

# Improving the A1 in Northumberland

Welcome to our public consultation exhibition



**We are holding this exhibition to provide you with information about the proposed improvements to the A1 in Northumberland**

## These improvements include:

- Options to dual the existing single carriageway sections of the A1 between Morpeth and Ellingham
- Options to enhance the performance and safety of the route north of Ellingham, including junction improvements, safe overtaking opportunities and improvements to crossings for pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders

## We aim to:

- Improve safety by improving the standard of the road; and reduce delays associated with planned and unplanned incidents
- Improve journey times
- Improve journey time reliability and resilience of the network
- Increase capacity on the A1 which will allow traffic to travel at a more desirable speed

The programme of improvements will provide additional capacity on the A1 and improve overall journey times on this route of strategic national importance. This will enable greater access to Northumberland, supporting economic growth and the development aspirations of the region.

## Tell us what you think today

This exhibition is an opportunity to find out more about the proposed improvements.

If you would like to contribute your feedback please complete the questionnaire provided.

If you have any questions please ask a member of the project team who will be happy to help you.

## Why are we doing this?

**In 2014 a feasibility study was carried out which considered the problems experienced by people using the A1 in Northumberland route. The following problems were identified:**

- Drivers face a lack of alternative routes for their journeys
- Varying carriageway standards on the route
- Poor junction standards and layout – there are many different types of junctions along the route which can be confusing for those who are not familiar with the route
- A large number of junctions and private accesses, resulting in delays and potential accidents when vehicles exit or enter the main carriageway

- Average traffic speeds on the single carriageway sections of the route are significantly lower than sections that have been upgraded to dual carriageway
- A high proportion of heavy goods and agricultural vehicles north of Alnwick resulting in reduced speeds for following vehicles
- Lack of overtaking opportunities on single carriageway sections of the route which slows down traffic
- Peak-hour traffic speeds are significantly slower than when traffic is free flowing

# What we have done so far

## Design

We have refined the designs following feedback from the public exhibitions in May 2016.

## Traffic

We have continued to progress traffic modelling to understand the impacts on predicted journey times, volume of traffic and safety benefits for the proposed improvements.

## Ground conditions

An initial study has been carried out on ground conditions to identify any ground issues in the local area. Future surveys will be required to complete this work as ground conditions can have a big influence on construction costs.

## Communicating with local government

We have been working with Northumberland County Council to develop the plans for improving the A1, in order to try and align our proposals with the development aspirations of the region.

