

A47 Blofield to North Burlingham dualling Consultation Brochure

Have your say





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Investing in your roads

At Highways England we believe in a connected country, and our road network makes these connections happen. We strive to improve our major roads and motorways, engineering the future to keep people moving today and moving better tomorrow. We want to make sure all our major roads are more dependable, durable and, most importantly, safe. That's why we're delivering over £15 billion of investment on our network.

The A47 Blofield to North Burlingham dualling scheme is a critical part of this investment and will improve journeys along the A47 in Norfolk, which is great news for the local and regional economy.

This scheme is categorised as a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP) under the Planning Act 2008. As such we are required to make an application for a Development Consent Order (DCO) to obtain planning permission to construct the scheme. For more information on this process, please visit the Planning Inspectorate's website: <https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/application-process/the-process/>

In this brochure we explain our proposals for the scheme and how you can take part in the consultation. Your responses will help us shape the scheme before we submit our application to the Planning Inspectorate. We also give details of how you can give us your feedback during our public consultation.

The scheme is one of six major road improvements along the A47 to create better and safer journeys along the 115-mile route between Peterborough and Great Yarmouth. The other A47 schemes in development are:

- A47 Wansford to Sutton dualling
- A47/A141 Guyhirn junction
- A47 North Tuddenham to Easton dualling
- A47/A11 Thickthorn junction improvements
- A47 Great Yarmouth junction (formerly A47/A12 junctions)

How to respond

We're now holding a public consultation on our proposals. We'd like to hear what you think so please share any concerns, ideas or local knowledge that you may have. The consultation will run from Monday 10 September to Friday 19 October, and there are lots of ways you can tell us what you think. Please do come along to one of our public consultation exhibitions (see page 6 for more details).

Alternatively you can view all the consultation materials on our webpage:

www.highwaysengland.co.uk/projects/a47-blofield-to-north-burlingham/

Please remember to submit a response form using the instructions provided or complete the form online. More details of how you can respond are detailed below.

Please respond using one of the following methods by 11:59pm on Friday 19 October

- Complete the response form online at www.highwaysengland.co.uk/projects/a47-blofield-to-north-burlingham
- Complete a consultation response form in and return it using the freepost address provided
- Email your response to A47BlofieldtoNorthBurlinghamRIS@highwaysengland.co.uk
- Write to us at **FREEPOST A47 Blofield to North Burlingham**



Public consultation exhibitions

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

Location	Date	Opening time	Closing time
Castle Mall, 100 Castle Meadow, Norwich, NR1 3DD	Saturday 15 September	11am	5pm
Acle Recreation Centre, Acle, Norwich, Norfolk, NR13 3RA	Saturday 22 September	11am	5pm
Blofield Courthouse, Yarmouth Road, Blofield, Norwich, NR13 4JU	Monday 24 September	1pm	8pm
Lingwood Village Hall, Station Road, Lingwood, Norwich, NR13 4AZ	Tuesday 25 September	1pm	8pm

Public information points

Paper consultation brochures, response forms and other reference documents will also be available at the following locations from Monday 10 September until Friday 19 October.

Public information point locations	Opening times
Lingwood Village Hall – Station Road, Lingwood, Norwich, NR13 4AZ	8:45am – 3pm Monday to Thursday
Blofield Library – North Street, Blofield, NR14 4RQ	1:00pm – 7:00pm Monday 10:30am – 7:00pm Wednesday 4:00pm – 7:00pm Friday 12:00pm – 4:00pm Saturday
Blofield Post Office – 10 Church Alley, Blofield, Norwich NR13 4JJ	7:30am – 8:00pm Monday to Saturday 9:00am – 5:00pm Sunday
Norfolk and Norwich Millennium Library – The Forum, Millennium Plain, Norwich, NR2 1AW	10:00am – 7:00pm Monday to Friday 9:00am – 5:00pm Saturday
Broadland District Council – Thorpe Lodge, 1 Yarmouth Road, Norwich, NR7 0DU	8:30am – 5:00pm Monday to Friday
Norwich City Council - City Hall, St Peters Street, Norwich, NR2 1NH	8:45am – 5:00pm Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday 1:00pm – 5:00pm Wednesday
Norfolk County Council – County Hall, Martineau Lane, Norwich, NR1 2DH	9:00am – 5:00pm Monday to Friday

Why is the scheme needed?

