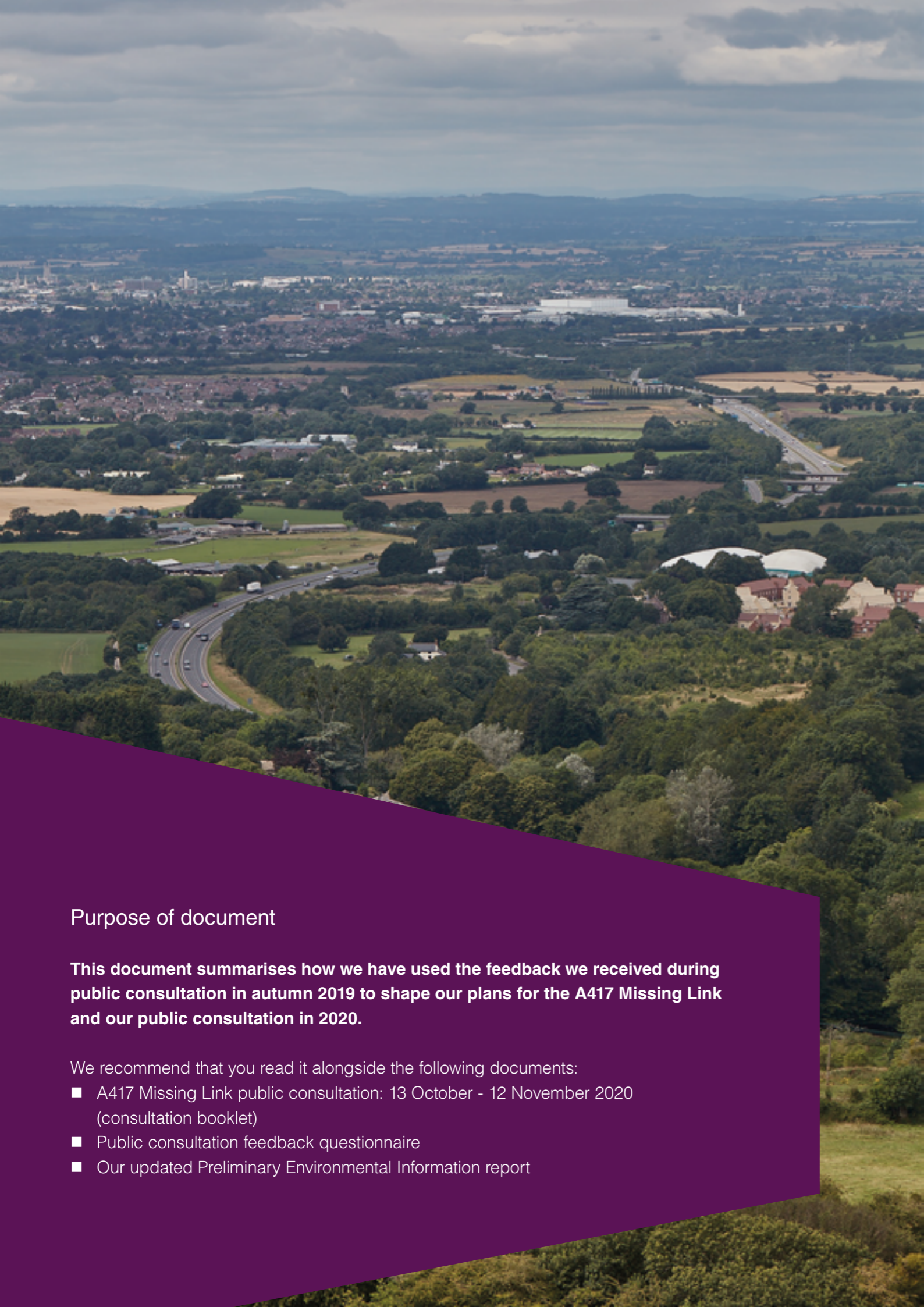


A417 Missing Link

**Responding to feedback from
our public consultation 2019**





Purpose of document

This document summarises how we have used the feedback we received during public consultation in autumn 2019 to shape our plans for the A417 Missing Link and our public consultation in 2020.

We recommend that you read it alongside the following documents:

- A417 Missing Link public consultation: 13 October - 12 November 2020 (consultation booklet)
- Public consultation feedback questionnaire
- Our updated Preliminary Environmental Information report

Introduction

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 this year (2020).

Scheme objectives

From the start of this project, we've always had very clear objectives and a vision for the scheme. Our objectives are:

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 and the 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

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, we've agreed a landscape-led scheme vision statement.

Landscape-led vision



"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".



Consultation summary

We've been developing plans to improve the A417 Missing Link since 2015, and every step of the way we've sought your input and feedback on our proposals. Following consultation in 2018, we announced our preferred route for the A417 Missing Link in March 2019.

In autumn 2019, we held a public consultation, which gave everyone interested in the scheme an opportunity to have their say on the proposed design. This was crucial in shaping our plans to deliver the best solution for the local community, the landscape and the environment. We heard from local communities, the wider public, businesses and interested groups, with more than 2,100 people attending our public information events to talk to the project team about the project, and over 900 people giving us formal feedback on the consultation.

Since our public consultation in autumn 2019, we've made some improvements to the scheme, which will further benefit local connectivity and accessibility and reduce the scheme's impact on communities, the environment and the local landscape.

