

A417 Missing Link

Moving forward: response to public consultation in 2020 and next steps





Purpose of this booklet

Thank you for taking an interest in this project. Your feedback is important, and it's helped shape our plans so far. This booklet summarises how the latest feedback received during our public consultation held in autumn 2020 has influenced the plans that we've submitted to the Planning Inspectorate. It also talks you through the next steps of the process and how you can get involved.

For more detailed information about public consultation and how we've responded to feedback, we recommend you read the [A417 Missing Link consultation report](#).

To read the documents published in support of our application, visit the [Planning Inspectorate's website](#).

The scheme

The A417/A419 provides an important route between Gloucester, Cheltenham and Swindon that helps connect the West Midlands and the north to the south of England via the M5 and M4 motorways. While most of the route is dual carriageway, there is one section that isn't. Known as the Missing Link, this three-mile stretch of single carriageway between the Brockworth bypass and Cowley roundabout severely restricts the flow of traffic.

We plan to build 3.4 miles (5.5 km) of new dual carriageway, which will considerably improve road safety, reduce traffic congestion and improve connectivity for road users and local communities, while unlocking economic growth in Gloucestershire and beyond. We're committed to delivering the A417 Missing Link scheme with the support of central government, who confirmed [funding in their second Road Investment Strategy \(RIS2\)](#), published in March last year (2020).

Scheme objectives

At the start of the project, we set ourselves clear objectives for the scheme:

- **Transport and safety:** to reduce delays, create a free-flowing road network and improve safety along this stretch of the A417
- **Environment and heritage:** to reduce the impact on the landscape, natural and historic environment of the Cotswolds and, where possible, enhance the surrounding environment
- **Community and access:** to reduce queuing traffic and pollution, improve access for local people to the strategic road network and support residents' and visitors' enjoyment of the countryside
- **Economic growth:** to help boost growth and prosperity by making journeys more reliable and improving connectivity

Our landscape vision

We recognise the significance of the scheme and the importance of the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). Through proactive engagement with a number of groups and organisations at the start of this project, we agreed a landscape-led scheme vision statement:

“We want to create a landscape-led highways improvement scheme that will deliver a safe and resilient free-flowing road while conserving and enhancing the special character of the Cotswolds AONB; reconnecting landscape and ecology; bringing about landscape, wildlife and heritage benefits, including enhanced visitors' enjoyment of the area; improving local communities' quality of life; and contributing to the health of the economy and local businesses.”

For more detailed information about our landscape-led approach to the scheme, read the *A417 Missing Link design summary report*.



Consultation summary 2020

We've been working hard over the last six years or so to develop plans to improve the A417 Missing Link and make the road safer and more reliable for all.

We've held a number of consultations in this time. We first consulted on options in 2018, before announcing our preferred route in March 2019. You can view the 2018 consultation documents on our [website](#).

We've since developed and consulted on the preliminary design of the road. Consultations were held in 2019 and 2020, which gave you the opportunity to have your say. For details of how we responded to feedback received in 2019, read our booklet [A417 Missing Link: Responding to feedback from our public consultation 2019](#). You can also view the 2019 and 2020 consultation documents by following the website link above.

In autumn 2020, we held a digital-first consultation. The Covid-19 pandemic and social distancing measures meant that we had to introduce new and innovative ways for you to view and take part in our consultation online, alongside more traditional methods and ways of having your say.



We created an online exhibition and held regular web chats where the project team was on hand to answer any questions you had. We also held a series of online question and answer events focusing on key themes, including:

- Safety, traffic and engineering
- Landscape, wildlife and habitats
- Local access and public rights of way
- Land, property and business
- Development Consent Order submission, examination and construction

In addition, all the information was uploaded to a [dedicated consultation website](#), where you could submit your feedback online or download our feedback questionnaire. Hard copies of documents were made available on request, with a Freepost return address provided. We also held telephone surgeries and in special circumstances, socially distanced meetings with landowners.

We held online meetings with key environmental and specialist stakeholders during this consultation to seek feedback on our revised plans and work collaboratively on solutions.

The feedback we received during this consultation has helped shape the plans that we've now submitted to the Planning Inspectorate for approval. The feedback, and how we've taken it into account, is summarised in this booklet.

1,700

unique visitors to our online exhibition

17

web chats with over 40 conversations

5

Question and answer sessions with over 40 attendees

70

requests of hard copy documents

433

responses

15

telephone call backs



Plans submitted for consent

This map shows some of the improvements we've made as a result of feedback received during our public consultation in autumn 2020. It also shows the scheme design we've submitted to the Planning Inspectorate for consent. You can find more detailed works plans are available on the Planning Inspectorate's website.

Further scheme improvements

1. Widened the proposed Gloucestershire Way crossing and proposed more planting

2. Amended the proposed Cotswold Way crossing to remove the viewing platform. (the resting area will remain)

3. Added new areas of native, species-rich grassland and trees to improve ecological connections between Crickley Hill and Barrow Wake Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) via the proposed Gloucestershire Way crossing

4. Extended the public right of way on the proposed Air Balloon Way (part of the repurposed A417), all the way up to the proposed Cotswold Way crossing