The 115-mile A47 provides for a variety of local, medium and long-distance trips between the A1 and the east coast. The corridor connects the cities of Norwich and Peterborough, the towns of Wisbech, King's Lynn, Dereham, Great Yarmouth and Lowestoft and a succession of villages in what is largely a rural area. The Blofield to North Burlingham section of the A47 is an important, well-used stretch of road for those living and working in the area.

Whilst around half of the A47 is already dual carriageway, the Blofield to North Burlingham section is not, with studies having identified that the single carriageway section of the road no longer meets the needs of its users. Sandwiched between 2 dual carriageway sections, the Blofield to North Burlingham stretch of the road acts as a bottleneck, resulting in congestion and leading to longer and unreliable journey times.

The section also has a poor safety record, with a total of 40 collisions recorded on the section between 2013 and 2017 (giving an average of 10 collisions per year).

The greater Norwich area is set to see major housing and employment growth by 2021. There are also plans for a significant number of new homes in Suffolk at Waveney.



Scheme objectives

The aims and objectives of the scheme are:

Supporting economic growth

The scheme aims to reduce congestion-related delay, improve journey time reliability and increase the overall capacity of the A47. This will help contribute to sustainable economic growth by supporting employment and residential development opportunities.

Making a safer network

Improving road safety for all road users by designing to modern highway standards appropriate for a major A road.

A more free-flowing network

Increasing the resilience of the junction in coping with incidents such as collisions, breakdowns, maintenance and extreme weather. The improved A47 Blofield to North Burlingham will be more reliable, reducing journey times and providing capacity for future traffic growth.

Protected environment

We will protect the environment by minimising adverse impacts and where possible, improving the environmental effects of transport on those living along the route of the new and existing road. We will do this by reducing the impact on the natural and built environment by the new road and any associated works.

An accessible and integrated network

To ensure the proposals consider local communities and access to the road network, providing a safer route between communities for cyclists, pedestrians, equestrians and vulnerable users where a need is identified.

Value for money

To ensure that the scheme is affordable and delivers good value for money.

What's happened so far?

As part of developing our proposals for the scheme, we held a public consultation on 4 different options, from 13 March to 21 April 2017:

Option 1: This option proposed improving the single carriageway section of the A47 between Blofield and North Burlingham to dual carriageway standard by upgrading the existing carriageway.

Option 2: This option proposed a new dual carriageway that would run to the north of the A47 as the route heads east away from the village of Blofield, and then to the south of the existing A47 as the route passes the village of North Burlingham, crossing the existing A47 between the 2 villages.

Option 3: This option proposed building a new dual carriageway to the south of the existing A47 between Blofield and North Burlingham.

Option 4: This option proposed building a new dual carriageway to the south within 70 meters of the existing A47 between Blofield and North Burlingham.

As well as listening to the consultation feedback, we continued to refine and further develop the design and undertake more surveys, including examination of the ground conditions, measuring the topography of the land, archaeological surveys and various environmental surveys. These included studies into the landscape and ecological impacts of each option.

