

A46 Newark Bypass scheme

Approach to Public Consultation

Introduction

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.

In the Midlands, we are investing in ways to increase capacity, improve connections and make sure journeys are as reliable as possible.

The A46 Newark Bypass scheme is a critical part of this investment, filling the gap in the A46 route to create a high-quality corridor that connects the Midlands, which is great news for the local and regional economy.

We will be asking for your view on our options to develop the A46 Newark Bypass and want to share with you how we will do this. We have produced this document which outlines our approach to consultation, including the different ways we'll collect feedback. It also provides details about how you can take part and how your feedback will be used to influence our options.

We will continue to develop our approach in partnership with Newark and Sherwood District Council and Nottinghamshire County Council and neighbouring local authorities to ensure our consultation is as effective and inclusive as possible.

The scheme

In March 2020, the Government's second Road Investment Strategy included a commitment for Highways England to improve the A46 'Trans-Midlands Trade Corridor' between the M5 and the Humber Ports, to create a continuous dual carriageway from Lincoln to Warwick.

The A46 Newark Bypass (Farndon to Winthorpe) is part of the strategic A46 route connecting the M1 and Leicester to the A1 and central Lincolnshire. The A46 in the Newark area also acts as a key link within the Newark highway network.

The main objectives of the scheme are to:

- Support economic growth
- Improve journey times
- Make journeys safer
- Help cyclists and pedestrians
- Protect and enhance the local environment

Additional information about the scheme, including the options we are consulting on and how we arrived at these options, will be included in our public consultation brochure. Copies of the brochure will be posted to stakeholders within the mailing zone when the consultation is launched (and upon request during the consultation), they will also be available on the scheme webpage www.highwaysengland.co.uk/a46-newark-bypass.

Environmental information

We are producing an Environmental Assessment Report (EAR), which assesses the potential environmental impacts of the options within the proposed scheme area.

This has helped us identify suitable options for the scheme. The following range of environmental topics have been assessed:

- Air quality
- Noise and vibration
- Climate change
- Biodiversity
- Landscape
- Cultural heritage
- Water environment
- Geology and soils
- People and communities
- Use of materials
- Cumulative effects of all, or combinations of the above factors

Measures to reduce negative impacts will be identified where possible and open to consultation during future stages of the scheme. We will undertake more detailed surveys and assessments based on statutory requirements and national guidance as the scheme progresses.

Approach to public consultation

This document outlines the details of our upcoming consultation process, including where you can find information and how to respond. This document will be available to view and download via the scheme webpage after the launch of the consultation and paper copies will be available on request. Contact details to request information or documents from us can be found at the end of this document.

When are we consulting and why?

We will be holding our consultation on the scheme options for eight weeks from Wednesday 9 December 2020 to 11:59pm on Tuesday 2 February 2021.

Public consultation is an important part of the delivery of this scheme and provides people with an opportunity to influence our proposals. It also allows us the opportunity to explain our proposals to the community and address concerns.

The comments we receive will help us to better understand the local area and any potential impacts our scheme may have on road users and the local community.

Who will we consult?

We have engaged with the following stakeholders, and will continue to do so in the lead up to and during the consultation:

- local authorities (through the existing ‘Newark Show and Tell’ sessions)
- statutory environmental bodies
- landowners
- MPs
- local businesses

We have developed a target area for the distribution of our consultation materials. The consultation zone in **Appendix A** shows two areas, one area where consultation packs will be posted to households and businesses, and a second area where we will send information postcards promoting the consultation and how people can view information.

We have undertaken an Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) for the scheme. Information in the EqIA is used to inform the consultation approach to make it as inclusive and accessible as possible to the local community. More information about what we have done for this scheme is included in later sections of this document.

We will also work with the local authorities to ensure that we reach everyone who could be affected by our proposals.

Who can take part?

Anyone who is interested in this scheme is welcome to take part. We welcome all views and will take them into account to help shape and improve our scheme design.

How will we consult?

The coronavirus pandemic presents unique challenges to delivering an inclusive and accessible consultation. Due to these restrictions we will not be holding face-to-face public consultation events as we would normally.

We are instead providing alternative ways for people to access scheme information, ask questions and ultimately make an informed response to the public consultation. We have used the Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) to help us design an approach that addresses this unique situation as far as possible.

