



A47/A11

Thickthorn junction improvement scheme

Public consultation

Share
your views



Investing in your roads

At Highways England we believe in a connected country and our network makes these connections happen. We strive to improve our major roads and motorways – engineering the future to keep people moving today and moving better tomorrow. We want to make sure all our major roads are more dependable, durable and, most importantly, safe.

That's why we're delivering £15 billion of investment on our network – the largest investment in a generation. The A47/A11 Thickthorn junction improvement scheme is a critical part of this investment and will improve access to Norwich and journeys between Thetford and Great Yarmouth, which is great news for the local and regional economy. The scheme is one of six major road improvements along the A47 to create better and safer journeys along the 115 mile route between Peterborough and Great Yarmouth.

The other A47 schemes in development are:

- A47 Wansford to Sutton dualling
- A47/A141 Guyhirn junction
- A47 North Tuddenham to Easton dualling
- A47 Blofield to North Burlingham dualling
- A47 Great Yarmouth junction (formerly A47/A12 junctions)

Visit the A47 corridor webpage for more information on these schemes:

www.highwaysengland.co.uk/A47Thickthorn

The A47/A11 Thickthorn junction improvement scheme is categorised as a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP) under the Planning Act 2008. As such, we are required to make an application for a Development Consent Order (DCO) to obtain planning permission to construct the scheme. You can find more information about the Planning Inspectorate and the Planning Act 2008 on the Gov.uk website: <https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk> or by calling the Planning Inspectorate on 0303 444 5000.

In this brochure we explain our proposals for the scheme. Alongside the brochure is the consultation response form for you to provide us with feedback, which will help us shape the scheme before we submit our planning application.

How to respond

We're now holding a public consultation on our proposals. We'd like to hear what you think, so please share any concerns, ideas or local knowledge that you may have. The consultation will run from 3 June 2019 to 11 July 2019 and there are lots of ways you can tell us what you think. Why not come along to one of our public consultation exhibitions? Alternatively, you can view all the consultation materials on our webpage: www.highwaysengland.co.uk/A47Thickthorn.

Please respond using one of the following methods:



Online: www.highwaysengland.co.uk/A47Thickthorn



By post: Freepost A47 THICKTHORN JUNCTION



In person: By visiting one of the public consultation exhibitions listed to the right

Public consultation exhibitions

One of the best ways to find out more about our proposals and have your say is to come to one of our public consultation exhibitions. Here you'll be able to find out more about the scheme and speak to members of the project team who will be happy to answer any questions you may have.

Location	Date
Hethersett Village Hall, Back Lane, Hethersett, Norwich, NR9 3JJ	Monday 10 June 2019 1pm – 8pm
Ketteringham Village Hall, High Street, Ketteringham, Wymondham, NR18 9RU	Thursday 13 June 2019 1pm – 8pm
The Willow Centre, 1–13 Willowcroft Way, Cringleford, Norwich, NR4 7JJ	Friday 14 June 2019 1pm – 8pm
Number 47, 47 Giles Street, Norwich, NR2 1JR	Saturday 15 June 2019 11am – 5pm

All responses must be returned by **23:59 on Thursday 11 July 2019.**



Where to get the brochure

Paper consultation brochures and response forms will also be available at the following locations from Monday 3 June 2019 (availability will depend on opening times).

Public information point locations	Opening times
North Wymondham Community Centre, 44 Lime Tree Avenue, Wymondham, NR18 0HH	Monday – Saturday 10am – 4pm Please phone ahead (01953 606 709) to confirm the opening time before you visit.
Hethersett Library, Queen's Road, Hethersett, Norwich, NR9 3DB	Monday, Wednesday and Friday 10am – 1pm and 2pm – 5pm Thursday 2pm – 7pm Saturday 10am – 2pm Please phone ahead (01603 810 188) to confirm the opening time before you visit.
The Willow Centre, 1–13 Willowcroft Way, Cringleford, Norwich, NR4 7JY	Monday to Friday 9am – 5pm Please phone ahead (01603 457 222) to confirm the opening time before you visit.
Norfolk and Norwich Millennium Library, The Forum, Millennium Plain, Norwich, NR2 1AW	Monday – Friday 10am – 7pm Saturday 9am – 5pm Please phone ahead (01603 774 709) to confirm the opening time before you visit.
Norwich City Council, City Hall, St Peters Street, Norwich, NR2 1NH	Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday 8:45am – 5pm Wednesday 1pm – 5pm Please phone ahead (0344 980 3333) to confirm the opening time before you visit.
Norfolk County Council, County Hall, Martineau Lane, Norwich, NR1 2DH	Monday – Friday 9am – 5pm Please phone ahead (0344 800 8020) to confirm the opening time before you visit.