We considered a number of factors in deciding between the options, including:

- safety
- economic benefits
- public consultation feedback
- costs
- environmental effects
- construction

Our assessment and feedback from the consultation demonstrated that Option 4 would provide the better performing route, by solving the traffic and safety problems of the existing road, being the least disruptive to build, and by taking the shortest amount of time to complete. It will also have the least impact on the environment and was favored by the public by a significant margin. This is the route we are taking forward in this consultation. You can read more about this in the Preferred Route Announcement brochure, which can be found at:

www.highwaysengland.co.uk/projects/a47-blofield-to-north-burlingham/

Progress since the Preferred Route Announcement

The team has continued to develop the design of the preferred route, with traffic flow and safety as primary considerations:

- Work has included design development of:
- the positioning of the road
- junctions
- structures
- lighting
- landscaping
- drainage

Engagement is ongoing with utility providers to make arrangements for diversions that may be required to accommodate the route.

We've also carried out several surveys including:

- aerial topographical surveys
- ecological surveys
- pedestrian, cyclist and equestrian user surveys
- ground investigation surveys

Following feedback from our first consultation in March and April 2017, we have engaged with local communities and stakeholders further on the local access arrangement for the Blofield to North Burlingham dualling.



What we are consulting on now: our proposed design

Our selected design will upgrade this section of the A47 to a new dual carriageway running to the south of the existing A47 between Blofield and North Burlingham. The route will be built within 70 metres of the existing carriageway and will pass predominantly through open farm land. The design also includes construction of 2 new junctions.

