proposed single option for improvements to the junction. More details including the outcome of this consultation are included in the public consultation report available to download from www.highways.gov.uk/a19-testos-downhill-lane; on request from the project team or will be available to view for the duration of the consultation period at the display locations detailed in this SoCC.

We want to make sure that the local community, residents, local interest groups, businesses, visitors and road users have the opportunity to fully understand the scheme and comment on our proposals. To do this we are therefore holding a six week public consultation on the proposals, starting on **Monday 11th September 2017** and ending on **Sunday 22nd October 2017** during which we will provide consultation information on various issues including:

- Junction layout and access arrangements;
- Proposed improved facilities for walkers, cyclists and horse riders; and
- Outlining the extent of land required for the scheme

We have carried out an Environmental Impact Assessment for the scheme. The scheme is Environmental Impact Assessment development and therefore we are publishing Preliminary Environmental Information (PEI) as part of the consultation material. This gives information about the potential environmental effects of the scheme and the measures proposed to reduce those effects such as

- Noise and vibration during construction;
- Air quality during construction;
- Flood risk and drainage design;
- Impacts of sourcing and storage and use of imported materials; and
- Cumulative construction and operation impacts associated with IAMP and the proposed Testos Junction Improvement scheme

Our consultation will involve:

Method	Detail
Public Information Exhibition	<p>Two public information exhibitions will be held at:</p> <p>Bunny Hill Customer Service Centre Hylton Lane, Sunderland, SR5 4BW</p> <p>Friday 22 September 2017 Between 2pm and 8pm</p> <p>Quality Inn Hotel Witney Way, Baldon, NE35 9PE</p> <p>Saturday 23 September 2017 Between 10am and 3pm</p> <p>The exhibition will give people an opportunity to view the scheme proposals, talk to the project team and provide comments.</p> <p>The public will be informed of the exhibitions through channels including advertisements in local newspapers, via our website, the media, direct communications and project updates.</p> <p>Feedback forms will be available at the exhibition events for members of the public to record their comments and these can either be left with the project team and/or sent back separately via the address noted below.</p>
Project Website	<p>A full summary of the project, copies of the supporting project documents and a feedback form will be provided on a dedicated project website: www.highways.gov.uk/a19-testos-downhill-lane</p>
Project Summary Leaflet	<p>A project summary leaflet and details of the planned public exhibitions will be delivered to 35,300 homes and businesses in the consultation zone shown at Appendix 1.</p>
Council and community/area forum briefings	<p>Local council and community/area forums within whose area the proposed scheme will be carried out will be offered briefings to discuss the proposal.</p> <p>A non-motorised user workshop has been held on 19th June to discuss access across the junction.</p>
Stakeholder Form briefings	<p>When invited, and where possible to do so, the project team will attend meetings of local community groups affected by the proposal.</p> <p>Affected land owner meetings will be held</p>

	on 7 th and 8 th August.
Project Updates	At the launch of the consultation and at the point at which Highways England submits the DCO application, project updates will be produced providing details on the proposals and reporting on the outcome of the consultation process respectively. These will be distributed to residents and community groups via the project leaflets mentioned above, by email to those registering for further communications on our website and to Town Councils and community/area forums who wish to receive them. Copies will be made available on our website and provided on request by the project team.
Consultation Feedback	Written comments can be made either online at www.highways.gov.uk/a19-testos-downhill-lane or in writing to the following address: A19 Downhill Lane Junction Improvement Project Team, Highways England, Lateral, 8 City Walk, Leeds, LS11 9AT.
Media	The consultation will be advertised in 1 newspaper nationally circulating newspaper, London Gazette, and 3 locally circulating newspapers; Sunderland Echo, Shield Gazette and Newcastle Chronicle Adverts will be placed in local newspapers at the launch of the consultation and reminders will be placed ahead of the exhibition events. Press releases detailing the consultation and how the community and road users can participate will be issued.

Documents available for inspection

Scheme summary information, this SoCC, policy guidance documents and other relevant technical documents listed in Appendix 3 will be available and will be added to throughout the course of the project at www.highways.gov.uk/a19-testos-downhill-lane and will be available to view free of charge during the consultation period at the locations listed below.