Why is the scheme needed?

Thickthorn junction is an important junction for those living and working around Norwich, connecting the city with Great Yarmouth and Peterborough via King's Lynn and Wisbech.

Studies have identified the unsuitability of the current junction layout to accommodate journeys between the A11 northbound to A47 eastbound carriageways and the A47 westbound to A11 southbound carriageways.

This is predicted to worsen in future years due to the growth in both traffic and large local residential developments along the A11 corridor to the south-west of Norwich.

By delivering these improvements, we aim to:

- reduce congestion, improve reliability of journey times and provide capacity for future traffic growth
- improve resilience of the road in coping with incidents such as collisions, breakdowns and maintenance
- help facilitate regional development and growth in Norwich and surrounding areas
- improve road safety for all road users and for those living near the junction
- protect the environment by minimising adverse impacts and, where possible, deliver benefits
- ensure the scheme considers local communities and access to the road network, providing a safer route between communities for cyclists, walkers, equestrians and other non-motorist groups



What's happened so far?

Between March and April 2017, we held a consultation in which the public were asked for their views on the proposal to create free flow link roads between the A11 south and the A47 east and provide improvements to the existing junction. The proposed A47 to A11 link road would sever the existing access for Cantley Lane South so a new underpass under the A47 was proposed to reconnect Cantley Lane South and Cantley Lane.

Following feedback from our first consultation, we engaged with local communities and representatives on the local access arrangement for the A47/A11 Thickthorn junction. It was agreed that the proposed severance of Cantley Lane South would require further investigation and, as a result, we assessed several solutions to address these concerns. We have since developed these options to put forward our preferred solution for this consultation. For more information please see our Sideroads Strategy Options Report which is available on our webpage at: www.highwaysengland.co.uk/A47Thickthorn

We have continued to develop the design of the preferred route, with traffic flow and safety as primary considerations. Work has included design development of:

- the junction
- structures
- lighting
- landscaping
- drainage

Engagement is ongoing with utility providers to plan for diversions that may be required to accommodate the scheme. We've also carried out several surveys including:

- aerial topographical surveys
- ecological surveys
- ground investigation surveys