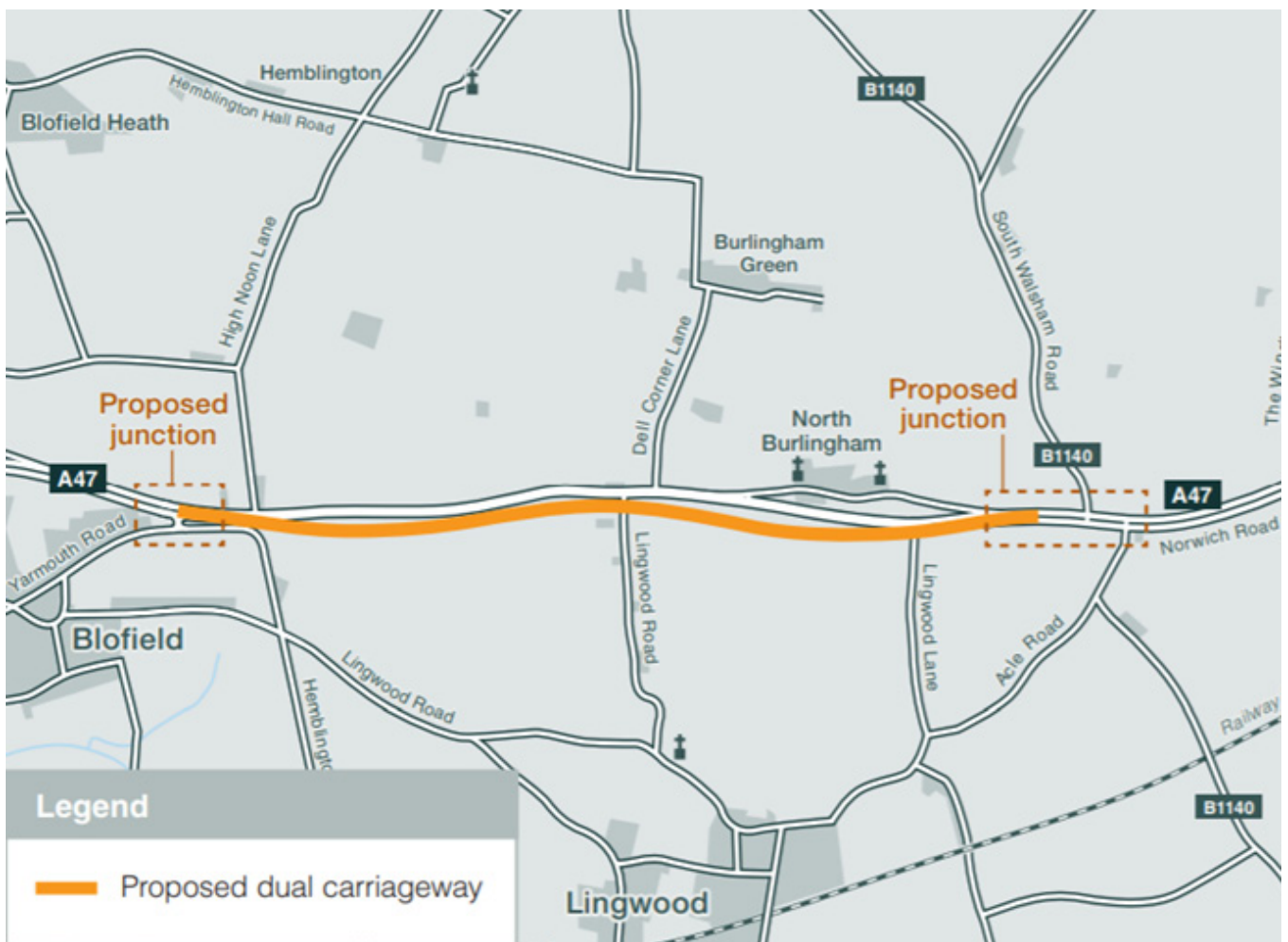


Diagram of proposed design

Western junction (1)

The junction at the Blofield end includes a link road going over the new route to connect the existing A47 with the Yarmouth Road via a bridge.



Eastern junction (2)

The junction at the North Burlingham end would be a new grade separated junction (this means you'll have to go up or down a slip road to join and leave the A47) in the form of a bridge to provide a north/south connection between South Walsham Road and Acle Road.



Benefits and impacts of the proposed design

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

Theme	Benefit/impact of the scheme
<p>Journey times and traffic congestion</p>	<p>By improving this stretch of the A47 up to dual carriageway standard, it is expected that journey times will be reduced, with the increased capacity of the road improving resilience in the event of breakdowns and accidents.</p> <p>We expect the new dual carriageway between Blofield and North Burlingham to be used by 43,000 vehicles a day when it opens in 2022, and 50,000 vehicles a day by 2037. The majority of this traffic would have otherwise used the existing single carriageway.</p> <p>For westbound journeys during the morning rush hour, we expect the proposals to save drivers up to 3 minutes on their journeys in 2022 and up to 4 minutes by 2037. For eastbound journeys during the morning rush hour, time savings of up to 2 minutes in 2022 and up to 3 minutes by 2037 are predicted. We anticipate that drivers will save around 2 minutes when travelling in either direction at other times of the day.</p>

Theme	Benefit/impact of the scheme
<p>Access for local residents</p>	<p>We have engaged with local representatives and residents about local access arrangements for the A47 Blofield to North Burlingham dualling. By retaining the existing A47 after the scheme is complete, local people will have safer access to nearby villages, whilst the A47 will benefit from more drivers being able to use this section of the road at any one time.</p>
<p>Air quality</p>	<p>We will consider the health-related issues of local and regional air quality together with the global issue of climate change. We are currently analysing data from long-term air quality monitoring in the local area and putting in place mitigation measures such as a dust management system so that potential impacts are controlled and monitored. Construction will also be planned in a way which will reduce the impact of emissions on the local area, whilst also preventing disruption to residents.</p>
<p>Noise</p>	<p>We are undertaking noise surveys and continue to assess any potential noise and vibration impacts to allow us to build in appropriate mitigation if it is required. As part of our assessment we do not expect the proposals to have a significant effect on noise and vibration, however if assessments show adverse effects, we will consider noise fences or bunds as part of the design. We will also make use of noise reducing tarmac, which will reduce noise at typical highway speeds in comparison to conventional road surfaces</p> <p>During construction mitigation includes choosing the most appropriate method and machinery to reduce noise, adequate maintenance and storage of construction equipment and possible local noise screening. Once the road is open we will monitor noise to assess if any further mitigation is required.</p>