As part of the planning process, we're required to consult on our project design and are committed to improving our proposals in collaboration with you. [Our consultation is taking place between 13 October and 12 November 2020. To find out more, visit our website and read our consultation booklet.](#)

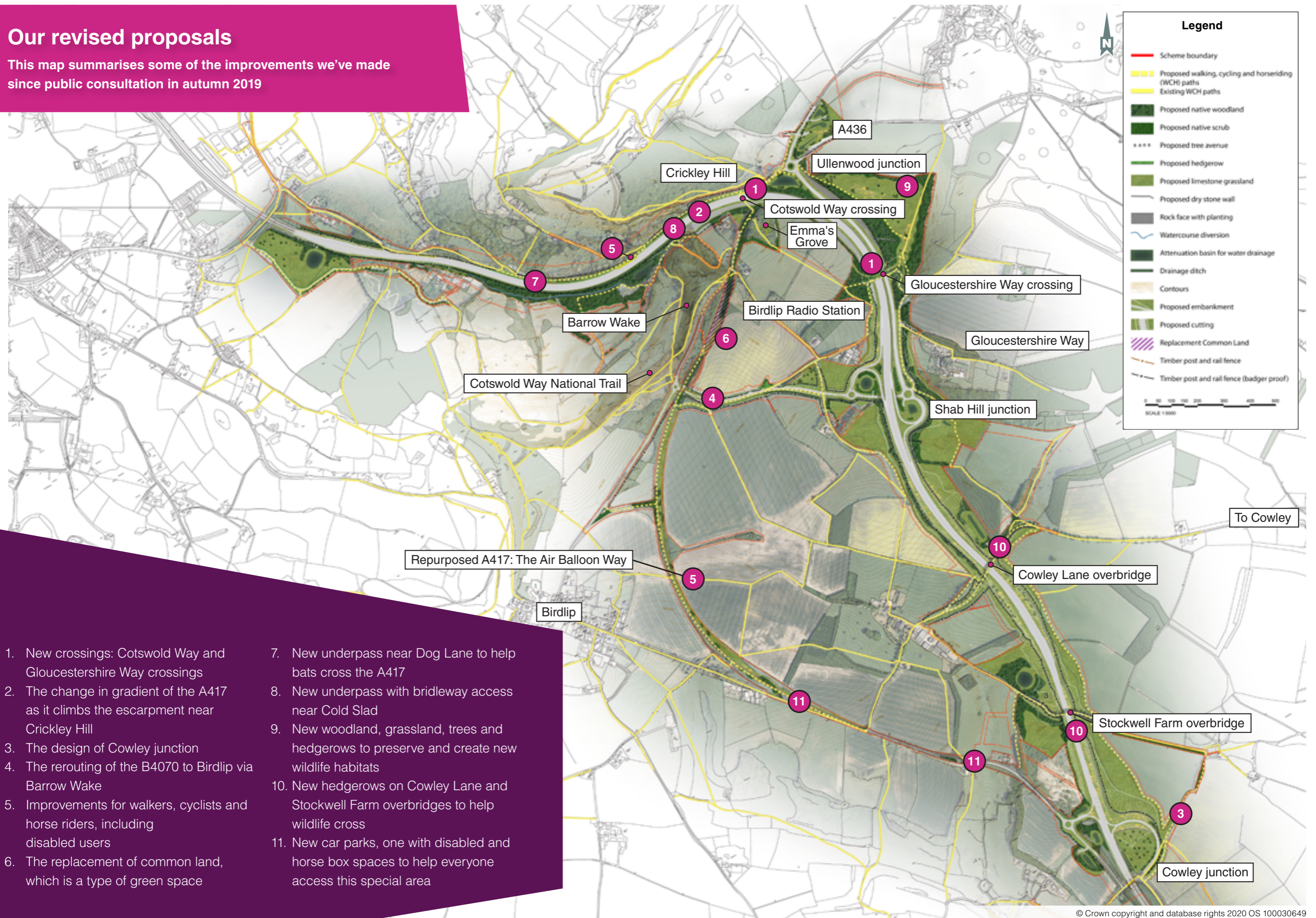
Key features of the scheme

- We're upgrading a single carriageway section of the A417. We're building 3.4 miles (5.5km) of new dual carriageway between the existing A417 Brockworth bypass and the existing A417 dual carriageway south of Cowley.
- The new dual carriageway will have a gentler gradient than the existing road and a crawler lane for slow vehicles climbing the hill.
- We'll plant new woodland, grassland, trees and hedgerows to improve habitat connectivity and maximise biodiversity.
- We'll create a new junction at Shab Hill, with a link road to both Birdlip and the A436, for journeys towards Seven Springs, Oxford and Cheltenham.
- We'll build new wildlife-friendly overbridges to maintain local connectivity.
- We'll replace Cowley roundabout with an improved junction and retain the existing underbridge to maintain local connectivity.
- We'll convert the existing A417, between the proposed new parking area near the Golden Heart Inn and Barrow Wake, into a route for walkers, cyclists and horse riders, including disabled users.
- We'll continue to retain some of the route to maintain access for local residents.



Our revised proposals

This map summarises some of the improvements we've made since public consultation in autumn 2019



Principle and value of the development

What you told us

There was continued support for the project, with a wide range of stakeholders, businesses and local communities commenting positively on our refined design. Some people however said they'd prefer an alternative solution to be taken forward.

You were keen to understand if we'd considered other local infrastructure and housing projects that had either been granted planning permission or would be constructed at the same time.

You also wanted to know how the scheme fits with government ambitions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and other environmental legislation.

Our response

We recognise that some people prefer alternative solutions. We investigated many route options, assessing them against the scheme's vision and objectives, as well as a range of engineering, economic and financial criteria.

We're proposing this scheme because it will result in a safe, resilient road that integrates into the landscape and enhances the local area.

It will also boost the local economy by making it a more attractive area to live, work, explore and visit.

We've taken into account plans for local infrastructure and housing and we'll continue to work closely with local authorities to ensure our plans are joined up. Gloucestershire County Council's Joint Core Strategy identifies the scheme as a key piece of infrastructure investment which will facilitate planned housing and economic growth across the region.

We recognise the concerns about climate change and we're continuing to assess the scheme's effects on carbon emissions and the environment as part of our application. Our carbon footprint will be an important consideration during construction and beyond. We're now proposing to change the

gradient of the A417 as it climbs the escarpment near Crickley Hill to 8% rather than 7%. This will lower the carbon footprint of the scheme by reducing the amount of material that needs to be excavated, construction traffic, and the need for 1,200 metres of large retaining walls (see page 13 for more information).

With environmental legislation in mind, we've identified many protected species in the area, including bats, badgers, reptiles, great crested newts and notable bird species such as barn owls. Through our mitigation and enhancement proposals, replacement habitats will be in keeping with the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and we've worked hard to maximise biodiversity improvements on the land we have available.