5. Reshaped replacement common land, which will now be adjacent and separate to the extended Air Balloon Way

6. Added a pedestrian connection between Cowley Wood Lane and the proposed Air Balloon Way

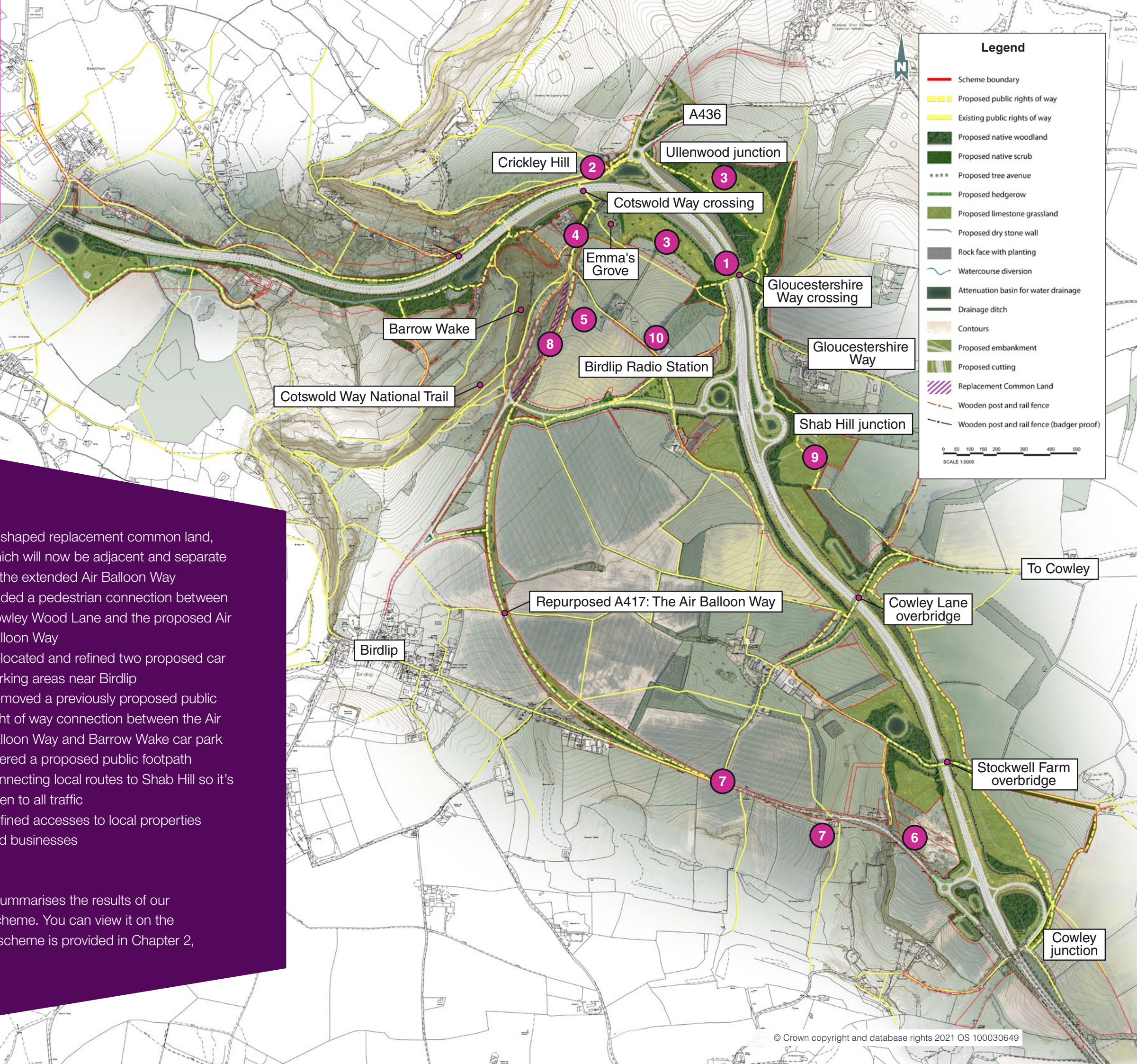
7. Relocated and refined two proposed car parking areas near Birdlip

8. Removed a previously proposed public right of way connection between the Air Balloon Way and Barrow Wake car park

9. Altered a proposed public footpath connecting local routes to Shab Hill so it's open to all traffic

10. Refined accesses to local properties and businesses

We've put together an Environmental Statement, which summarises the results of our surveys and our plans for minimising the impact of the scheme. You can view it on the [Planning Inspectorate's website](#). A full description of the scheme is provided in Chapter 2, while design changes are set out in Chapter 3.



Responding to feedback

Design changes proposed in autumn 2020

What you told us

We consulted on our updated proposals, including the following design changes, in autumn 2020:

- 1. New crossings: Cotswold Way and Gloucestershire Way crossings
- 2. The change in gradient of the A417 as it climbs the escarpment near Crickley Hill
- 3. The design of Cowley junction
- 4. The rerouting of the B4070 to Birdlip via Barrow Wake
- 5. Improved access for walkers, cyclists and horse riders, including disabled users
- 6. The location of replacement common land

These changes were well received by local people, with 70% of respondents supporting the changes and only around 10% stating opposition. We received some requests for further improvements.

Our response

Following such positive feedback, we've now updated our plans. There have also been some further improvements made because of your feedback, which we summarise in the coming pages.



Principle and value of the development

What you told us

This consultation highlighted again the strong support we have for this scheme. There were some people who raised concerns about the potential impact of the new road on the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), and the effect that road building has on the environment and climate change. There were also some objections to the scheme from a few people who were upset about the loss of the Air Balloon pub, which will be demolished if the scheme goes ahead.

Our response

The A417 Missing Link is a critical road enhancement scheme that will improve road safety, reduce traffic congestion and improve connectivity for road users and local communities, while unlocking economic growth in Gloucestershire and beyond. It supports the economic growth aspirations for the area.