Theme	Benefit/impact of the scheme
<p>Cultural heritage</p>	<p>We are conducting archaeological surveys to identify any risks of disturbing significant remains during construction. Mitigation includes, where possible, planting to screen local historic assets from the proposed scheme.</p>
<p>Landscape and visual impacts</p>	<p>During construction we will use mitigation measures such as the retention of existing planting where possible, as well as ensuring a well-ordered and tidy construction site. We will introduce new areas of native tree and shrub planting to replace areas of planting that will need to be removed. This, along with appropriate landform embankments and cuttings, will be used to screen views of the proposed scheme.</p>
<p>Nature conservation</p>	<p>We have been carrying out ecological surveys and have identified the presence of protected species such as barn owls and bats. Designated sites within the vicinity of the scheme include a number of local wildlife sites. 6 priority habitats listed are recorded within the study area; grassland and scrub around the edges of fields used for crops, stagnant water bodies/ponds with naturally high nutrient content, hedgerows, lowland mixed deciduous woodland, traditional orchards and pond habitats.</p> <p>We will use best practice mitigation measures to reduce the risk of impacts on designated sites, protected species and habitats. Opportunities to improve nature conservation are also sought and included in the design of the proposed scheme. Examples may include the sensitive timing of work to avoid breeding seasons, non-disruptive lighting and native tree and shrub planting.</p> <p>Once operational, mitigation measures will include the creation of replacement habitats for bats, kingfishers, reptiles and water voles.</p>

Theme	Benefit/impact of the scheme
<p>Road drainage and the water environment</p>	<p>To prevent pollution we will use best practice mitigation measures during construction such as the safe storage of materials away from drains and watercourses. We will also create temporary watercourse crossings during construction to minimise impact on flood risk and water quality.</p> <p>To help reduce the risk of flooding we will implement a sustainable drainage system. To support this, a flood risk assessment will inform the designs of the surface-water drainage system, which takes into account climate change.</p>
<p>Contaminated land</p>	<p>Soil will be tested for contamination in advance of and during construction, to decide if it requires treatment or special disposal methods. Best practice mitigation measures will be used to ensure that there will not be any residual contamination issues.</p>
<p>Geology</p>	<p>During construction we will implement best practice measures to protect soil structure and quality, minimise waste generation and protect controlled waters from both general site works. This will include testing soil in advance of and during construction for contamination to decide if it requires treatment or special disposal methods.</p>
<p>Materials</p>	<p>Value engineering is being used to optimise the cost versus the value (benefits) of the scheme where appropriate. Consideration will also be given to recycling by reusing waste generated on-site before disposing of it or bringing in waste from outside.</p> <div style="text-align: center;"> </div> <p>This would directly decrease the impacts from the use of materials. Further opportunities to reduce impacts may also be achieved at the detailed design stage.</p>

Theme	Benefit/impact of the scheme
<p>Road safety</p>	<p>By improving junctions and designing to modern safety standards, the scheme should reduce the number of accidents which lead to fatal or serious injury on this section of the road network.</p> <p>From 2013 to 2017, this stretch of the A47 had 40 reported injury collisions, making the annual average number of collisions 10. Following construction, we estimate that the annual average number of collisions will be reduced to 2.98 in 2021 and 2.23 by 2036.</p> <p>The construction of the dual carriageway and grade separated junctions to modern design standards are predicted to significantly reduce the risk of these types of collisions, with many dangerous connections directly onto the main carriageway removed.</p>
<p>Construction duration and impacts</p>	<p>We estimate a construction period of up to 2 years. There will be impacts on the road network and local communities during this time and we will provide further detail on this (including a construction traffic management plan) as part of our Development Consent Order (DCO) application. Some of the mitigations we have already considered during construction include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ choosing the most appropriate method and machinery to reduce noise ■ adequate maintenance and storage of construction equipment ■ local noise screening ■ using a dust management system so that potential impacts are controlled and monitored ■ planning construction related activity in a way that will reduce the impact of emissions and limit disruption for residents.