We're continuing to investigate further opportunities to improve biodiversity with neighbouring landowners and other off-site measures.



People and sense of place

Cultural heritage

What you told us

You really value some important features on the route and you want them conserved. The Air Balloon pub is of local cultural and historical importance, which you want celebrated as part of the new scheme. You asked that a monument, sculpture or public information display be built telling visitors of the area's link to the famous physician Edward Jenner.

Our response

We've assessed all features of cultural and historic significance. Where impacts have been identified, we'll agree with the relevant statutory bodies how best to address and reduce them.

We want to leave a positive legacy for local communities and visitors to the area. The proposed improvements for walkers, cyclists and horse riders, including disabled users will create better links between sites of cultural and historical interest, making them easier to access. The Air Balloon pub needs to be demolished to make

way for the new road, but we understand how much people value its history. Recognising that the pub was named after one of the first British balloon flights, we're proposing to call the section of repurposed A417, between the proposed new parking area near the Golden Heart Inn and Barrow Wake, the Air Balloon Way.

We'll also continue to work with our stakeholders and look for more opportunities to celebrate the heritage of the area.



Local tourism

What you told us

It's very important to you that the scheme does not impact local tourism, but instead makes the area a more attractive place to explore and visit.

Our response

We recognise that there may be an adverse impact on tourism during construction and we're committed to supporting the industry by keeping the road open during this time. The design changes that we're proposing in our consultation would reduce construction time by up to six months, meaning less disruption to tourism.

In the long term, the scheme will make the area a more attractive place to explore and visit by improving road safety, local walking, cycling and horse riding routes, Barrow Wake and accessibility of this special area.



Public rights of way (PROW) for walkers, cyclists and horse riders, including disabled users

What you told us

You told us about the untapped beauty of this area and asked us to keep communities connected.

You asked us to improve (PROW), including the Cotswold Way National Trail, create better connections to Barrow Wake and Crickley Hill Country Park, and improve amenities and accessibility for all, including families, walkers, cyclists and horse riders, including disabled users. You also asked us to link some local (PROW) with local lanes that are important to you.

At Shab Hill junction, you wanted us to come up with a safer way for walkers, cyclists and horse riders, including disabled users, to navigate this busy junction. A number of you were also concerned that access from Cold Slad Lane would be cut off.

Our response

We're planning to make significant improvements to these routes and we've been working closely with local authorities and local (PROW) groups, to agree exactly what the new and improved network will look like.

New crossings are being proposed across the scheme to improve connectivity. In particular, we're proposing to build two key new crossings of the A417 - one near Emma's Grove and one north of Shab Hill junction.

New crossings

- **Cotswold Way crossing** - a new crossing in the region of 5m wide that would enable users of the Cotswold Way National Trail to safely cross the A417.
- **Gloucestershire Way crossing** - a new crossing in the region of 25m wide that would enable users of the Gloucestershire Way to safely cross the A417, without having to navigate the busy Shab Hill junction. It would also be planted with hedgerows to help bats and other animals such as badgers and barn owls cross safely.

We can confirm that Cold Slad Lane would remain accessible. A new underpass with bridleway would connect to Cold Slad Lane and we're also proposing to create a new connection for people along and between Dog Lane and Cold Slad Lane, which would improve pedestrian links between Brockworth and Nettleton Bottom via Crickley Hill, the Cotswold Way crossing and the new Air Balloon Way.

In addition, we're proposing to link some popular, local lanes that are used for recreational purposes to the wider walking, cycling and horse riding network, which will also be accessible to disabled users. To help manage the way people access the area, we're proposing to add parking near the Golden Heart Inn, which would include disabled and horse box spaces.

Changes to the (PROW) network would help reduce or avoid impacts on a local Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). The scheme would result in some loss of common land near Crickley Hill and at Barrow Wake.

We're proposing to replace this with an area of new common land next to Barrow Wake, which would be made up from the repurposed A417, north of the new Air Balloon Way. It would be connected to the existing area of common land and Crickley Hill and Barrow Wake SSSI, be bigger than the area lost, and could be used for the same purposes.

As it's an area of common land, it would not be accessible to cyclists or horse riders. This would however help protect Crickley Hill and Barrow Wake SSSI. We're confident that the improvements we're proposing to make would enhance the area and have a positive effect on people's health and well-being.

We're currently consulting on the improvements we've made to the (PROW) network, and replacement of common land. To find out more, please see pages 14 and 15 of the consultation booklet.



Impact on neighbouring property and businesses

What you told us

Some of you living very close to the proposed new road were worried about the impact on you and your property.

Our response

We're proposing some changes to accommodate feedback from local residents, landowners and businesses.

For example, we're proposing to move the road running parallel to Rushwood Kennels so it's further away from the property, and we'll add more trees and a noise reducing embankment.

We're also planning to move the B4070 and western roundabout at Shab Hill 30m to the north to reduce its impact on local properties and add a parking bay for Air Balloon Cottages.

In addition, we're proposing to reroute the bridleway away from the Flyup 417 Bike Park business as requested.



Conserving and enhancing the special qualities of the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)

What you told us

While there was general support for our landscape-led approach, some of you questioned our approach and wanted to know more about how we'll conserve and enhance the special qualities of the Cotswolds AONB.

Our response

We've designed the road to fit in with the character of the surrounding landscape, and it's been a consideration right from the start when looking at different route options.

Throughout the design process, we've focused on how best to conserve and enhance the special character of the AONB. This can be achieved by integrating the scheme into the landscape: introducing new crossings, linking and restoring hedgerows, creating woodland and planting locally important grassland, as well as providing new habitat for rare and protected local wildlife.

To further enhance the AONB, we'll be exposing rockfaces to showcase the geological features that are unique to the Cotswolds, creating additional

habitats at Birdlip Quarry, planting native woodland and grassland near Crickley Hill, and bringing to light archaeological features at Emma's Grove.

Integrating the landscape and habitat creation

- 7.2 miles of new Cotswold drystone walls*
- 4.8 miles of new hedgerows*
- 19.67ha of new native woodland*
- 4.52ha of scrub, e.g. small bushes and trees*
- 14.9ha of species rich, native grassland*
- 68.45ha of limestone grassland*

We'll create new and improved habitats that are in keeping with the AONB, and that have been carefully designed to improve habitat connectivity.