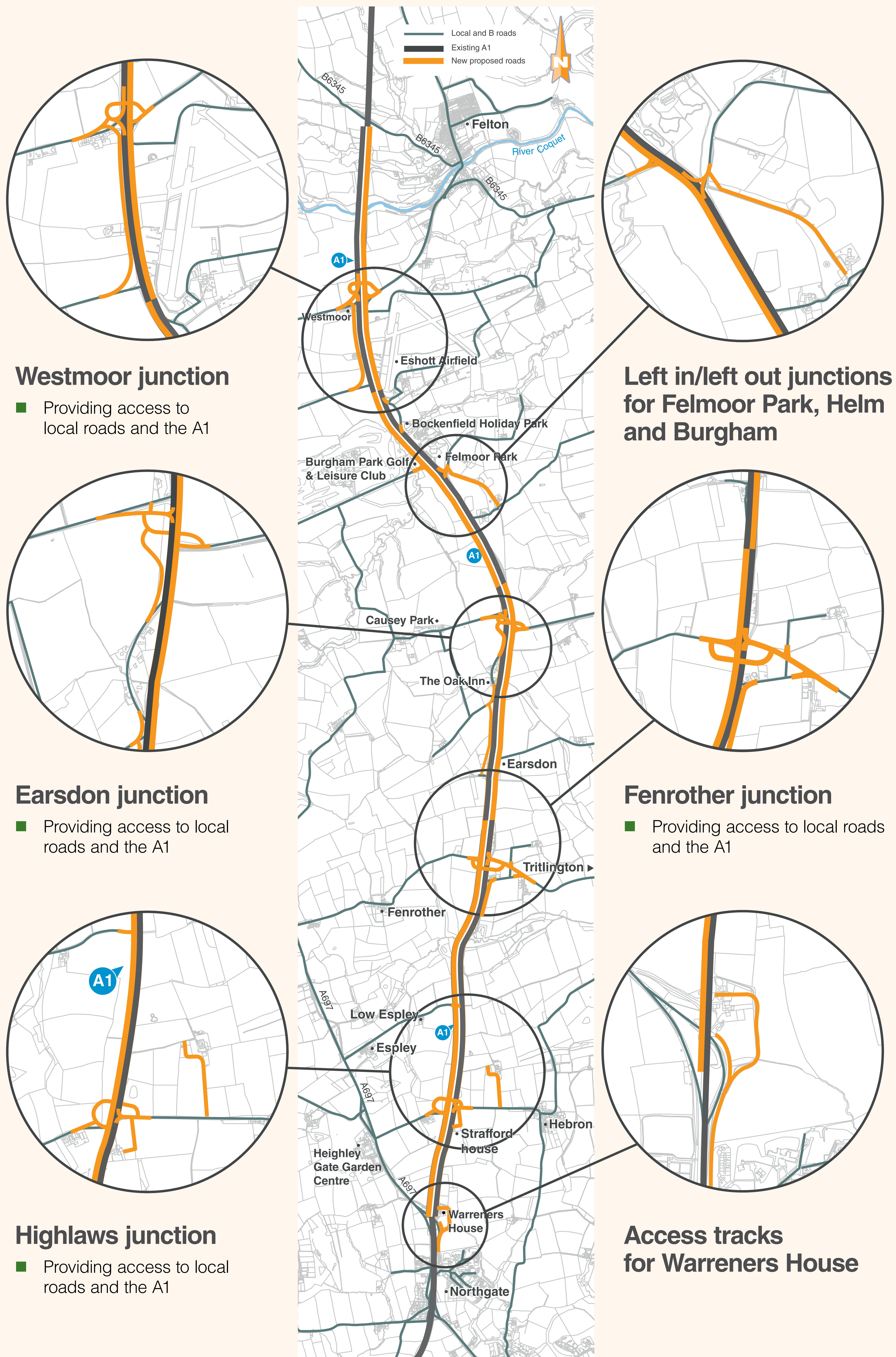
## Environment

Surveys are being undertaken between Morpeth and Ellingham to map different habitat types and the presence of any protected species, including any breeding birds, bats, otters and water voles, red squirrels and badgers. Preliminary environmental surveys have been carried out north of Ellingham to understand the potential impacts on the proposals on the environment. We have also conducted surveys of pedestrian, cyclist and horse rider traffic in the local area.

**Further information on work we have done is available in the consultation booklets.**

# Morpeth to Felton route options

## Orange Option

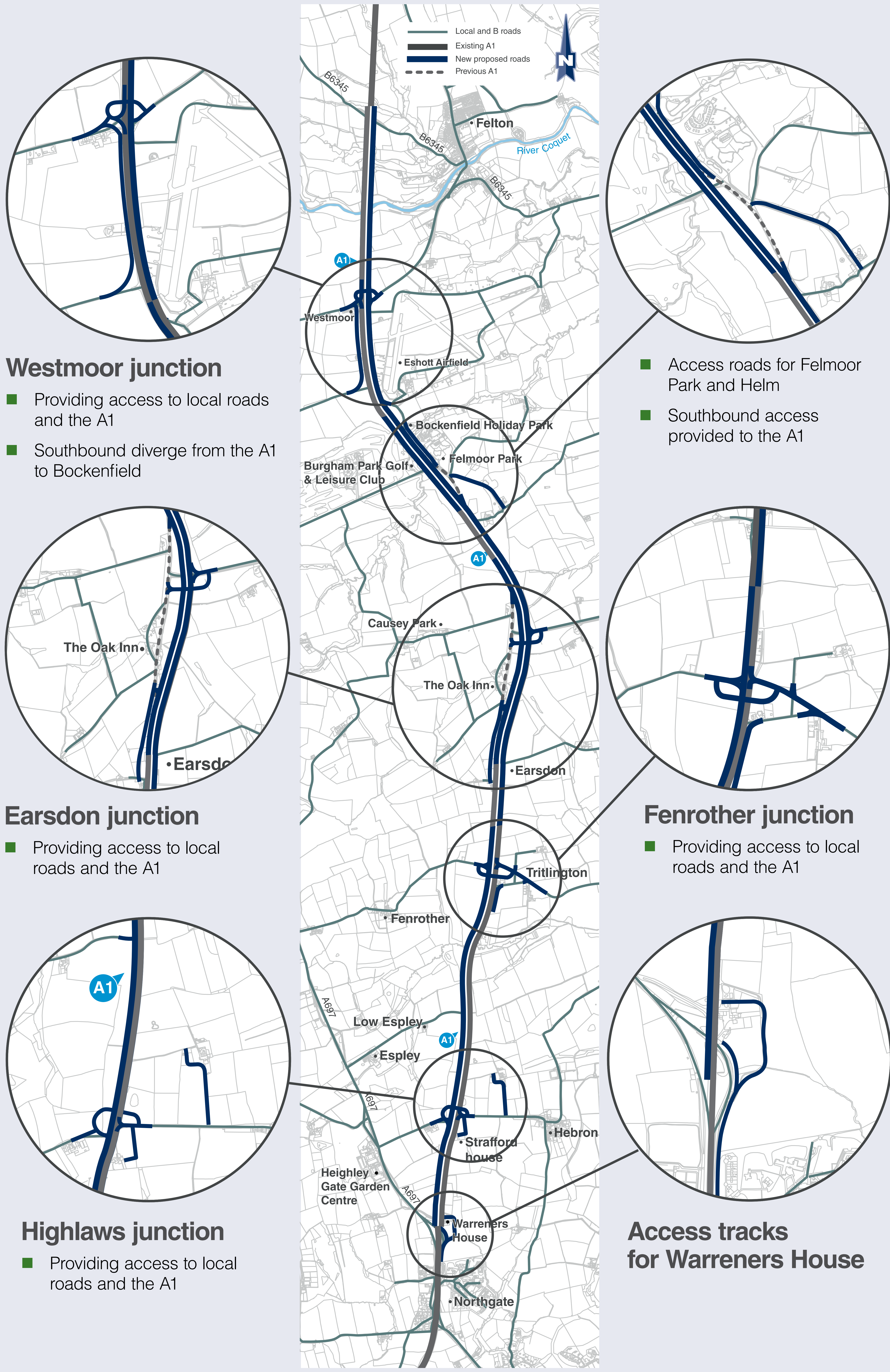


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Key elements	Details
Four new junctions	Highlaws, Fenrother, Earsdon and Westmoor.
Changes to current accesses	The following accesses will be changed to left-in/left-out arrangements: Low Espley, Felmoor (to Felmoor Caravan Park), Burgham Park and Bockenfield Holiday Park.  All other accesses onto the current A1 will be closed, and drivers will instead use the new junctions.
Non-motorised user access (e.g horse riders, pedestrians and cyclists)	Pedestrian footbridge at Causey Park being considered to maintain Right of Way. Extended underpass at Parkwood.