Impact on the Cotswolds AONB

The Cotswolds AONB is designated for its special qualities, including landscape, geology, wildlife, biodiversity and cultural heritage. With this in mind, the A417 Missing Link has been carefully and sympathetically designed. Landscape has been at the heart of our design decisions; we've designed the road to fit into the landscape rather than the other way around. You can read more about this in our [A417 Missing Link design summary report](#).

The Air Balloon pub

The Air Balloon pub needs to be demolished to make way for the new road. While it's not a listed building and we're not required to do so, we're going to undertake a detailed historic building recording as part of the mitigation for the scheme.

Recognising that the pub was named after one of the first British balloon flights and to retain the history of the area we're proposing to call the repurposed A417 the Balloon War, subject to approval by the local authority. We'll also continue to work with our stakeholders and look for more opportunities to celebrate the heritage of the area.

Climate change

We recognise people's concerns about climate change, and we've assessed the scheme's effects on carbon emissions and the environment as part of our application.

We've identified lots of ways of reducing the carbon footprint of the scheme. For example, in 2020, we changed the gradient of the A417 as it climbs the escarpment near Crickley Hill from 10 percent to 8 percent rather than from 10 percent to 7 percent. This change lowers the carbon footprint of the scheme by reducing construction traffic and the amount of soil and rock that needs to be dug out. It also removes the need for 1,200 metres of large retaining walls.

During construction, we'll also:

- set targets for carbon emissions
- explore the use of renewable energy generation and electronic equipment and vehicles at construction compounds
- source recycled or secondary materials from the local area
- where possible, use lower carbon materials

More information about what we're doing during construction can be found in our [Construction Traffic Management Plan](#) on the Planning Inspectorate's website. On this website, you will also find our climate assessments, which are in [Chapter 14](#) of the Environmental Statement.

The Jenner story

Edward Jenner, also known as The Father of Immunology, was born in Berkeley in Gloucestershire, and is famous for developing the first smallpox vaccine in 1796.

As well as immunology, Jenner had a fascination for hot air balloons. 2 September 1784 at 2pm, he released a hot air balloon from the courtyard of Berkeley Castle, which is thought to have travelled 24 miles in total - no mean feat given the infancy of this technology.

Jenner's balloon is thought to have landed first at Kingscote Park near Tetbury, and then again east of Gloucester on the escarpment at Birdlip.



Public rights of way

What you told us

Feedback showed support for the improvements we've made to public rights of way in the area. These include the repurposing part of the existing A417, which will become a five metre wide route for walkers, cyclists and horse riders, including disabled users.

There was also wide support for the addition of the Cotswold Way crossing and the Gloucestershire Way crossing and the other improved connections for walkers, cyclists and horse riders, including disabled users.

There were requests to do the following:

- widen the Cotswold Way crossing
- add a public right of way connection near Cowley junction
- improve crossing arrangements of the B4070 on the proposed Air Balloon Way
- amend some public rights of way designations to allow more people to access existing and new routes
- add more crossings of the A417

Our response

In response to feedback we've:

- extended the proposed Air Balloon Way all the way up to the proposed Cotswold Way crossing
- added a footpath along the road to connect Cowley Wood Lane to the proposed Air Balloon Way

We've also:

- added equestrian holding areas to enable the safe crossing of the proposed B4070 link road
- converted the proposed footpath east of Shab Hill to a byway open to all traffic and users
- removed a previously proposed public right of way connection between the proposed Air Balloon Way and Barrow Wake car park, to reduce potential impacts on this environmentally sensitive area.

The Cotswold Way crossing will be five metres wide which is appropriate for walkers, cyclists and horse riders, including disabled users, and consistent with that of the proposed Air Balloon Way.

Visualisation of the equestrian crossing on the B4070



We've not added any additional crossings of the A417 beyond those consulted upon in autumn 2020. This is because the new crossings we're already proposing, such as the Cotswold Way crossing, Gloucestershire Way crossing, and Grove Farm underpass, adequately reconnect the Cotswold Way National Trail and the Gloucestershire Way, and provide safe connections to existing and proposed routes. To add to this, there is also an existing crossing

of the A417 at Bentham Lane. More crossings would cause additional and unnecessary impacts on the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and local ecology, pose engineering risks, and offer poor value for money.

For more detailed information about the improvements we're making to local public rights of way and how we'll manage them during [construction](#), read our [public rights of way management plan](#).

A new pedestrian connection will be added to connect Cowley Wood Lane and the proposed Air Balloon Way



Impact on property, land and business

What you told us

Throughout the development of this scheme, we've continued our discussions with owners of property, land and business. In particular, we received requests from landowners to change some access arrangements, and there were concerns raised by residents of Birdlip about the impact of new parking areas proposed nearby. In addition, we were asked by environmental consultees to reduce, move, or remove the car park at Barrow Wake as it's very close to the Crickley Hill and Barrow Wake Site of Special Scientific Interest.

Our response

Following feedback from landowners, we've made several amendments to the scheme. For example, we've changed the access to the Ullenwood Bharat Cricket Club and widened the access to Birdlip Radio Station.

In addition, we've looked at the amount of land required temporarily for construction, and permanently for access and maintenance, and amended our plans to reduce the impact on the land.