Theme	Benefit/impact of the scheme
<p>Walkers, cyclists and horse riders</p>	<p>The proposed scheme would result in an overall beneficial effect for walkers, cyclists and horse riders travelling between Blofield and North Burlingham since crossing of the A47 would be made easier and safer by the introduction of the Blofield Bridge.</p> <p>Where the existing A47 is unaffected by the dualling, it will become a local access road for residents, with a new footpath provided adjacent to the road connecting Yarmouth Road to the existing footpath at the Dell Corner Lane junction.</p> <p>The Burlingham footpath between Lingwood and North Burlingham would be directly impacted by the proposed scheme as the new road shortens the existing path. Extensive surveys of non-motorised users have been undertaken in November 2017 and May to June 2018. The results captured a very low number of users travelling north to south in this area.</p> <p>The proposed scheme includes a compact grade separated junction at the B1140. The bridge associated with the proposed junction is anticipated to have a beneficial effect on cyclists crossing the A47 to and from the two side roads</p>
<p>Land take</p>	<p>Permanent land take is required within the impacted area to accommodate the dualling during the construction stage and operational phase. We are engaging with owners who may be affected by this.</p>
<p>Local communities</p>	<p>For safer and easier merging and diverging to and from the proposed A47, the alignment removes right turns across the carriageway.</p> <p>We will work with local communities to put in place appropriate mitigation measures during construction.</p>

What is a Development Consent Order?

The proposed scheme constitutes a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project, which means that permission for its construction has to be authorised via an application for a Development Consent Order (DCO) decided by the Secretary of State for Transport. A DCO can incorporate a range of consents that normally have to be obtained separately, such as listed building consent.

The DCO for the A47 Blofield to North Burlingham dualling will also need to include powers for the compulsory acquisition of land, as the works will require land beyond the current highway boundary. Applications for a DCO are made to the Planning Inspectorate, the body appointed by the Government to examine the merits of proposals and to make recommendations to the Secretary of State on whether consent should be granted.



What happens next?

Once the consultation has closed on **Friday 19 October**, we will consider all feedback given during the consultation. We will take the time to analyse and consider your comments when making further refinements to the proposed design and when developing our mitigation measures. We will set out a summary of responses and describe how our proposals have been influenced by them in a consultation report. The consultation report will form part of our Development Consent Order (DCO) application and will also be available to the public following the submission of our application.