# Morpeth to Felton route options

## Blue Option

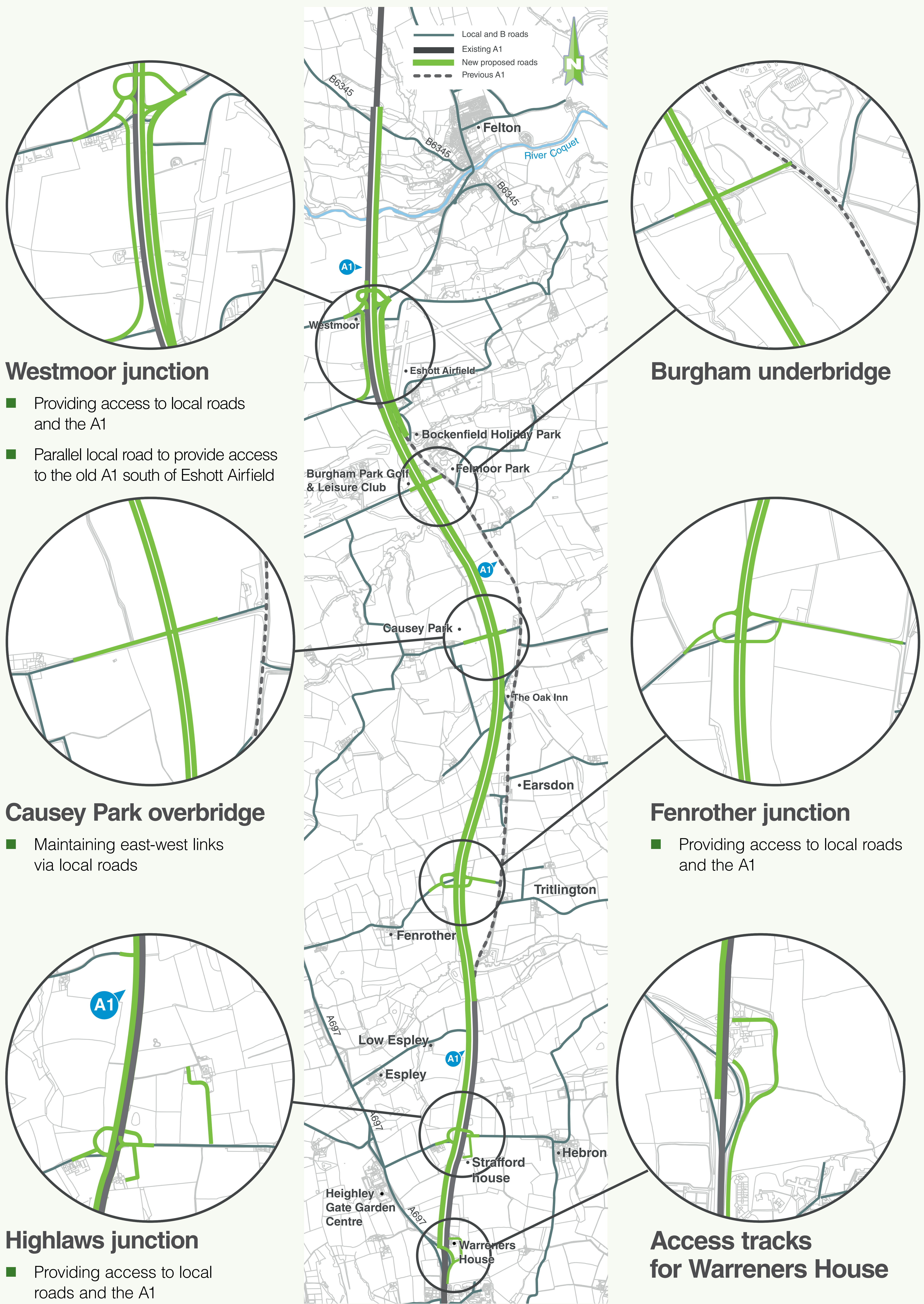


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Key elements	Details
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Non-motorised user access (e.g horse riders, pedestrians and cyclists)	Extended underpass at Parkwood.