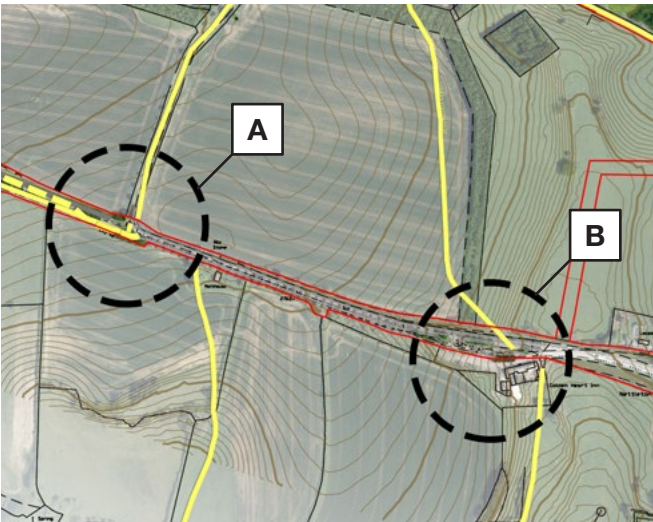
We're also working closely with local people and businesses to carefully consider and address

their concerns about noise during construction, alongside other impacts. Following feedback from residents of Birdlip, we've amended the car parking provision for users of the proposed Air Balloon Way to address concerns about antisocial behaviour. General car parking and horse box parking will now be located near the Golden Heart Inn, and a smaller disabled parking area will be provided off the Stockwell Farm junction, further away from the village. We've also clarified with Cowley and Birdlip Parish Council that the Old Cirencester Road (also known as Ermin Way) will not be opened up to traffic and therefore not used as a through route.

Some environmental stakeholders asked us to reduce, remove or relocate Barrow Wake car park. This change would not form part of the project, but we've offered to help inform or facilitate any discussions there might be about proposed changes to this car park. We'll ensure the A417 scheme is able to accommodate the existing car park, or a future scenario where the car park might be reduced or removed.

We're committed to continued engagement with stakeholders, including landowners, throughout the examination, detailed design and construction stages of the scheme to help address any concerns or queries.

Amended car parking provision for users of the proposed Air Balloon Way



A. Proposed disabled parking at Stockwell junction



B. Proposed general and horsebox parking at the Golden Heart Inn



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Local journeys

What you told us

During consultation, lots of people wanted to know how the new A417 would affect traffic on local roads. There were questions about the design and ability of the proposed roundabouts to accommodate projected traffic flows. Concerns were also raised about the safety of Shab Hill junction, in particular traffic merging onto the A417.

In addition, we had a lot of feedback about the changes to Cowley junction. While many residents welcomed the fact that we would prevent road users (except immediate residents) accessing Cowley via Cowley junction, some asked if there would be rat running elsewhere, and also wanted clarification about how they would access the A417 or their properties following the changes.

Following safety concerns about turning school buses, Cowley and Birdlip Parish Council also asked if we would be able to relocate the Birdlip school bus stop.

Our response

Traffic

With the exception of Leckhampton Hill, there will be less traffic on local roads after the A417 Missing Link is built. This is because the A417 will no longer pass through Cowley or Ullenwood junctions and less congestion and delays and a more free-flowing road will mean users of the A417 will no longer seek alternative local routes. We've undertaken extensive traffic modelling that utilises the latest traffic growth data currently available from the Department for Transport. The traffic modelling shows that there will be a reduction of traffic in both directions at the following locations:

- through Birdlip
- through Elkstone
- on the A436 between Ullenwood junction and the A40
- on the A435 between Cheltenham and Cirencester

Less traffic will mean that local journeys should be quicker and easier.

At Leckhampton Hill there will be a slight increase in traffic because there will be a redistribution of traffic travelling from south Cheltenham to Cirencester and on towards the M4. Currently, vehicles travel on the A435 through Seven Springs and then south on the A435. Traffic either stays on the A435 or joins the A417 via the Highwayman Inn junction before travelling south.

With the new road built, our modelling shows that a proportion of this traffic would redistribute onto Leckhampton Hill and then the A436 to join the A417 at Shab Hill as this will be the quickest and easiest route. We will work with local stakeholders to ensure this road remains safe for all users.

Potential rerouting of traffic from south Cheltenham



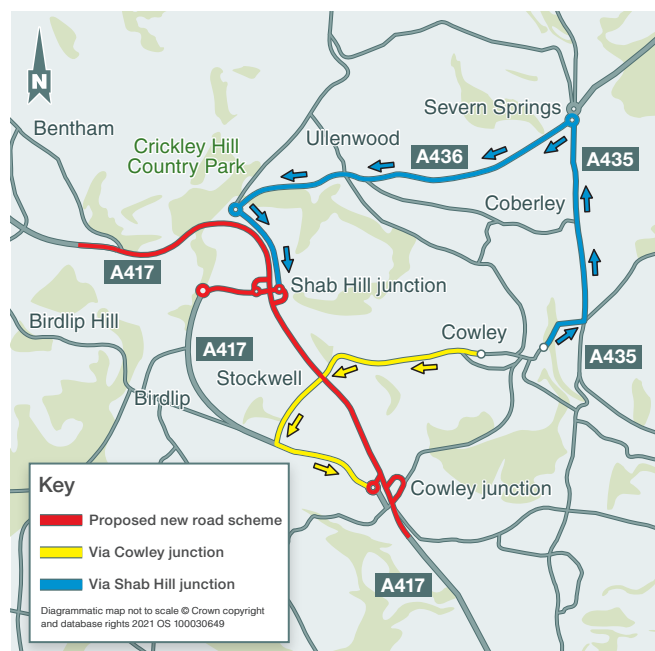
Cowley junction

Access to Cowley from Cowley junction will be ‘stopped up’, meaning that there will be a restriction to general traffic. Signage and other measures will make it clear that access is for immediate residents only. Access to Cowley Wood Lane will be retained for walkers, cyclists and horse riders, including disabled users. We’ll finalise this arrangement, including any signage, surfacing and enclosures such as fencing, gates and bollards, at the detailed design stage. Residents from Cowley will be able to access the A417 via two routes: one connecting into Cowley junction and one connecting to Shab Hill junction.