*Please note that all figures are approximate.



Design

We received lots of comments about the design of the scheme. Whilst many of you liked the design and felt it was a good solution to current congestion problems, others felt changes could be made. Our road schemes follow the Design Council's ten principles of good road design, and are outlined in *The road to good design* document.

The green bridge

What you told us

Lots of people welcomed the idea of a green bridge but there were some concerns about its location and purpose. There were also concerns about its size and visual impact, and its effect on nearby veteran trees and a Site of Special Scientific Interest.

Our response

After careful consideration we've removed the structure from our plans. Its removal reduces the impact on Crickley Hill Country Park, Crickley Hill and Barrow Wake Site of Special Scientific Interest and nearby veteran trees.

The concept of the green bridge grew out of the need to provide a footbridge to enable walkers, cyclists and horse riders, including disabled users,

on the Cotswold Way National Trail to safely cross the A417. It also allowed us to explore opportunities to integrate the scheme within the landscape and connect wildlife habitats on either side of the new road. Following its removal, we've looked at how best to meet these needs, the scheme objectives and our landscape vision.

For example, we're now proposing two new crossings near Emma's Grove and north of Shab Hill junction. In addition, we're proposing to plant hedgerows on the proposed Stockwell Farm and Cowley Lane overbridges, which will help connect habitats and integrate them into the landscape.

We're also planning to build a new bat underpass near Dog Lane to improve habitat connections, and an underpass with a new bridleway connecting to Cold Slad Lane. To further improve habitat connections, we're also proposing to link and restore more hedgerows, create more woodland and plant more locally important grassland, as well as provide additional habitat for rare and protected local wildlife.



Artists impression of green bridge proposed in autumn 2019

The escarpment

What you told us

At our consultation in autumn 2019, we proposed to reduce the road's gradient from 10% to 7% to improve safety and congestion but there were concerns about the impact of the required cutting through the escarpment, which at its deepest point would have been up to 25m deep.

You also suggested that there should be a compulsory crawler lane for lorries and had safety concerns about merging traffic from Shab Hill junction onto the A417.

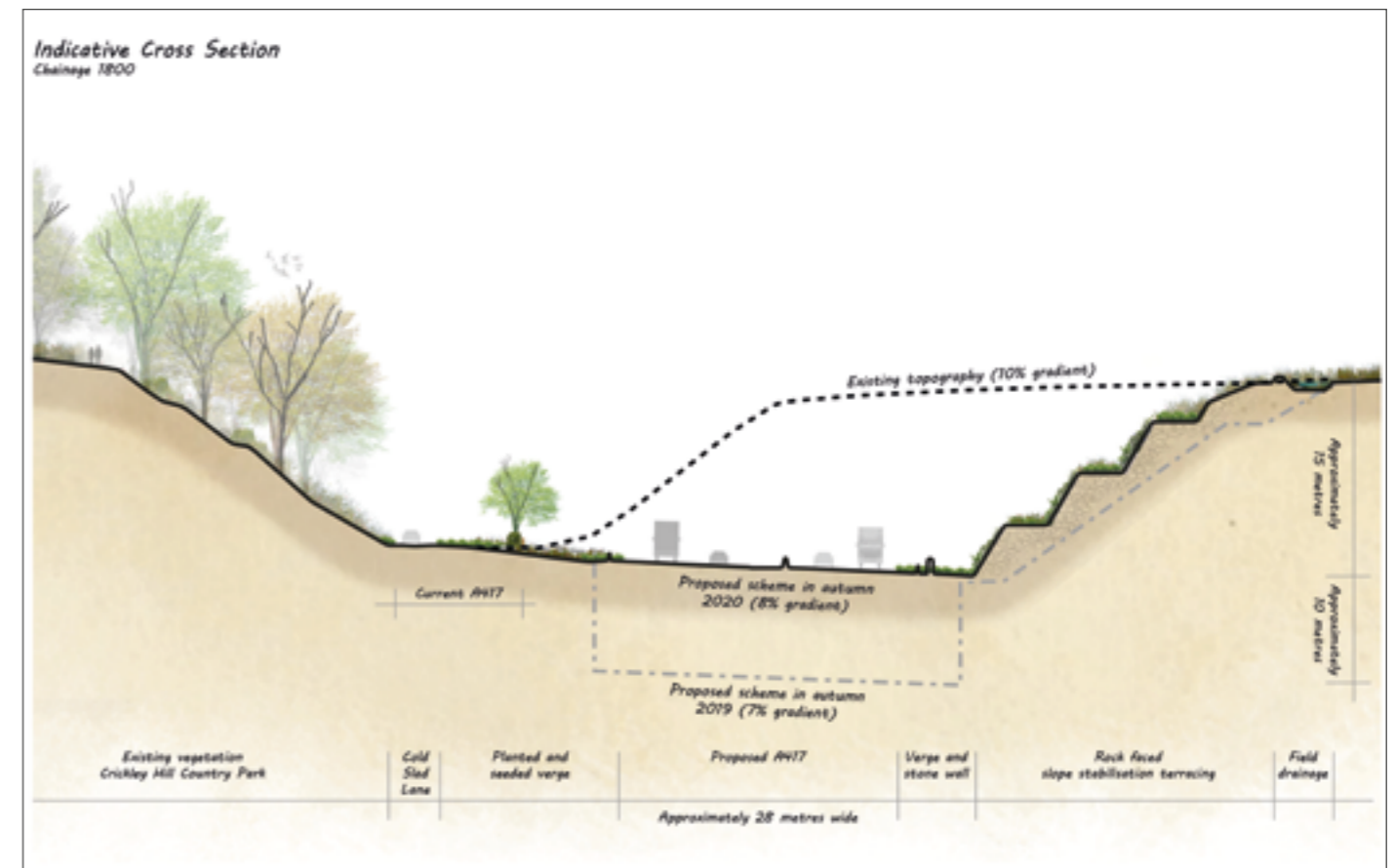
Our response

There will be a crawler lane to help heavy goods vehicles climb the escarpment and we're looking into the possibility of making it compulsory. In response to consultation and to improve safety, we're proposing to extend the southbound slip road from Shab Hill junction to the A417 so merging traffic is kept a distance away from the end of this new climbing lane.