# Morpeth to Felton route options

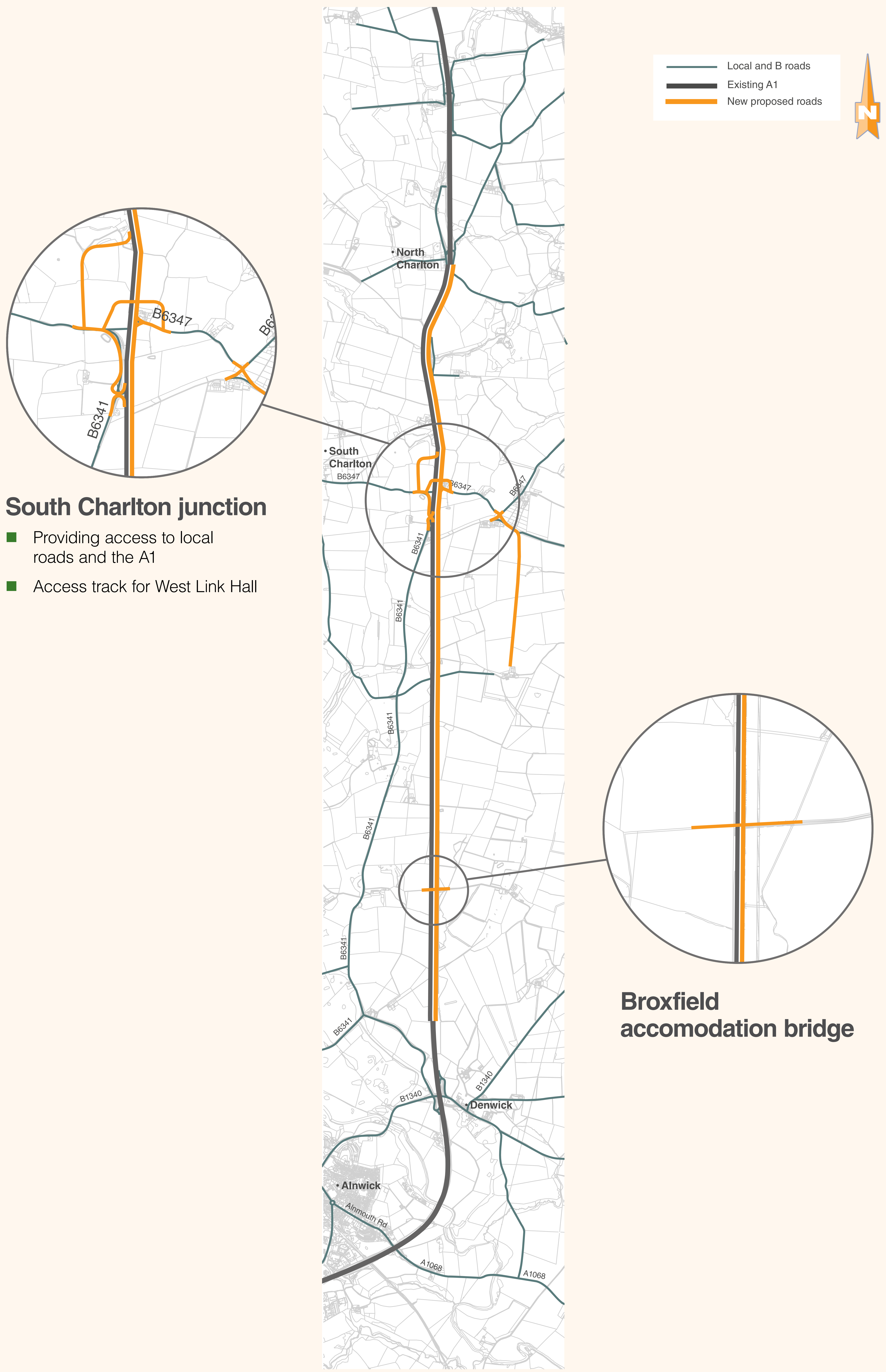
## Green Option



Key elements	Details
Three new junctions	Highlaw, Fenrother and Westmoor.
Changes to current accesses	All accesses will be made via the new junctions New local roads will be provided to maintain access to the A1 via the new junctions.
Non-motorised user access (e.g horse riders, pedestrians and cyclists)	Extended underpass at Parkwood.

# Alnwick to Ellingham route options

## Orange Option



### South Charlton junction

- Providing access to local roads and the A1
- Access track for West Link Hall

### Broxfield accomodation bridge

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Key elements	Details
One new junction	South Charlton, connecting the A1, B6341 and B6347.
Changes to current accesses	Left in/left out accesses at private property near to South Charlton All others will be closed and access provided via new junction.
Non-motorised user access (e.g horse riders, pedestrians and cyclists)	We have recently conducted surveys to gather pedestrian, cyclist and horse usage data. We will review this data to identify locations for improvements.

We previously presented Green and Blue options between Alnwick and Ellingham at our awareness exhibitions in May 2016. These have been discounted due to affordability constraints.