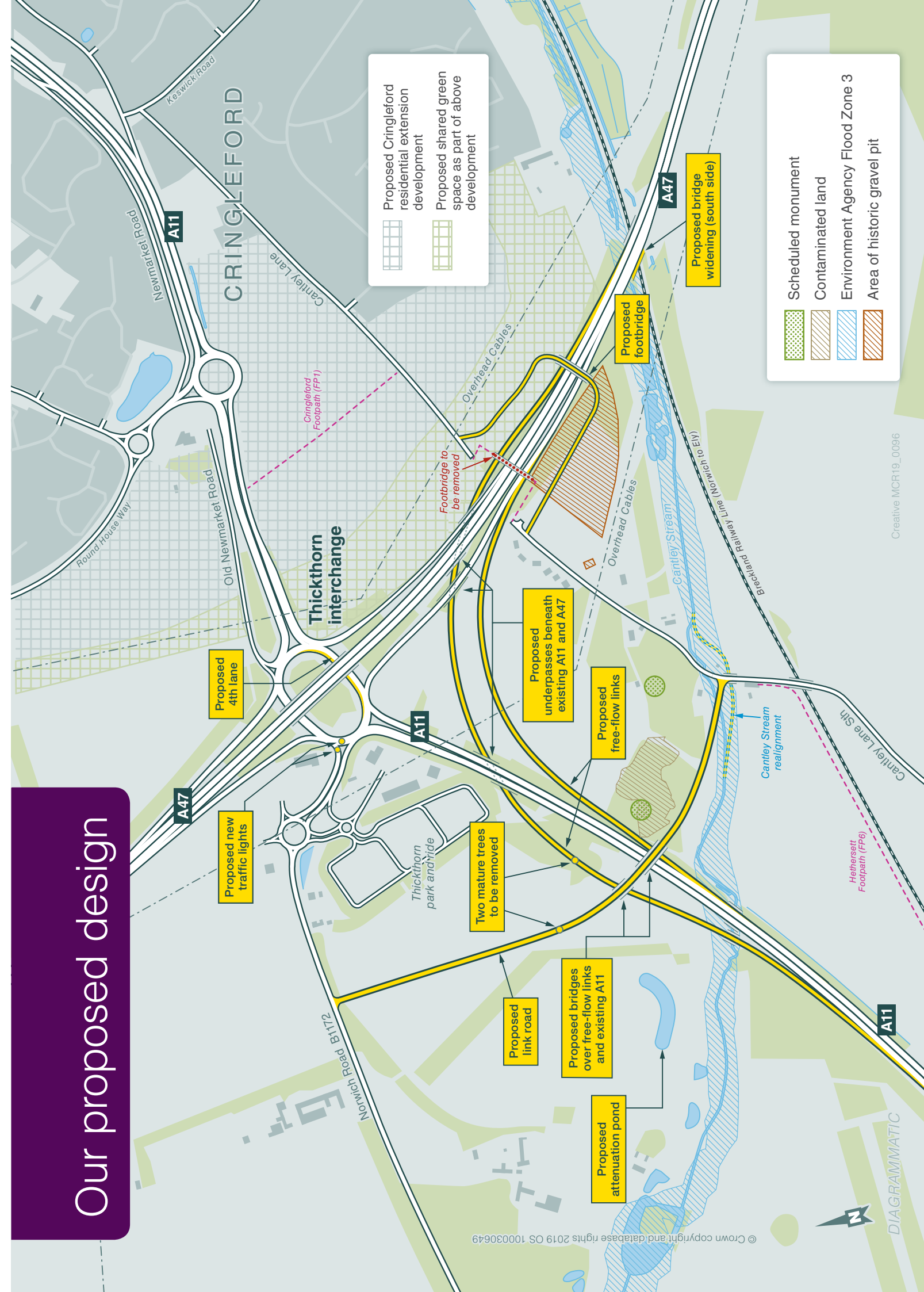
For more information on the previous consultation results and the preferred route announcement please visit our webpage.

Our proposed design

The scheme consists of:

- Two new single lane free-flowing link roads connecting:
 - the A11 northbound to A47 eastbound via three underpasses (under the A11, the A47 westbound and the A47 eastbound)
 - the A47 westbound to A11 southbound
- Improvements to the junction:
 - introducing new traffic lights on the approach to the junction from the B1172
 - incorporating a 4th lane on the southern section of the roundabout
- The existing Cantley Lane South connections to the A11 and A47 will be closed off as part of the works.
- A new link road will connect Cantley Lane South with the B1172 to the north. This will require the construction of two new overbridges.

- Provision for walking, cycling and horse riding is proposed along the new Cantley Lane link road to provide access to local amenities as well as a link to other recreational routes.
- The existing Cantley Lane stream and nearby access track will be realigned to the west. This will require an extension of the existing stream culvert and provision of a new stream culvert underneath Cantley Lane South.
- A new footbridge will be constructed over the A47 for walkers, cyclists and horse riders approximately 200m east of the existing footbridge, which is to be demolished as part of the scheme to facilitate the new link roads.
- Widening the western side of the Cringleford railway bridge to accommodate the A47 – A11 link road.



Benefits and effects of the proposed design

In assessing the benefits and effects of the proposed design, we look at a variety of features including those summarised below. This information is based on our findings from detailed surveys and assessments that we have carried out. Environmental impacts are assessed based on national guidance. For more detailed information, please visit our webpage where you will find our Preliminary Environmental Information Report.

Feature	Benefit / effect of the scheme
Journey times and traffic congestion	<p>The proposed A11 northbound to A47 eastbound free flow link road and the A47 westbound to A11 southbound link road will significantly reduce traffic on the existing roundabout. This will reduce queuing on two of the busiest approaches to the roundabout.</p> <p>The new link roads are predicted to save 16,000 vehicles a day from entering the existing roundabout in the opening year of 2022. This will rise to 17,500 by 2037. Without these proposals, this traffic would continue to enter the existing junction, increasing congestion in and out of Norwich.</p> <p>By 2022, the scheme is also predicted to cut journey times by around four minutes for drivers travelling from the A11 northbound to the A47 eastbound during the morning peak hours. This will rise to five and a half minutes in 2037. The A11 northbound traffic that continues to use the roundabout will save approximately five minutes on their journeys, as a result of the reduction in traffic.</p>
Access for local residents	<p>The improved operation of the roundabout will provide a quicker alternative route for a significant proportion of the traffic.</p> <p>To the west of the Thickthorn junction a new link road will connect Cantley Lane South with the B1172 to the north.</p>
Air quality	<p>We will consider health-related issues of local and regional air quality together with the global issue of climate change. We are currently analysing data from long term air quality monitoring in the local area and putting in place mitigation measures such as a dust management system so that potential impacts are controlled and monitored. Construction related activity will also be planned in a way which will reduce the impact of emissions on the local area, whilst also preventing nuisance to residents.</p>