Via Cowley junction: vehicles can travel along the existing road from Cowley village (that passes Stockwell Farm) via the new Cowley Lane overbridge, which will connect into a section of the existing A417 that will be retained. From there, vehicles will travel past the Golden Heart Inn public house to the new Cowley junction to access the new A417.

Via Shab Hill junction: vehicles can travel on the A435 and A436 to join the A417 at the new Shab Hill junction.

Proposed route from Cowley to the A417 once the new road is built



Shab Hill junction

Concerns about traffic merging from Shab Hill junction onto the A417 have been raised in the past. We’ve designed all new junctions to modern safety standards and to accommodate future projected traffic flows. Using the latest forecast data, we’ve made slight changes to Shab Hill and Ullenwood junctions to ensure this is the case.



Birdlip school bus stop

We’ve carefully considered the relocation of Birdlip school bus stop within the land available as part of the scheme and we’ve discussed opportunities with Cowley and Birdlip Parish Council and Gloucestershire County Council officers.

We’ve offered to inform or facilitate any future discussions about the bus stop and access arrangements. We want to reassure people that we’ll not adversely impact the existing bus stop arrangement, and if required, we’ll be able to accommodate a relocated bus stop if it falls within our scheme boundary.

Cultural heritage

What you told us

During consultation, there were concerns about the impact of the scheme on the historic environment and archaeology in the area. There were also questions about the limited survey data available at the time of consultation.

Our response

Our archaeological surveys were ongoing at the time of consultation due to delays in gaining access to the land. We’ve now completed extensive archaeological surveys of the area.



During our surveys, we found a number of interesting artefacts, which are being analysed. We’ve compiled a detailed mitigation plan for the future stages of the project in collaboration with Historic England and the County Archaeologist at Gloucestershire County Council.

Ahead of construction, our team of archaeologists, under the watchful eye of Historic England and the County Archaeologist, will monitor digs before work will be allowed to continue. Any interesting archaeological finds will be excavated, analysed and preserved for future generations to enjoy.



Landscape

What you told us

While we've gone to great lengths to help ensure the road is integrated into the special landscape of the Cotswold AONB, there were requests for more screening and planting to help hide the road and protect the area's unique views.

We also received comments about the proposed Cotswold Way crossing, in particular the materials it will be built from and its impact on the landscape. People also wanted to know what surfaces we will use on the other proposed crossings and the Air Balloon Way.

Our response

As mentioned earlier in this booklet, we've designed the road to fit in with this unique landscape. At every stage, design decisions have been made with this special landscape in mind.

Following consultation in autumn 2020 we've made some improvements to the scheme.

We've added a landscape bund at Crickley Hill between Fly up 417 bike park and Grove Farm to help screen the views of the road, particularly from Barrow Wake and the Cotswold Way National Trail between The Peak and Barrow Wake. It will ensure minimal impact on views as shown in the 15-year visualisation on page 15.

We've also redesigned landscape bunds south of Shab Hill, extended the false cutting on the north-west bound side of the road all the way to Shab Hill and added a false cutting to the north-east side of Shab Hill at Coldwell Bottom. All of these changes will better integrate the road into the landscape and further reduce noise and screen the views of the road.

In addition, we'll remove planting on the south side of Barrow Wake car park to reduce the impact on the Crickley Hill and Barrow Wake Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). We'll also add planting around new drainage basins to integrate them into the landscape and add hedgerow and avenue trees on Cowley Lane to improve landscape connectivity.

Map showing locations of landscape bunds which will help screen the views of the road