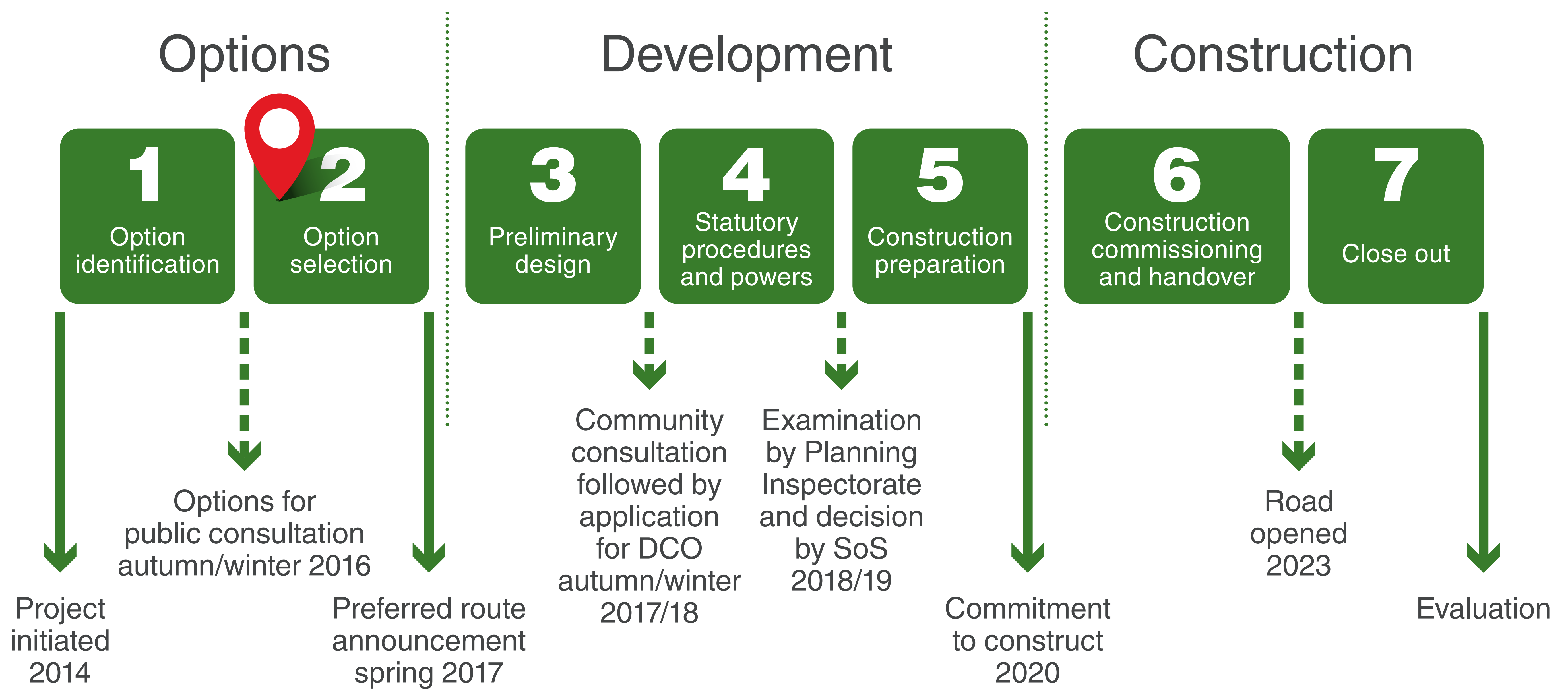
We are still seeking feedback on the Orange Option, so if you have any comments, they would be gratefully received.

# Morpeth to Ellingham – what happens next

Once the consultation closes on 23 December, responses will be compiled into a consultation report. We will then refine the option designs, incorporating the comments provided where practicable and complete our assessment work. We will then look to announce a preferred route in spring 2017.

Further consultation will take place on the preferred route before submitting a Development Consent Order (DCO) to the Planning Inspectorate. Once the application is submitted, you have an opportunity to register as an interested party with the Planning Inspectorate in order to support or object.

Following the Secretary of State's (SoS) decision, a period to challenge the process applies.





# North of Ellingham improvement options

## Middleton overtaking lane

From Cragmill junction to Middleton

This will provide an additional lane northbound between Cragmill junction and Low Middleton to allow overtaking. The minor road towards Middleton would be closed off.