Feature	Benefit / effect of the scheme
Noise	<p>To help reduce noise levels from road traffic once the road is open, we will assess the use of noise reduction measures as part of the design. During construction, the noise reduction measures will include using modern construction techniques, low-noise construction plant and local noise screening.</p> <p>We will undertake noise surveys and continue to assess any potential noise and vibration impacts to allow us to build in appropriate mitigation, which may include earth banking, timber fencing and appropriate landscape design.</p>
Cultural heritage	<p>We are conducting archaeological surveys to identify any risks of disturbing significant remains during construction.</p> <p>The scheme has been designed so that there is no encroachment on the two bronze age burial mounds, which are a Scheduled Monument, located to the south-west of Thickthorn junction.</p>
Landscape	<p>During construction we will use mitigation measures such as the retention of existing planting where possible. We will introduce new areas of native tree and shrub planting to replace areas of planting that will need to be removed. This, along with appropriate landform (embankments and cuttings), will be used to screen views of the new link roads.</p>
Nature conservation	<p>We have been carrying out ecological surveys and have identified the presence of barn owls, kingfishers, reptiles, bats, otters and water voles. Designated sites within the vicinity of the scheme include several local wildlife sites. Current habitats include veteran trees, broadleaved semi-natural woodland, species-rich hedgerows and grassland.</p> <p>We will use best practice mitigation measures to reduce the risk of impacts on designated sites, protected species and habitats. Examples may include the sensitive timing of work to avoid breeding seasons, directional and low-level lighting and the sensitive location of construction machinery.</p> <p>Once operational, mitigation measures will include the creation of replacement habitats for identified species.</p>

Feature	Benefit / effect of the scheme
Road drainage and the water environment	<p>The existing Cantley Lane stream and nearby access track will be realigned to the west. This will require an extension of the existing culvert and provision of a new culvert underneath Cantley Lane South.</p> <p>To prevent pollution, we will use best practice mitigation measures during construction such as the safe storage of materials away from drains and watercourses.</p> <p>To help reduce the risk of flooding, we will implement a sustainable drainage system. To support this, a flood risk assessment will inform the designs of the surface water drainage system.</p>
Road safety	The scheme will result in safety improvements to help reduce the number of people killed or seriously injured in collisions on this section of the road network.
Geology	<p>Construction of the proposed scheme could potentially result in some disturbance to the former Cantley Lane landfill site, so we will undertake further ground investigation surveys to determine the extent of the landfill site.</p> <p>During construction, we will implement best practice measures to protect soil structure and quality, minimise waste generation and protect controlled waters from both general site works.</p>
Construction duration and impacts	We estimate construction will take up to two years. We will minimise the impacts on the road network and local communities during this time and will provide further details including a construction traffic management plan as part of our Development Consent Order application.
Walkers, cyclists and horse riders	<p>A new footbridge will be constructed over the A47 for walkers, cyclists and horse riders approximately 200m east of the existing footbridge, which is set to be demolished as part of the scheme.</p> <p>Additional provision for walking and cycling is proposed along the new Cantley Lane link road, to provide improved access to local amenities as well as a link to other recreational routes for users.</p>
Local communities	We will work with local communities to put in place appropriate mitigation measures during construction.
Materials	Modern construction techniques will be used to ensure that waste materials generated on-site will be recycled/re-used where possible. This will directly decrease the impacts from the use of materials.