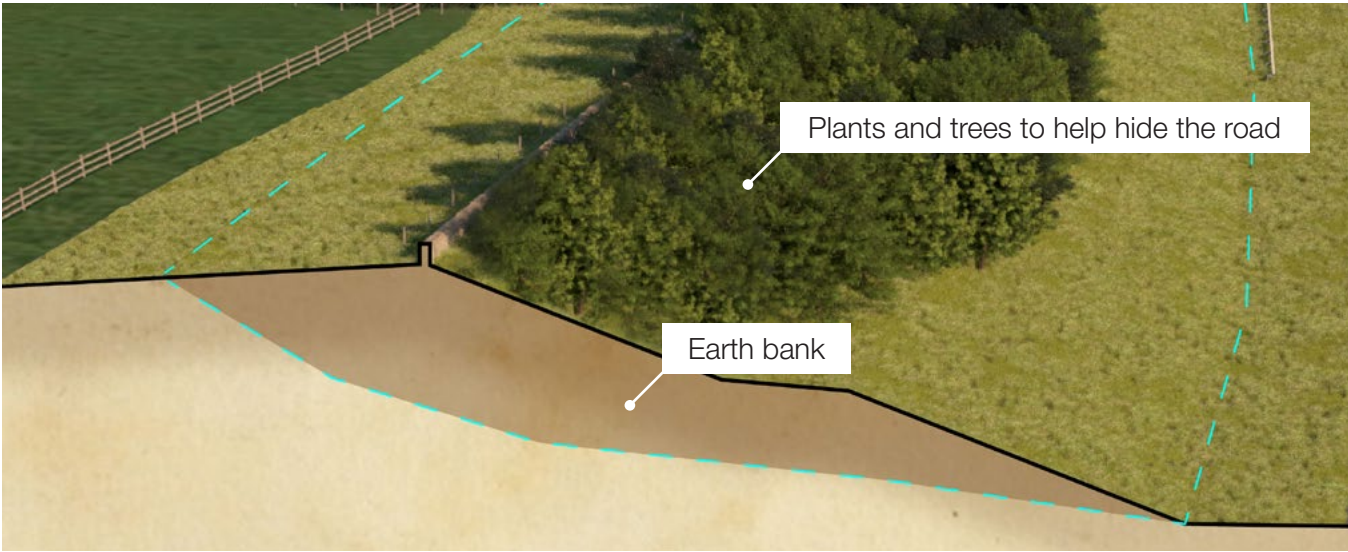


What are they?

False cutting = man-made embankments on either side of the new road to help reduce noise and help hide the road.

Landscape bund = earth bank with plants and trees to help hide the road.

Cross section showing landscape bunds used to screen views of the road



View from Barrow Wake showing the benefit of planting and screening of the road



To view larger versions of these and other visualisations see Chapter 7 of the Environmental Statement.

To minimise the impact on the landscape, we've altered the design of the Cotswold Way crossing, making it more slender, and removed the viewing area. The resting area will, however, remain.

When it comes to materials and surfacing, we will finalise this at the detailed design stage following approval of the scheme. See the *A417 Missing Link design summary report* for more details.

The Cotswold Way crossing



The Cotswold Way crossing from Cold Slad Lane



Preliminary design

High level plans are developed in consultation with local people and key stakeholders. These plans enable us to carry out assessments and apply for Development Consent.

Detailed design

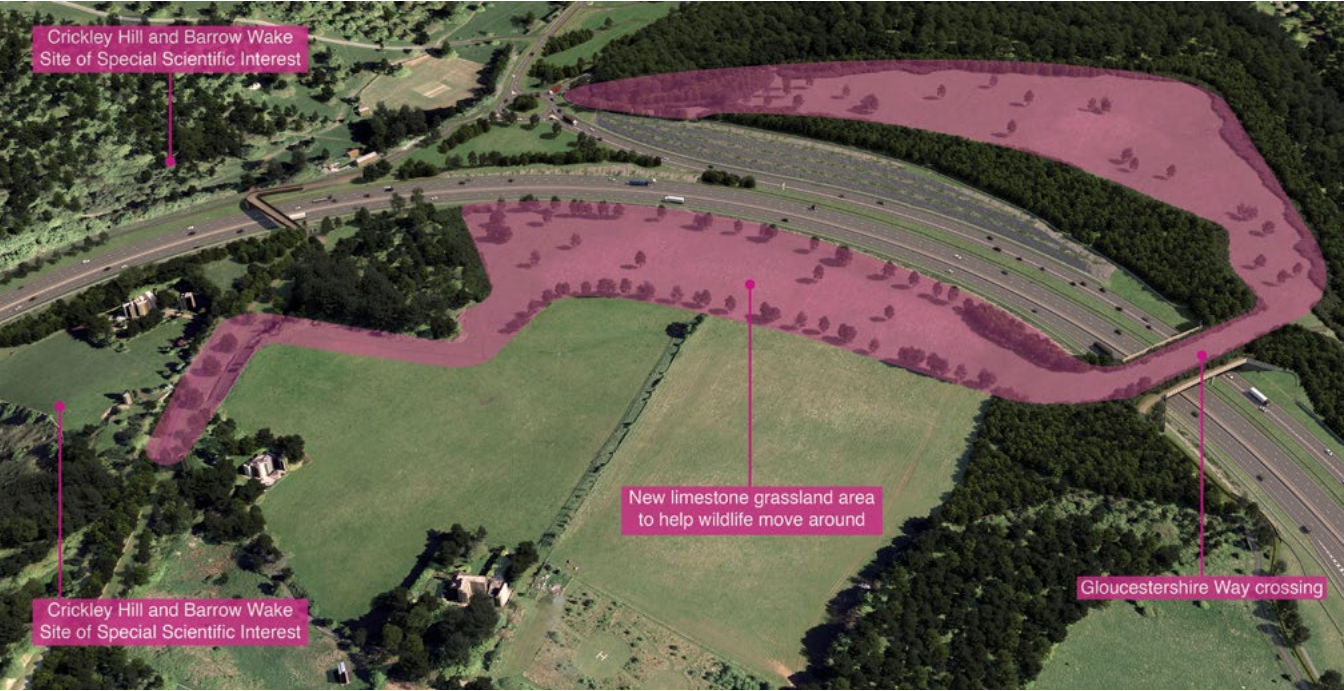
Detailed plans are developed ahead of construction. For example, details of surfacing, signage and materials will be refined in consultation with the appointed contractor and Gloucestershire County Council as the highways authority.

At this stage, there will be further opportunities for our stakeholders and local interest groups to be involved.



Habitat and ecology

Extra planting helps wildlife move around more easily



What you told us

During consultation in autumn 2020, environmental stakeholders scrutinised our plans and asked us to continue looking at ways to maximise biodiversity.

Environmental stakeholders welcomed the addition of the Gloucestershire Way crossing but requested that it be wider and that we add areas of limestone, species-rich grassland and trees between the crossing and the Crickley Hill and Barrow Wake Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) so that wildlife can move more easily over the crossing and to the SSSI. Some people also requested that we add planting to the Cotswold Way crossing to help wildlife cross the road.