## Fenwick overtaking lane

Between Fenwick Stead and Fisher's Back Road

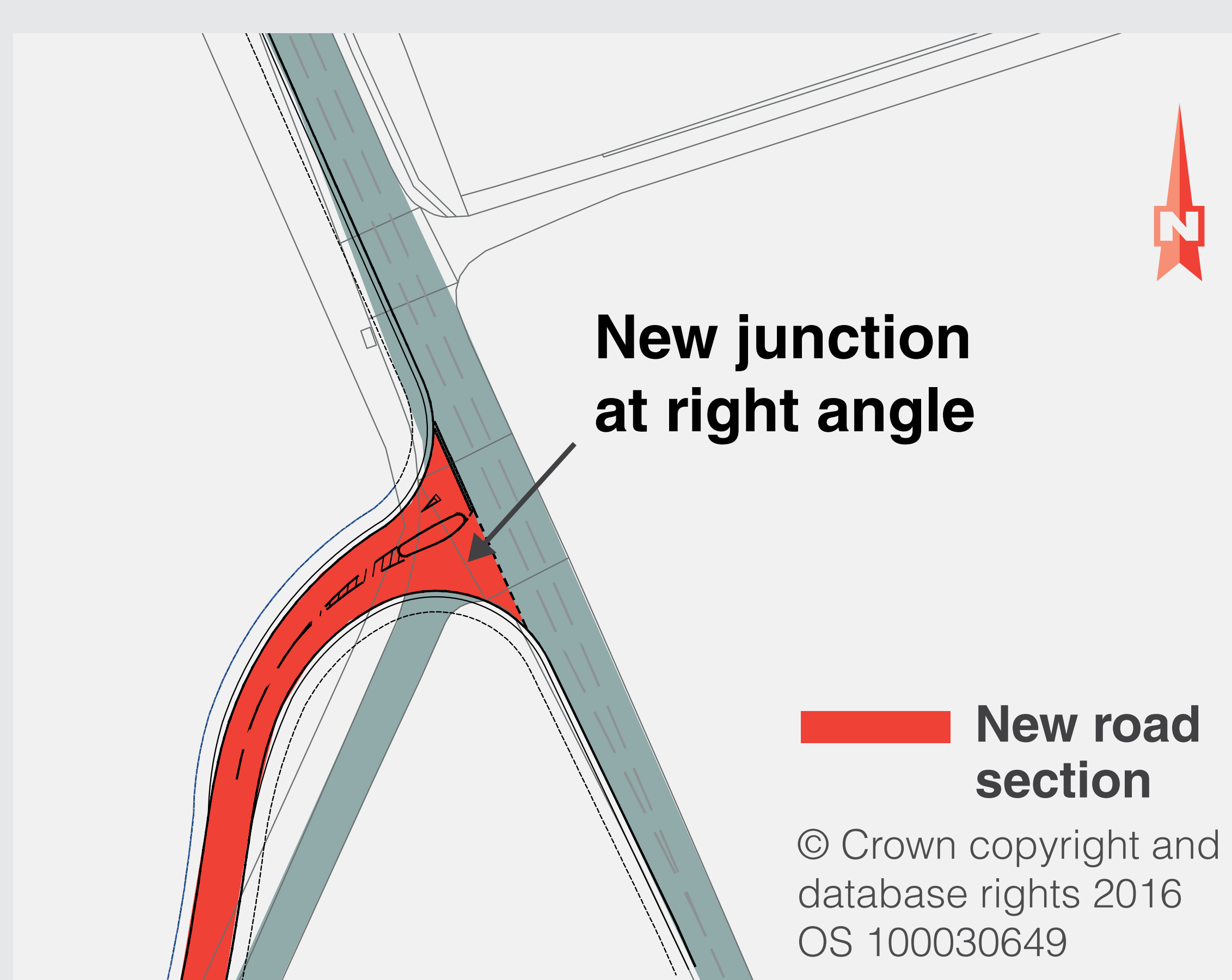
This option will provide an additional lane northbound between Fenwick and Fisher's Back Road, and southbound between Fenwick and Fenwick Stead. There would be clear markings separating the two overtaking sections. The junction immediately to the north of Fisher's Back Road will be closed with an access road provided for properties located to the east of the existing A1. The junction at Fenwick would be upgraded to provide a staggered junction.



Please see consultation booklet for a summary of the benefits and effects of the proposed options.

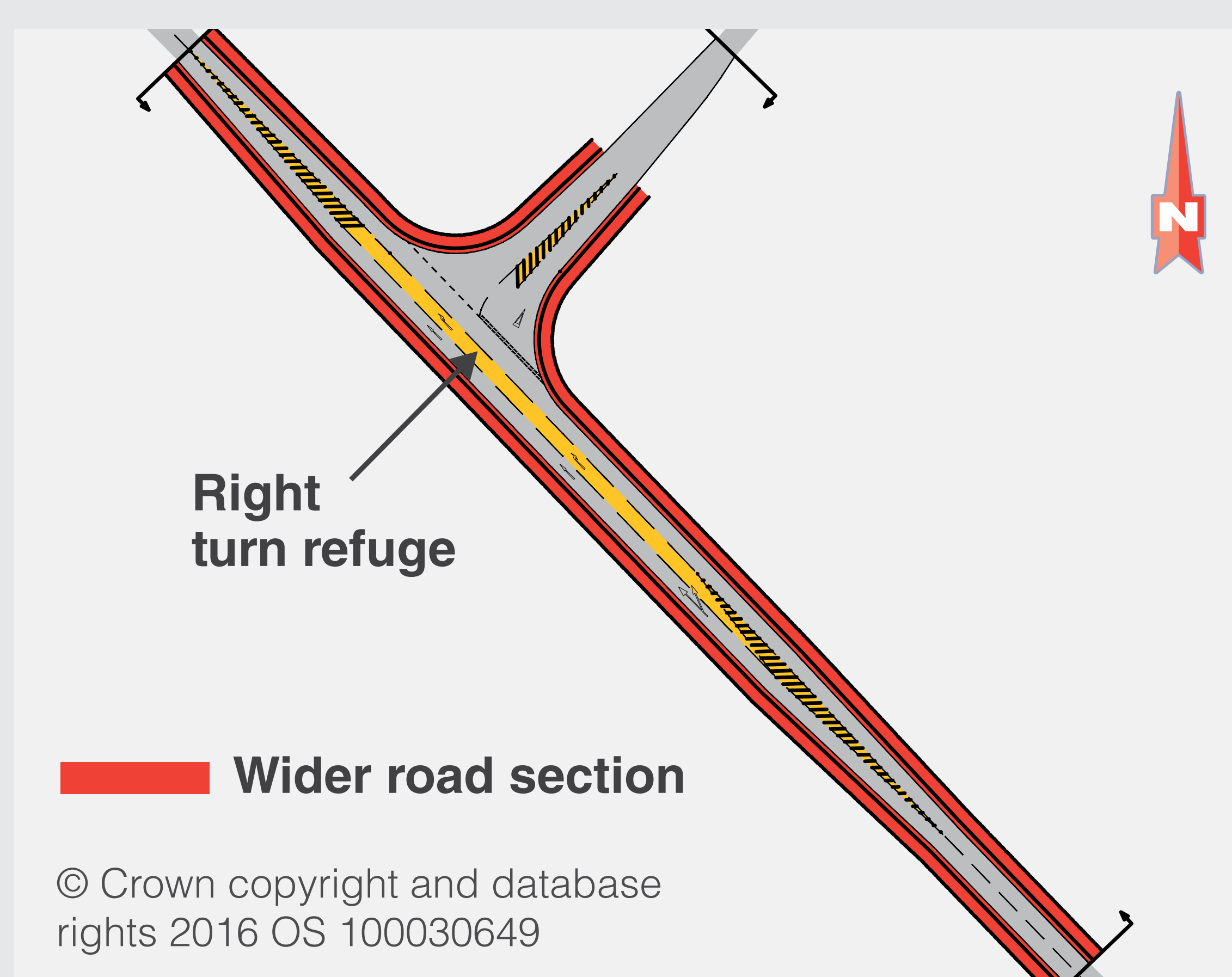
# North of Ellingham improvement options