As a result of your feedback, and to conserve and enhance the special character of the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, we're now proposing to change the gradient of the A417 as it climbs the escarpment near Crickley Hill to 8%, rather than 7%. The safety benefits would remain, and we're still proposing to include a safety barrier and integrate the road into the landscape using sensitively designed earthworks, woodland, flower-rich grassland and Cotswold drystone walling.

By changing the gradient from 7% to 8% we would reduce the visual impact of the road, the impact on local woodland and watercourses, waste, construction traffic, carbon footprint, and construction time.

We're consulting on this particular design change. To find out more, please see pages 10 and 11 of our consultation booklet.



Road design

What you told us

Some of you wanted us to add more lanes to cope with future increases in traffic. You also asked if we could create a safe bus stop for school children living in Birdlip. In addition, you wanted us to consider some suggested changes to the road's design.

Our response

The new section of the A417 will be a dual carriageway, with three lanes climbing the escarpment at Crickley Hill. This will help traffic pass slower vehicles and the road is designed to accommodate predicted future increases in traffic. Additional lanes would further impact the surrounding landscape and environment. We're also currently looking at possible locations for a new, safer school bus stop closer to Birdlip. Alternative designs put forward by you have been carefully considered. Unfortunately, we were not able to take them forward as they

would have resulted in an increase in land take and a greater environmental impact than the scheme we are proposing.

Slip road design

What you told us

You asked us to reconsider the A436 slip road design at Shab Hill to avoid those travelling west towards the M5 and Gloucester having to 'go back on themselves'. Gloucestershire County Council also requested that we make several local roads wider to improve safety.

Our response

We did consider a more direct route from the A436 to the westbound carriageway of the A417 but assessments showed the difference in levels between the slip road and A417 would make it difficult to build a connection between the two. To improve safety, we've made some local roads, such as Cold Slad Lane, wider at the request of Gloucestershire County Council. [We're currently consulting on the changes to Cowley junction. To find out more, please see page 12 of our consultation booklet.](#)

Roundabout design

What you told us

Some of you felt that there were too many new roundabouts and that some wouldn't be able to cope with increasing volumes of traffic, for example the new A436 roundabout heading towards Seven Springs, the A40 and Oxford.

You also raised concerns about safety and rat running as a result of the proposed Cowley junction. You were worried that there would be an increase in traffic and rat running on Cowley Lane, which is a narrow, single-lane road. You were also worried that an increase in traffic would cause disruption in Cowley village.

Our response

We've put safety at the heart of our scheme. The new A436 roundabout, which we're now calling Ullen Wood junction, would be a similar size to the existing Air Balloon roundabout and is considered the safest and most appropriate option for this location. Less traffic would use this junction compared to

the existing Air Balloon roundabout. Following feedback, we've redesigned Cowley junction to prevent vehicles from accessing Cowley Lane. Access would, however be retained along Cowley Lane for local properties, as well as walkers, cyclists and horse riders, including disabled users.



Barrow Wake and the B4070 to Birdlip

What you told us

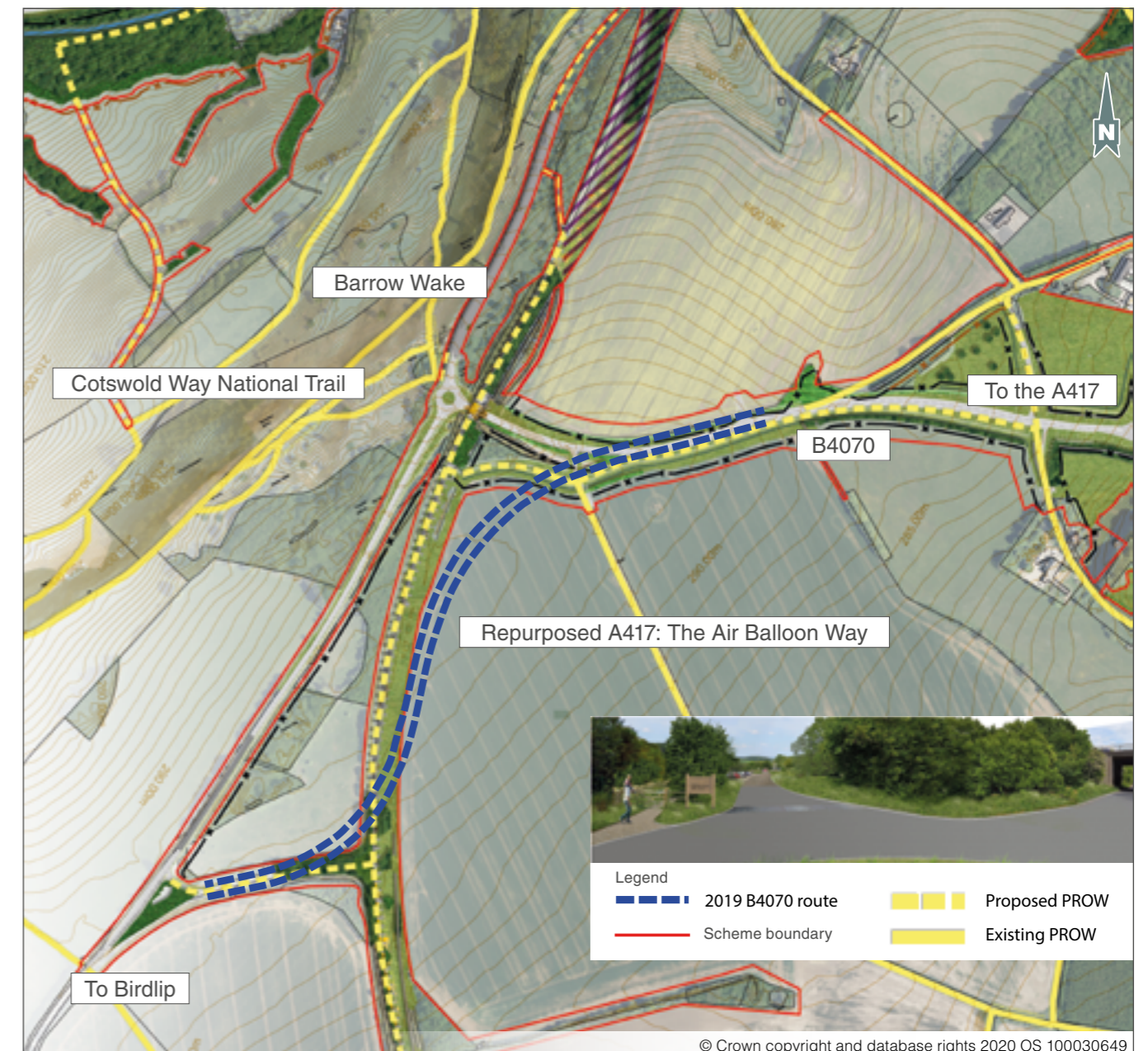
Many of you asked if we could use this scheme as an opportunity to improve facilities, parking and accessibility at Barrow Wake. There were also concerns about the proposed alignment of the B4070, which crossed the repurposed A417, and resulted in the loss of agricultural land.