In addition, they raised concerns about the impact of the new B4070, Barrow Wake roundabout and the proposed public right of way on the SSSI.

Landscape integration and habitat creation

Here are some of the positive things we are doing to benefit the area:



*these numbers are taken from the Environmental Statement.

Our response

Biodiversity net gain

Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) is an approach to development that leaves biodiversity in a better state than it was before.

While it is not a legal requirement for nationally significant infrastructure projects such as this to achieve BNG, we're a responsible developer and through the design process have sought to maximise biodiversity improvements wherever we can.

As part of this scheme, we're planting lots of new, native and high-quality woodland, grassland, trees and hedgerows to help preserve and create additional habitats for local wildlife in the area.

We've worked collaboratively with environmental stakeholders, including Natural England, and will create more important habitats than we're taking away. They've agreed that the habitats we create should be right for the local area, in keeping with the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), and help improve connections between existing local habitats.

Department for Environment and Rural Affairs and Natural England are currently developing a BNG calculator that uses set criteria to score habitats before and after construction to check if there is a loss or gain in biodiversity. This is a slightly different way of looking at BNG and even though it's still in development and not a requirement, we've applied this calculation to the project.

Despite gains in habitat and biodiversity across the project, the current calculator shows a negative score, as the habitats we're creating such as limestone grassland, while appropriate to the Cotswold Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty do not score very highly in the calculator.

If we were to plant higher scoring plants in the AONB, for example brambles, the calculator would show a gain, but this approach would not be appropriate.

We're continuing to work with local landowners to explore further opportunities for creating more of the right habitats and improving biodiversity in the local area.



The Gloucestershire Way crossing



The Gloucestershire Way crossing

In response to feedback from environmental stakeholders, we’ve widened the Gloucestershire Way crossing from 25 metres to 37 metres. By doing this, we’ve increased an area of native grassland planting, which will make it easier for wildlife to use the crossing. We’ve also added new areas of native, species-rich grassland and trees to help wildlife move between the crossing and the SSSI.

The Cotswold Way crossing

We’ve not added planting to this crossing because its primary purpose is to provide a safe crossing of the A417 for users of the Cotswold Way National Trail.

Ecological surveys have informed the design of all the crossings on the scheme and where needed, we’ve provided crossings for wildlife. For example, we’ve added lots of planting to the Gloucestershire Way crossing, Cowley overbridge and Stockwell Farm overbridge. We’re also proposing a bat underpass near Dog Lane.

Further planting on the Cotswold Way Crossing would not serve an effective ecological purpose and would require a larger structure within the landscape, resulting in unnecessary adverse impacts on the Cotswold Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, additional land take and cost.

In addition, we’re making several changes to reduce the impact of Barrow Wake roundabout and the B4070 on the SSSI. The footprint of the Barrow Wake roundabout has been made smaller and we’re also making the earthworks on the western side of the B4070 steeper to minimise land take.

We’ve also altered the boundary of the replacement common land. It remains in the same location but is now a slightly different

shape to allow us to extend the proposed Air Balloon Way all the way up to the Cotswold Way crossing. It will be planted to help connect it with other nearby habitats such as the SSSI.

This means we can now remove the public right of way adjacent to the SSSI, and route walkers, cyclists and horse riders along the proposed Air Balloon Way instead of through the Barrow Wake car park.

Map showing replacement common land and proposed Air Balloon Way arrangements



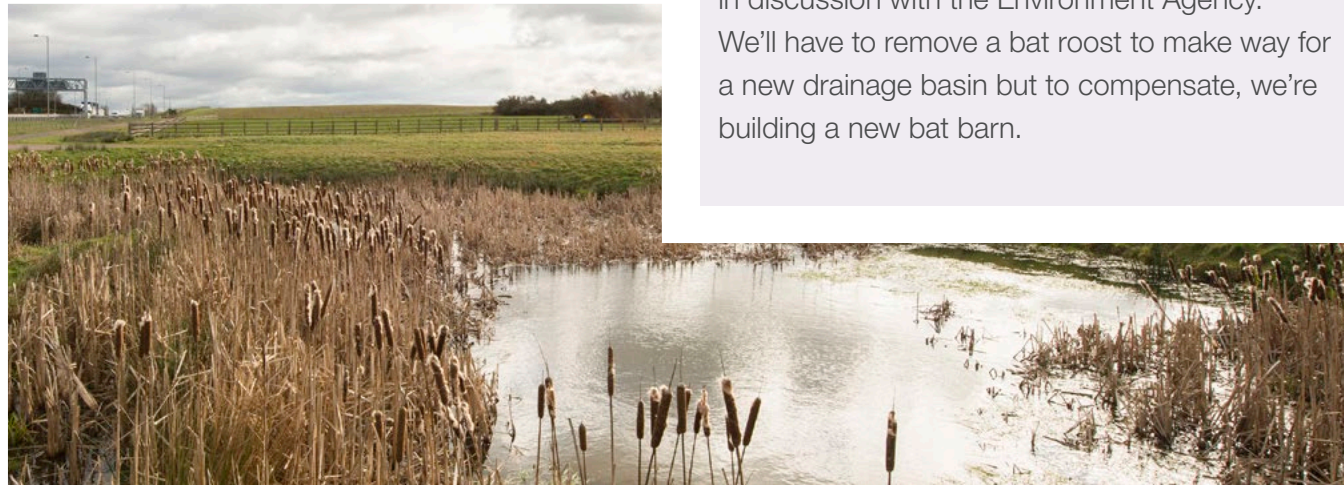
What is common land

It is land where people, other than the landowner, may have certain traditional rights, for example to graze their livestock or to collect wood. The public also usually have the right to roam over common land on foot. This means you can use it for activities such as walking and running. You cannot use the land for horse riding, cycling or access it in a vehicle.