## Improvement to Wooler road junction



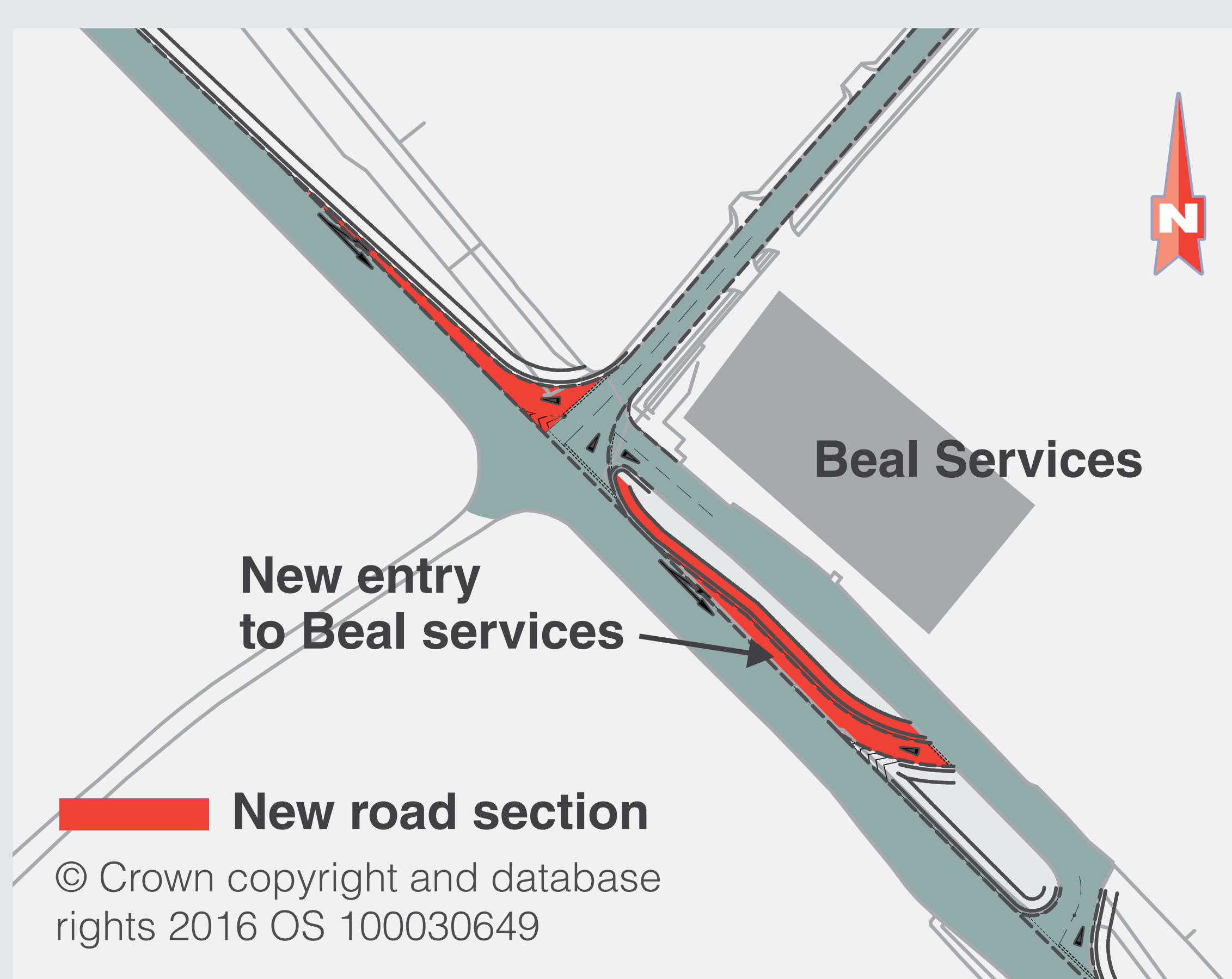
We will realign the junction so that Wooler road meets the A1 at a right angle, this will increase visibility for those waiting to join the A1 and so reduce accidents. The bus stop would be moved slightly north and we would provide a new pedestrian crossing island to help cross the A1.

## Improvement to Cheswick junction



We will provide a marked right turn refuge and realign the carriageway to allow northbound traffic to pass those waiting to turn into Cheswick. We will widen the entrance to the Cheswick road to provide separate left and right turn lanes for those waiting to join the A1. This will also allow us to provide an easier left turn into the Cheswick road from the southbound A1, which means traffic on the southbound A1 will not need to slow so much behind traffic turning left.