Our response

Following feedback, we're now proposing to reroute the B4070 to Birdlip via the entrance of Barrow Wake car park and along the existing road to Birdlip, improving accessibility and natural surveillance of the area, making it a safer and more welcoming place to visit.

We're also proposing to add a new roundabout on the road leading to Barrow Wake, resurface the car park and build new Cotswold drystone walls along the edge of the car park to minimise light pollution from cars at night and reduce the impact on Barrow Wake SSSI. We're also planning to add a connection from the car park to the new Air Balloon Way to improve accessibility for walkers, cyclists and horse riders, including disabled users.

[We're currently consulting on the changes to the B4070 and Barrow Wake. To find out more, please see page 13 of our consultation booklet.](#)



The environment

The feedback we received during our public consultation in 2019 highlighted some concerns about the environmental effects of the scheme.

We're currently consulting on the Preliminary Environmental Information report, in particular the environmental effects and mitigation measures associated with the design changes. To find out more, please see pages 17 to 21 of our consultation booklet.

Habitat and ecology

What you told us

You welcomed our initial proposals to reduce the impact of the scheme on habitats and ecology, but you were still concerned about the impact of the green bridge (see page 12 for more information) and the loss and severance of habitats as a result of the new road. You were also concerned about the removal of veteran trees in the area, including an apple tree in the Air Balloon pub car park, and the potential impact on Ullen Wood.

Our response

As part of our survey and assessment work we've identified additional mitigation measures to help reduce the scheme's impact on wildlife, trees and plants.

We're proposing to plant new woodland, grassland, trees and hedgerows to help preserve and create additional habitats in the local area. These new and improved habitats would be in keeping with the AONB, and have been carefully designed to improve habitat connectivity.

We've worked hard to maximise biodiversity improvements on the land we have available. We're continuing to investigate further opportunities to improve biodiversity with neighbouring landowners and other off-site measures. We've also removed the green bridge from our plans and made changes to the scheme that will have a positive environmental effect overall. The removal of the

green bridge reduces the impact on Crickley Hill Country Park, Crickley Hill and Barrow Wake Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and nearby veteran trees. We're also protecting more veteran trees in the area by reducing the gradient of the A417 as it climbs the escarpment near Crickley Hill. Following feedback, we'll protect the veteran apple tree that is currently in the Air Balloon pub car park.

We're proposing two new crossings near Emma's Grove and north of Shab Hill junction to help connect habitats. The Gloucestershire Way crossing in particular would be planted with hedgerows to help bats and other animals such as badgers and barn owls cross safely.

We're planning to plant hedgerows on the proposed Cowley Lane and Stockwell Farm overbridges, which would further help connect habitats and integrate them into the landscape. We're also proposing to build a new bat underpass near Dog Lane.

We've developed proposals for new and improved public rights of way and are planning to reroute some of them away from SSSIs to help protect them. We have carefully considered how we'll build the road and don't predict any adverse impact on Ullen Wood and its trees.