Water and drainage

What you told us

There were concerns raised around impact of the scheme on natural ground and surface water levels. Specifically, we were asked to move some of the proposed water drainage basins to better, more effective locations.

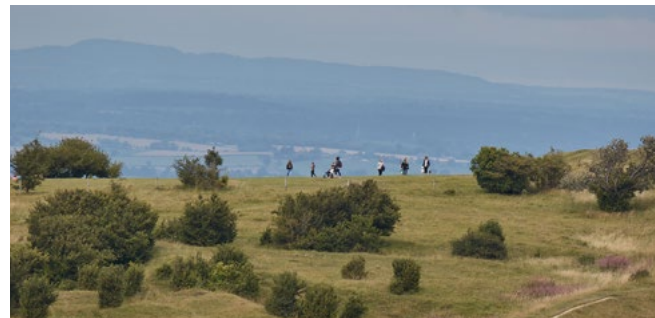


Our response

In response to feedback, we've moved some of the drainage basins and amended our drainage strategy to ensure that natural ground water and surface water levels are adequately managed once the new road is built. This has been done in discussion with the Environment Agency. We'll have to remove a bat roost to make way for a new drainage basin but to compensate, we're building a new bat barn.

A place to visit and enjoy

We want to leave a positive legacy for local communities and visitors to the area. We're proposing a scheme with long-lasting benefits. It will not only improve the long-term safety and reliability of the A417, but it will also boost the local economy by making it a more attractive area to live, work, explore and visit.



We'll make local journeys and reduce rat running through local villages. We'll also create new open spaces and enhance the footpath, cycling and bridleway network, providing safe, fully accessible routes from the Brockworth bypass to Stockwell, Cowley and beyond. This will help improve local people's quality of life.



Next steps

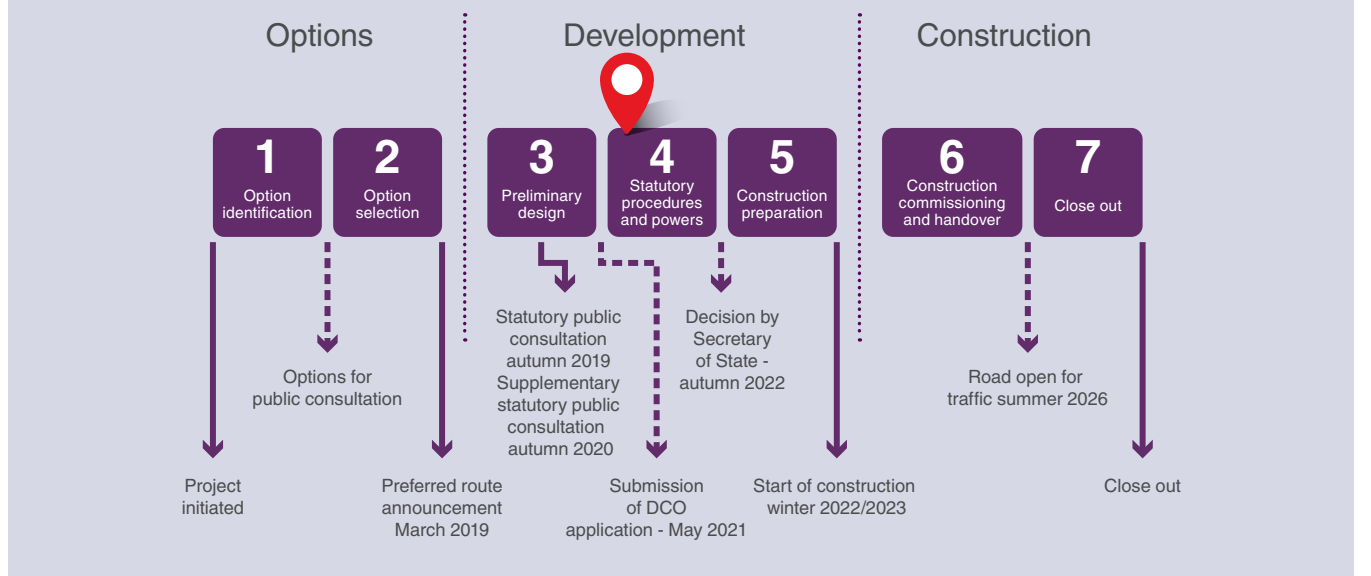
We've now submitted our Development Consent Order (DCO) application to the Planning Inspectorate.

The Planning Inspectorate (acting on behalf of the Secretary of State) will now examine the application through written representation and public hearings, and then make a recommendation to the Secretary of State for Transport, who will decide on whether or not the scheme should go ahead.

The examination and decision making process will take around a year and further information about this process and how you can get involved can be found on the Planning Inspectorate's [website](#). Alternatively, you can watch the following video: [How to have your say on Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects \(NSIPs\)](#).

Subject to approval, we expect to start work in 2023, and the road to open for traffic in 2026.

Timeline



You can keep up to date with updates about scheme progress and consultation by visiting our website, emailing us or following us on Twitter or Facebook:

www.highwaysengland.co.uk/a417-missing-link

a417missinglink@highwaysengland.co.uk

[@HighwaysSWEST](https://twitter.com/HighwaysSWEST)

[Facebook@HighwaysSWEST](https://www.facebook.com/HighwaysSWEST)



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