Location	Opening Times
Boldon Village Hall Asda Complex/North Road Boldon Colliery NE35 9AR Tel: 0191 536 3841	Monday to Friday 09:00 – 12:00
Bunny Hill Customer Service Centre Hylton Lane Sunderland SR5 4BW Tel: 0191 520 5555	Monday to Friday 09.30 – 17.00
East Boldon Library Boker Lane East Boldon NE36 0RY Tel: 0191 424 7853	Monday & Friday 09.30 – 12.30 & 13.30 to 17.00 Tuesday & Thursday 09.30 – 12.30 & 13.30 – 19.00
Gateshead Civic Centre Regent Street Gateshead NE8 1HH Tel: 0191 433 3000	Monday to Friday 09.00 – 17.00
Library at Hebburn Central Glen Street Hebburn NE31 1AB Tel: 0191 424 7831	Monday to Thursday 09.30 – 19.00 Friday 09.30 – 17.00 Saturday 10.00 – 16.00
Hedworthfield Community Centre Cornhill Jarrow NE32 4QD Tel: 0191 519 6700	Monday to Friday 09.00 – 22.00 Saturday 09.00 to 17.00 Sunday 10.00 – 14.00
Jarrow Library Cambrian Street Jarrow NE32 3QN Tel: 0191 489 7786	Monday & Friday 09.30 – 17.00 Tuesday & Thursday 09.30 – 19.00 Saturday 12.00 – 16.00

North Tyneside Council Planning Reception Quadrant The Silverlink North Cobalt Business Park North Tyneside NE27 0BY Tel: 03454 04 05 06	Monday to Thursday 08.30 – 17.00 Friday 08.30 – 16.30
The Quadras Centre Woodstock Way Boldon Business Park Boldon Colliery Tyne & Wear NE35 9PF Tel: 0191 519 7202	Monday to Friday 08.30 – 17.00
The Word Library The Word 45 Market Place South Shields NE33 1DX Tel: 0191 427 1818	Monday to Thursday 09.00 – 19.00 Friday 09.00 – 17.00 Saturday & Sunday 10.00 – 16.00
Sunderland City Centre Customer Service Centre 31-32 Fawcett Street Sunderland SR1 1RE Tel: 0191 520 5553	Monday to Friday 08.30 – 17.00
Washington Library Independence Square Washington NE38 7RZ Tel: 0191 561 3441	Monday, Tuesday, Thursday & Friday 09.30 – 17.00 Wednesday 09.30 – 19.00 Saturday 10.00 – 16.00
Highways England Lateral 8 City Walk Leeds LS11 9AT Tel: 03400 470 2683	Monday to Friday 09.00 – 17.00

Next Steps

Comments made during the consultation will be recorded and carefully considered by Highways England and will be taken into account in developing the scheme proposal. An explanation of how comments received have shaped and influenced our proposals will be reported in a Consultation Report prepared by Highways England which will accompany the DCO application as required by Section 37(3) (c) of the Planning Act 2008. The Planning Inspectorate will decide whether the application meets the required standards to proceed to examination and will determine whether Highways England's pre-application consultation has been adequate.

Highways England needs to collect and assess all responses to consultation before compiling the DCO application to the Planning Inspectorate. To allow time to do this we must receive feedback by the **22nd October 2017**.

If you want to contact us or find out more about the scheme you can:

- Visit the scheme webpage: www.highways.gov.uk/a19-testos-downhill-lane
- Email us: A19DownhillLane@highwaysengland.co.uk
- Call us: 0300 270 2719
- Write to us: A19 Downhill Lane Junction Improvement Project Team, Highways England, Lateral, 8 City Walk, Leeds, LS11 9AT.

Date: 4th September 2017

Local Authorities affected by the scheme
Sunderland Council
South Tyneside Council
Gateshead Council

Adjoining Local Authorities

Sunderland Council
South Tyneside Council Appendix 3 – Documents to be made available for inspection at deposit points listed at this section.

SoCC
Preliminary Environmental Information (PEI)
Leaflets/Feedback Form (Questionnaire)