Next steps

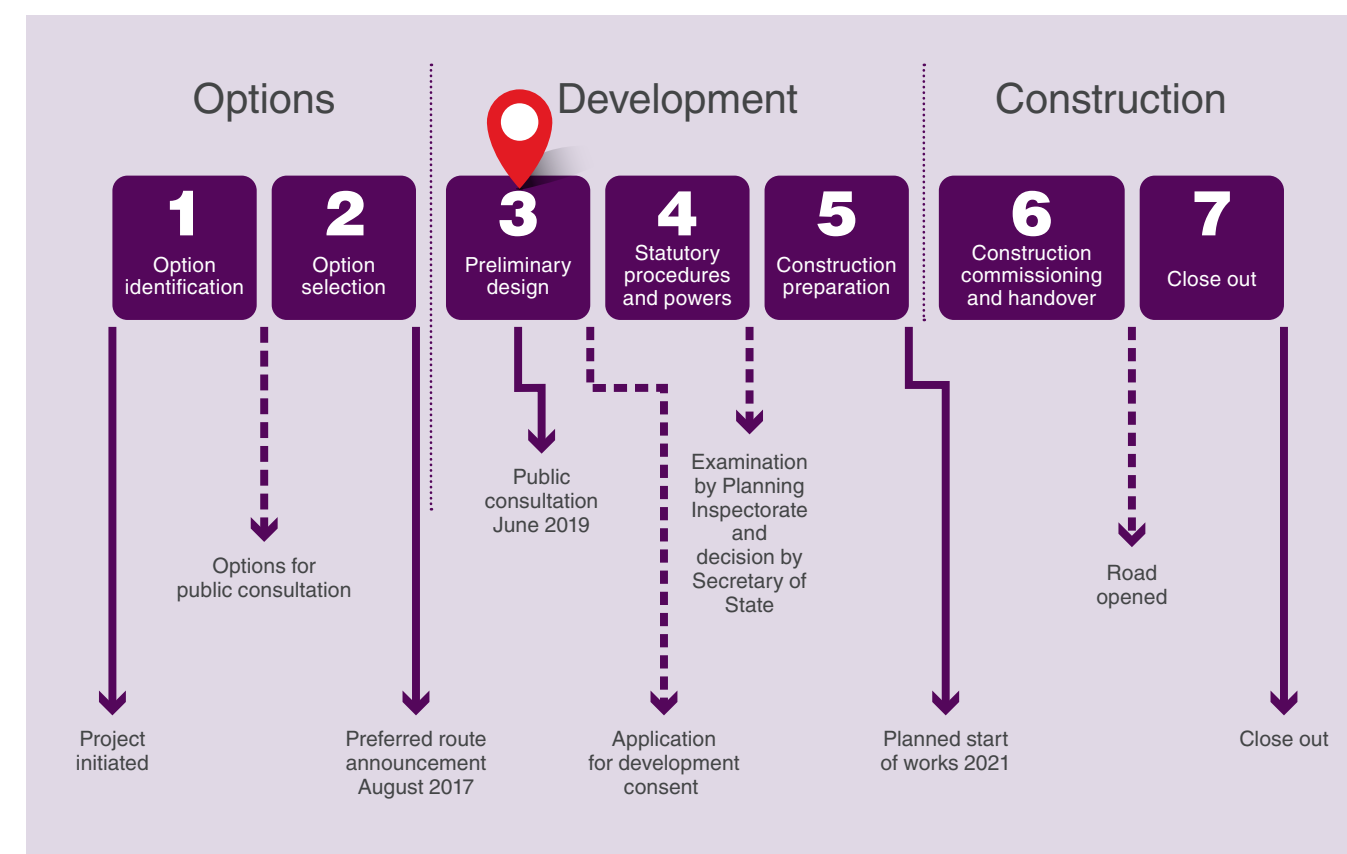
Once the consultation has closed on 11 July 2019, we will review all the suggestions and comments received during consultation. We will take time to analyse and consider your feedback when making further refinements to the proposed design and to develop our planned mitigation measures. We will set out a summary of the responses and describe how our proposals have been informed by and influenced by them, in a consultation report. This will form part of our planning application and will also be available to the public following submission of the application. We expect to submit our DCO application by winter 2019 and, provided it is granted, works are expected to start in 2021.

In addition to this consultation process, we will continue to engage with anyone interested in, or impacted by, the scheme.

To help us shape the final design in preparation of our submission to the Planning Inspectorate, it is important you are involved now and submit your response by **Thursday 11 July 2019**.

Once we submit our application, the Planning Inspectorate (acting on behalf of the Secretary of State) will decide whether to accept the application for examination or not. An examination of that application is likely to include public hearings. Following the examination, the Planning Inspectorate will make a recommendation to the Secretary of State for Transport, who will decide on whether the scheme will be granted consent.

The process for this is explained in the table below.



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