The approach pays careful consideration to the following factors, some which are unique to the current pandemic, and some which are standard best practice to consider for consultation.

- people who are unable, or choose not to leave the house due to the pandemic
- key workers, and those who are not able to work from home during the pandemic
- people who do not have access to the internet or are less internet literate
- people who have lower literacy levels, or for whom English is not their first language
- people who require the consultation materials in an alternative format

The following mitigation efforts have been developed in order to reduce these concerns as far as possible:

- posting the consultation brochure and response form to reach stakeholders who may not have access to the online materials
- providing a call back service to provide stakeholders with the opportunity to speak to a member of the project team
- producing a summary video of the consultation process and options
- providing an extended consultation of eight weeks to allow people more time to review the information available and respond

The table below shows the full approach and methods we will use to promote our public consultation and gather feedback on the scheme:

Method	Detail
Scheme webpage	This will provide information about the consultation and will include electronic versions of all consultation materials as well as a link to the Highways England 'Citizen Space' portal where an electronic version of the response form can be completed. The link to the scheme webpage will be shared via social media and with local authorities to publicise as appropriate.
Engagement van	This will advertise the options consultation in public locations near to the scheme on dates at the start and towards the end of the consultation.
Social media	Highways England social media channels including Twitter and Facebook will be used to advertise the consultation.
Letters	These will be posted to stakeholders within the consultation zone and accompanied with consultation materials.
Call back service	The project team will provide the opportunity for stakeholders to organise telephone calls with members of the project team to answer any questions they may have about the consultation or the scheme.
Posters	Posters with details about the consultation will be displayed at public locations such as libraries, community centres and council offices that are open and accessible during the COVID-19 coronavirus pandemic.

Press release	A written communication directed at members of the news media will be distributed by the Highways England Press Office to local news and media outlets on key dates throughout the consultation.
Consultation response channels	<p>We have provided a consultation period of eight weeks, rather than the usual six weeks to allow people more time to review the information available and respond. Responses can be submitted using the following channels:</p> <p>Online</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete the online consultation response online at: www.highwaysengland.co.uk/a46-newark-bypass <p>Post</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete a paper copy of the consultation response form and return it using the Freepost address: Freepost A46 NEWARK BYPASS

What will happen to the consultation responses?

All responses received during the public consultation will be recorded and independently analysed.

The detailed analysis will allow us to understand the issues and concerns raised by all our stakeholders and how these can be addressed. Where it is possible, we will use your feedback to develop the scheme design or to identify ways to address concerns about the impacts of the scheme.

As we continue to refine the option designs, we will assess these against consultation feedback, and detailed area research such as ground investigation surveys and traffic assessments. Based on this assessment we will identify and announce our preferred route for the scheme.

Before we announce our preferred route, we will publish a consultation report outlining the key issues identified in our analysis of feedback to the consultation. The report will also explain how and why this feedback influenced our proposals.