## Improvement to West Mains junction



This improvement would address safety and the flow of traffic on the A1 by creating a new entry to Beal Services, which will help to improve movement of traffic for road users accessing the services and those leaving Holy Island during busy times.

Please see consultation booklet for a summary of the benefits and effects of the proposed options.

## North of Ellingham – next steps

The consultation will close on **23 December 2016**. We will analyse the results and produce a consultation report, which will inform development and detailed design of the options.

Following completion of statutory processes, we plan to start construction of some of the A1 north of Ellingham improvements **in 2018**.

## Keeping you up to date



**Online** – up to date information will be posted on our scheme web page as it becomes available, at:

[www.highways.gov.uk/A1inNorthumberland](http://www.highways.gov.uk/A1inNorthumberland)



**Questionnaire** - questionnaires are available for you to complete and return to us at:

**A1 in Northumberland, Highways England, Lateral, 8 City Walk, Leeds, LS11 9AT**

Or the questionnaire can be downloaded at:

[www.highways.gov.uk/A1inNorthumberland](http://www.highways.gov.uk/A1inNorthumberland)

All comments made during the consultation process will be made public, but personal details such as address will not.



**Email alerts** - you can sign up to receive email alerts as they are made via our web page at:

[www.highways.gov.uk/A1inNorthumberland](http://www.highways.gov.uk/A1inNorthumberland)



**Contacting us** - if you have any queries about this improvement scheme please contact:

[A1inNorthumberland@highwaysengland.co.uk](mailto:A1inNorthumberland@highwaysengland.co.uk)

Or call:

**0300 470 4585**

**Thank you for visiting us today.**

**Please ensure your completed questionnaire  
or comments are returned to us by**

**23 December 2016.**

# Morpeth to Felton route options – comparison

Feature	Orange Option	Blue Option	Green Option
Safety	The road will be designed to meet required safety standards.	The road will be designed to meet required safety standards. This option provides a smoother alignment for road users.	The road will be designed to meet required safety standards. This option provides a smoother alignment for road users.
Construction duration and impacts	2-3 years. This option will have the <b>greatest impact</b> on road users during construction.	2-3 years. This option has <b>less impact</b> on road users during construction.	2-3 years. This option has the <b>least impact</b> on residents and road users during construction.
Current cost estimates	£197.3m	£203.5m	£207.8m
Air quality	Existing air quality is good. For all options, there would be no significant impact on air quality.		
Cultural heritage	The risk of disturbing unknown archaeological remains increases the more land is taken.		
Landscape	Where the option moves away from the existing A1 it will increase impacts on the landscape.		
Nature conservation	All options have the potential to impact habitats, this potential increases the more land is taken. The designs were made to avoid any high-sensitivity receptors and mitigation options will be considered as the scheme progresses.		
Geology and soils	This option involves least loss of Grade 3 agricultural land.	This option involves more loss of Grade 3 agricultural land.	This option involves the greatest loss of Grade 3 agricultural land.
Noise and vibration	This option will impact properties already close to the existing A1. Most adverse impacts, fewest beneficial impacts.	This option takes part of the route away from the existing A1, lessening impacts to properties at this point. Some adverse impacts, some beneficial impacts.	This option takes part of the route away from the existing A1, lessening impacts here. Where it is brought closer to properties in the west, it is anticipated to increase noise levels here. Fewest adverse impacts, most beneficial impacts.
Effects on all motorised users	All the options will be designed to modern highways standards. Drivers would continue to see very similar views to now from the proposed new routes.		
Community and private assets, including land take	This option requires the least land take (around 50 hectares).	This option requires more land take (around 60 hectares).	This option requires the most land take (around 70 hectares).
Pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders	Surveys are ongoing and this information will inform the provisions of the facilities provided.		
Road drainage and the water environment	Because this route follows the existing A1 it has least impact on stream and river crossings.	This option includes some new stream crossings and therefore has more impact.	This option includes most new stream crossings and therefore has most impact.
	All water environment impacts will be fully mitigated and there is the potential for improvement on the existing situation, particularly at the River Coquet.		

# Alnwick to Ellingham route options – summary

Feature	Orange Option
Safety	The road will be designed to meet required safety standards.
Construction duration and impacts	18 – 24 months. As with all improvements, we will work with the contractors and communities to minimise the impacts of construction.
Current cost estimates	£89.6m
Air quality	Existing air quality is good. There would be no significant impact on air quality.
Cultural heritage	Widening along the existing A1 carriageway reduces the risk of disturbing unknown archaeological remains.
Landscape	Following the existing route of the A1 minimises the impact on landscape features and character. However, there will be visual impacts for a number of properties.
Nature conservation	Widening along the existing A1 reduces the amount of habitat loss and the potential for impacts on protected wildlife species.
Geology and soils	Because the widening follows the existing alignment of the A1, loss of agricultural land is minimised.
Noise and vibration	The assessment carried out so far suggests noise increases would be limited to the northern end of this section. There would be noise decreases on minor roads due to the redistribution of traffic.
Effects on all motorised users	This will be designed to modern highways standards. Drivers would continue to see very similar views to now from the proposed new route.
Community and private assets, including land take	This requires some land take (around 20 hectares).
Pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders	Surveys are ongoing and this information will inform the provisions of the facilities provided.
Road drainage and the water environment	Because this route follows the existing A1 it has small scale impacts on stream and river crossings. All impacts would be fully mitigated.