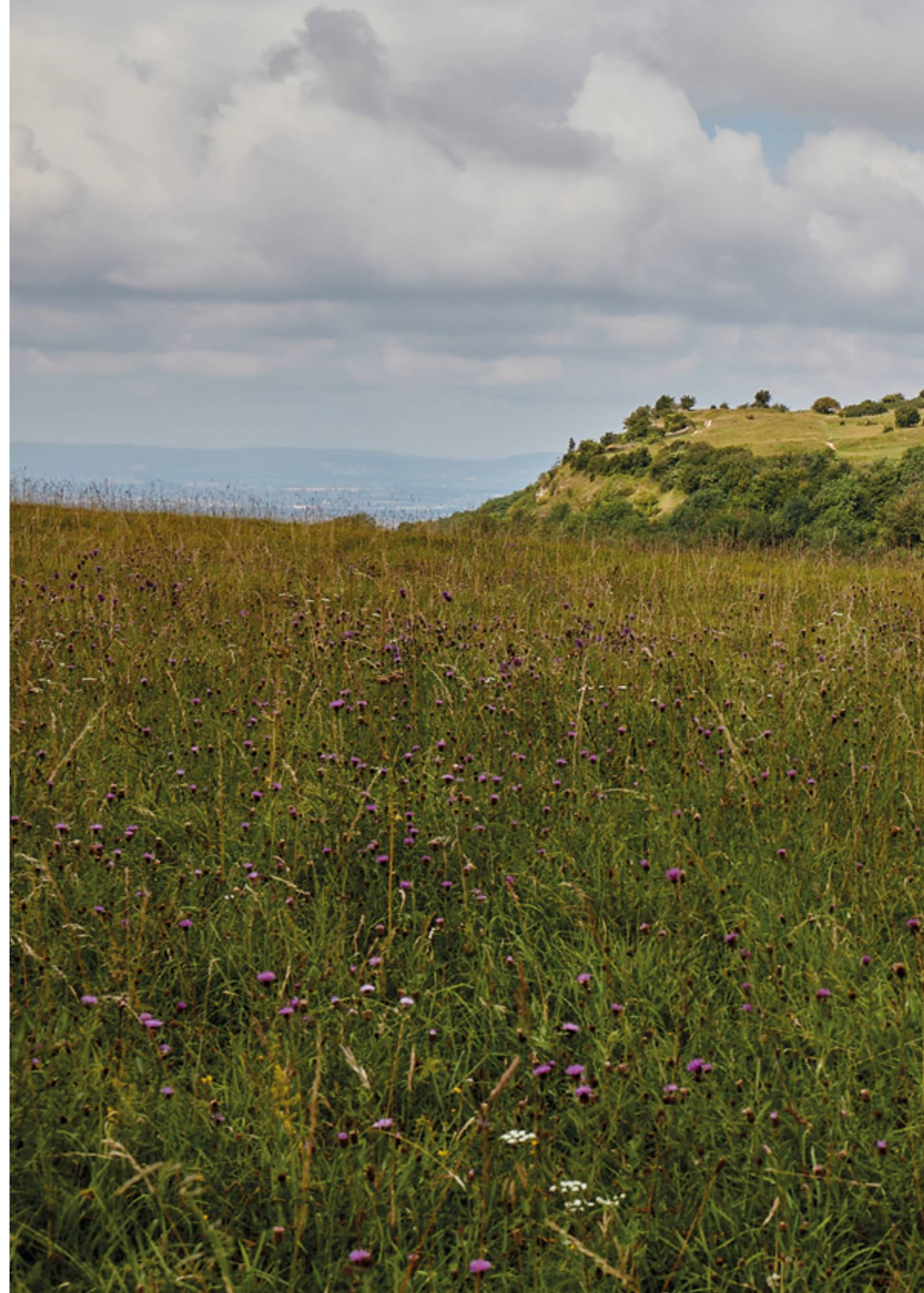
Water and drainage

What you told us

You were concerned about the scheme's impact on natural ground and surface water levels.

Our response

The location and shape of the drainage basins, which prevent flooding by storing large volumes of rainwater in a dedicated area, have been redesigned to reduce the amount of land required and their landscape impact. Where necessary we'll redirect watercourses to help with drainage and prevent flooding, for example at Norman's Brook.



Noise and air pollution

What you told us

Your feedback highlighted issues surrounding the A417/A419 concrete section of the dual carriageway between Latton and Daglingworth. Some of you wanted a speed limit of 50mph instead of 70mph to reduce noise and improve safety. You also raised issues around the Air Balloon Air Quality Management Area (AQMA), especially if traffic increases at this location.

In addition, you were worried about the impact of noise during construction. You were also interested to find out why Cowley and Coberly were not included in our preliminary noise assessments and raised concerns around the potential noise impact.

Our response

We'll be using a low noise surface, which will reduce road noise between Brockworth bypass and Cowley junction. The concrete section between Latton and Daglingworth is outside the scope of this project. We do, however regularly monitor our motorways and A roads and make improvements when needed.

The new road has been designed to safely accommodate vehicles travelling at 70mph, which will help improve journey times.

The design changes we're proposing, including the reduction in gradient of the A417 and the removal of the green bridge, will mean less noise pollution for local residents during construction. We're proposing to create new earth banks that would further reduce road noise for users of public rights of way in the area.

By helping HGVs climb Crickley Hill, and by removing the bottleneck at Air Balloon roundabout, we'll help improve air quality within the AQMA.

When doing preliminary noise assessments, we look at properties within a fixed radius of 600m, known as the standard calculation distance for noise monitoring. As a result of your feedback we've extended this to over 1km so that Cowley and Coberly are included in the assessment area.



Local journeys

What you told us

During consultation it became clear that many of you wanted to understand how local journeys would be affected.

Our response

By improving the A417 we'll significantly improve safety and congestion, therefore reducing the risk of incidents and associated delays. This in turn will help reduce rat running in the local area. Local journeys should be easier and quicker. Many people asked how they would make journeys into towns such as Stroud, Gloucester, Cirencester and Cheltenham.

Getting from A to B

Directions to Gloucester

- Birdlip to Gloucester via Birdlip Hill, A46 and A417
- Brimpsfield to Gloucester via A417
- Cowley to Gloucester via A417
- Elkstone to Gloucester via A417
- Ullen Wood to Gloucester via Leckhampton Hill, A436 and A417
- Leckhampton to Gloucester via A46 and A40

Directions to Cheltenham

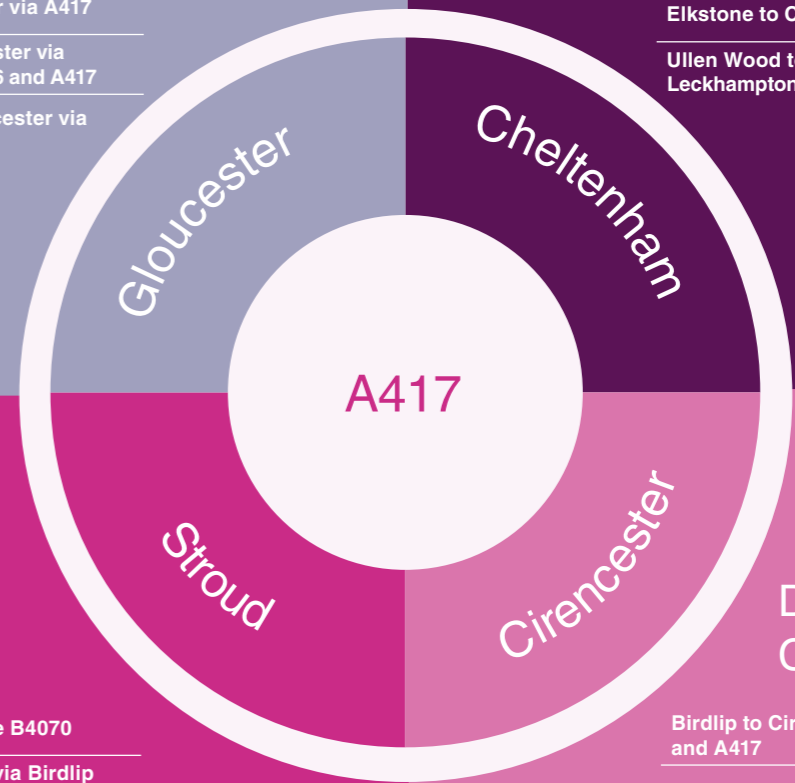
- Birdlip to Cheltenham via B4070, A436 and Leckhampton Hill
- Brimpsfield to Cheltenham via A417, A436 and Leckhampton Hill
- Cowley to Cheltenham via A435
- Elkstone to Cheltenham via A435
- Ullen Wood to Cheltenham via Leckhampton Hill