Next steps

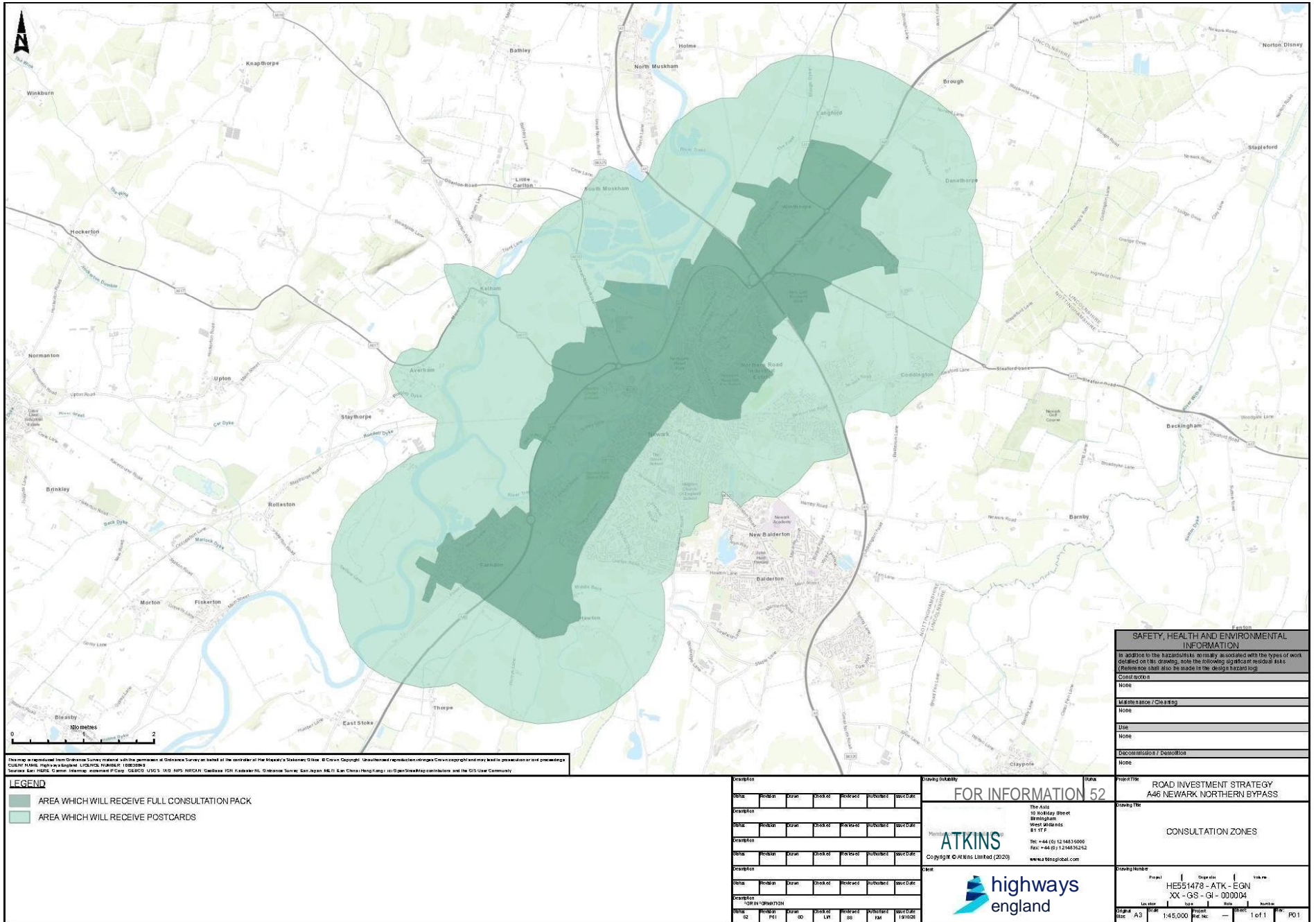
The timeline below sets out the stages in the project's development to Preferred Route Announcement (PRA):

Timeframe	Description
Winter 2020/2021	As the consultation progresses, responses will be collected and analysed.
Spring 2021	The consultation report will be published digitally after the consultation has closed and made available on our website. Paper copies will be available upon request via the contact details provided. Where possible, concerns and feedback raised during this consultation will be considered and input into the scheme design.
Summer 2021	The preferred option to be taken forward to the next stage of design development will be announced.

For more information, please;

- Visit our scheme webpage: www.highwaysengland.co.uk/a46-newark-bypass
- Call our Customer Contact Centre on: 0300 123 5000
- Email us: a46newarkbypass@highwaysengland.co.uk

Appendix A



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LEGEND
 AREA WHICH WILL RECEIVE FULL CONSULTATION PACK
 AREA WHICH WILL RECEIVE POSTCARDS

SAFETY, HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENTAL INFORMATION	
In addition to the hazards normally associated with the types of work detailed on the drawing, note the following significant residual risks (distances shall also be made in the design hazard log)	
Consult notes	
None	
Maintenance / Clearing	
None	
Use	
None	
Decommission / Demolition	
None	

Description		Status	
SHA	Revision	Drawn	Checked
Description		Status	
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FOR INFORMATION 52

ATKINS

The Axis
10 Redgrave Street
Birmingham
West Midlands
B1 1TE

Tel: +44 (0) 121 483 5000
Fax: +44 (0) 121 483 5212
www.atkinsglobal.com

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Drawing Title:		CONSULTATION ZONES	
Drawing Number:		HE551478 - ATK - EGN XX - GS - GI - 000004	
Scale:	1:45,000	Sheet:	1 of 1
Date:	19/10/20	Rev. No.:	001