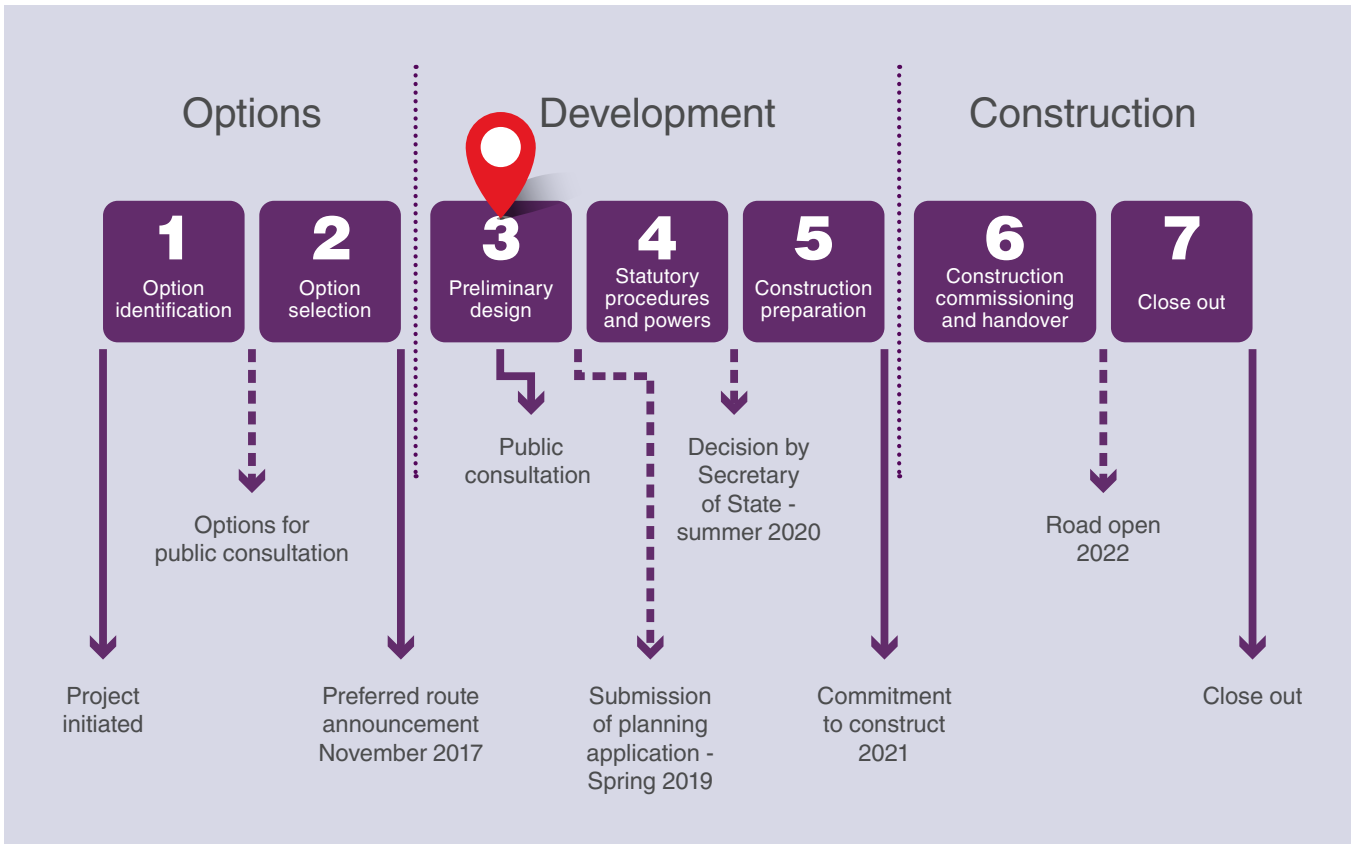
We expect to submit an application to the Planning Inspectorate by spring 2019. Once we submit our application, the Planning Inspectorate (acting on behalf of the Secretary of State) will make a decision on whether the application should be accepted for examination. If the application is accepted, the examination is likely to include hearings which provide opportunities for interested parties to make oral representations to the Examining Authority. The Planning Inspectorate will then make a recommendation to the Secretary of State for Transport, who will decide on whether or not the scheme will go ahead. If it is granted, we anticipate that the scheme will take a couple of years to build.

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



To help us shape the final design in preparation of our submission to the Planning Inspectorate, it is important you are involved now and submit your response by Friday 19 October.

The process for the development, application and construction of the scheme is explained in the table below:



For more information

Please visit our webpage


 highwaysengland.co.uk/projects/a47-blofield-to-north-burlingham/

where you can also sign up for email alerts whenever the webpage for this scheme is updated.

If you have any queries about this scheme, please contact the project team directly by emailing

 A47BlofieldtoNorthBurlinghamRIS@highwaysengland.co.uk

Alternatively, call our Customer Contact Centre on

 **0300 123 5000**

Requesting copies of consultation documents

A copy of the Statement of Community Consultation (SoCC) and this consultation brochure can be provided free of charge upon request. For paper copies of the PEIR, our printing and postage costs will be charged.

If you need help accessing this or any other Highways England information, please call **0300 123 5000** and we will help you.

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