Directions to Stroud

- Birdlip to Stroud via the B4070
- Brimpsfield to Stroud via Birdlip and B4070
- Cowley to Stroud via A435, A436 and B4070
- Elkstone to Stroud via Brimpsfield and B4070
- Ullen Wood to Stroud via Leckhampton Hill, A436 and B4070
- Leckhampton to Stroud via Leckhampton Hill, A436 and B4070

Directions to Cirencester

- Birdlip to Cirencester via B4070 and A417
- Brimpsfield to Cirencester via A417
- Cowley to Cirencester via A435
- Elkstone to Cirencester via A417
- Ullen Wood to Cirencester via Leckhampton Hill, A436 and A417
- Leckhampton to Cirencester via Leckhampton Hill and A417



Next steps

We're currently consulting on a number of design changes we've made since our public consultation in 2019. For further information, please see our website www.highwaysengland.co.uk/a417-missing-link and read our consultation booklet.

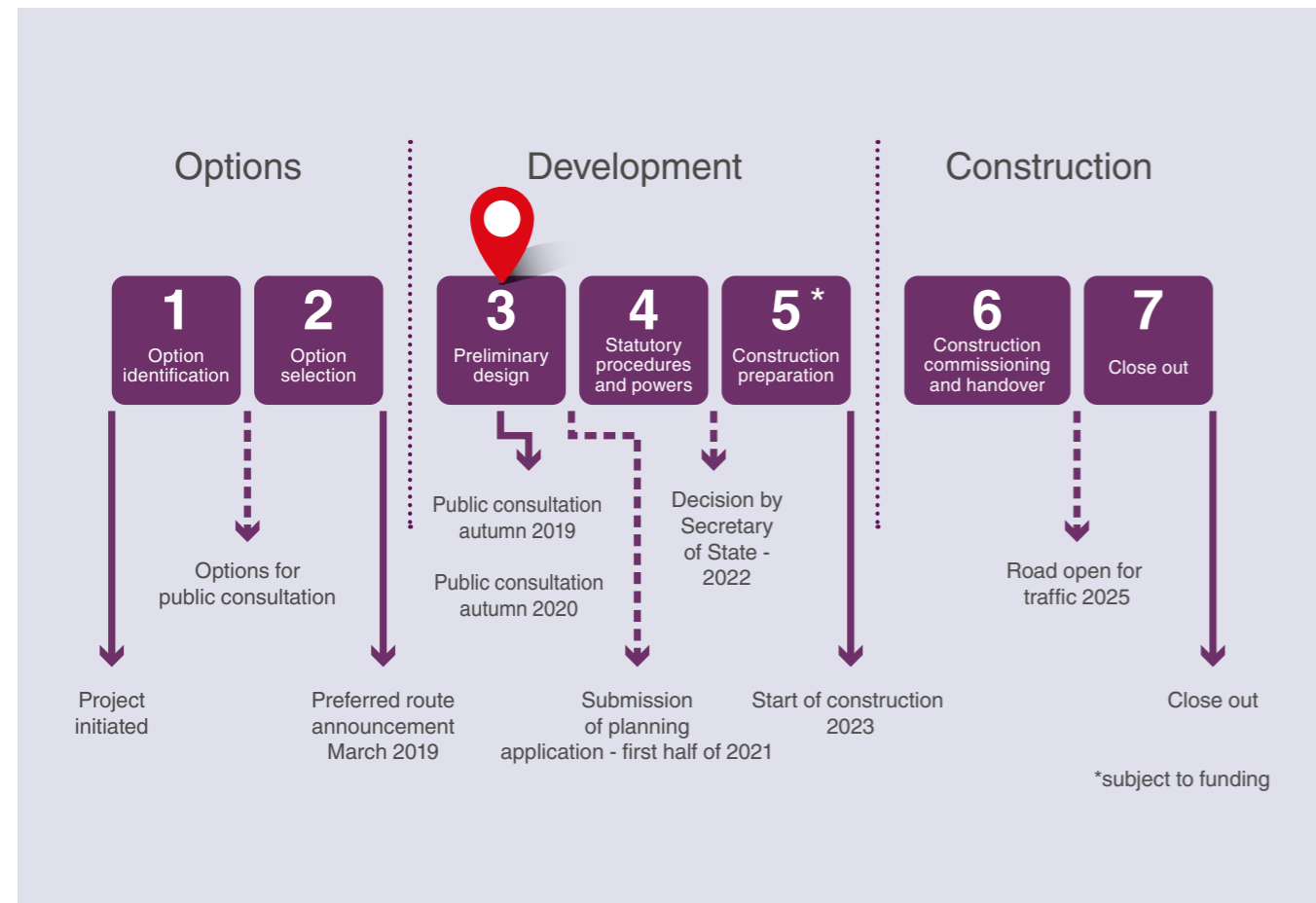
Once the consultation has closed, we'll review all the suggestions and comments received during the consultation. We'll take time to analyse and consider your feedback when making final refinements to the proposed design and to develop our planned mitigation measures.

We'll set out a summary of the responses and describe how our proposals have been informed and influenced by them in a consultation report. This will form part of our Development Consent Order (DCO) application and will also be available to the public following submission of the application. We expect to submit our DCO application in 2021. Subject to planning approvals, we expect to start works in 2023, and the road to open for traffic by the end of 2025.

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

In addition to this consultation process, we'll continue to engage with anyone interested in, or impacted by, the scheme. You can keep up to date with updates about scheme progress and consultation by visiting our website or emailing us or following us on Twitter or Facebook on:

-  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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