

M621

Junctions 1 to 7

Improvement scheme

Share your views



Investing in your roads

Every road user wants less congested roads to enable swift, safe, comfortable and informed travel. On behalf of the government, Highways England is responsible for delivering the largest investment in a generation throughout England's motorways and major A roads.

In 2014, the government announced proposals to improve M621 junctions 1-7 as part of their Road Investment Strategy.

The M621 is a vital link between Leeds city centre and the surrounding road network. It's already very congested, especially at peak times. This congestion will only get worse with economic growth expected in the region. That's why investment is needed to provide more reliable journeys for people using the route.

Share your views

We're holding the first public consultation on our proposals. We'd like to hear what you think about some of these proposals, so please share any concerns or local knowledge that you may have.

The consultation will run for six weeks, from **4 September to 15 October 2017** and there are lots of ways you can tell us what you think.

Why not come along to one of our public exhibitions?

Or you can write to us by post or email. Details of how you can respond are listed below.

Your comments will help us to make sure that we've fully understood any potential impacts on the community. We'll listen to everyone's feedback and consider these before we select a preferred option.

The proposed options

We have looked at lots of ways we could improve the M621 and assessed each of our options, taking the following into consideration:

- Whether or not they meet the scheme's objectives
- Value for money
- Potential impact on the environment
- How the local community could be affected

We have now shortlisted three options which all meet the scheme's objectives. These are Options A, B and C. This section of the booklet provides more detail on our proposals and includes a number of proposed improvements which are essential to addressing the cause of the peak time congestion. These are presented in Option A, with Options B and C providing further improvements and benefits.



In this brochure we explain our proposed improvements for the M621 junctions 1 to 7 improvement scheme. We also give details of how you can give us your feedback during our public consultation.

How to respond

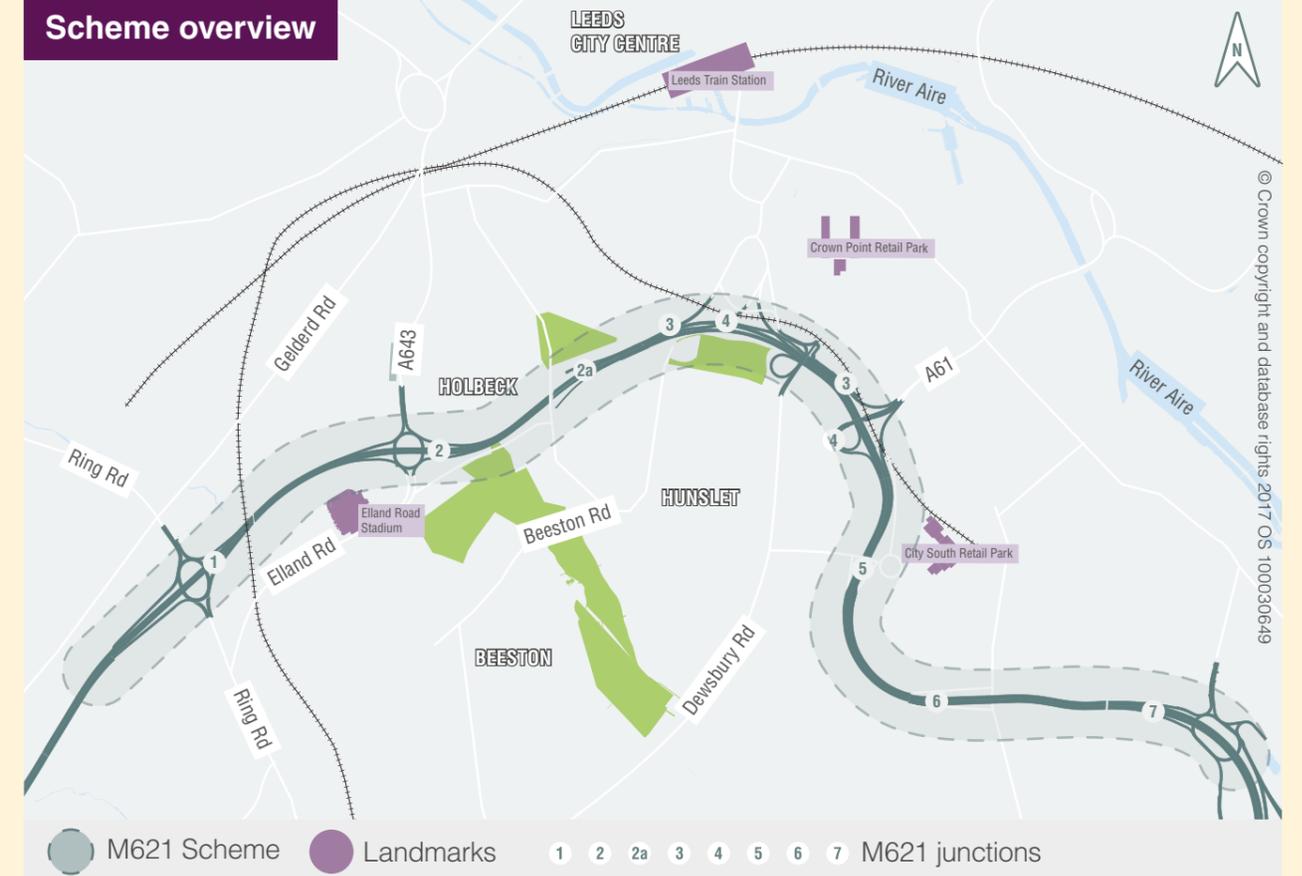
Please respond to our consultation using one of the following methods by 15 October 2017.

-  **Freepost:** Complete the questionnaire in this brochure and return it to us using the freepost provided.
-  **Online:** Complete the questionnaire online at: www.highways.gov.uk/m621j1-7
-  **Email your response to:** M621J1to7@highwaysengland.co.uk
-  **You can write to us at:**
M621 Junction 1-7 Project Team, 3rd Floor South, Highways England, Lateral, 8 City Walk, Leeds, LS11 9AT

Public exhibitions

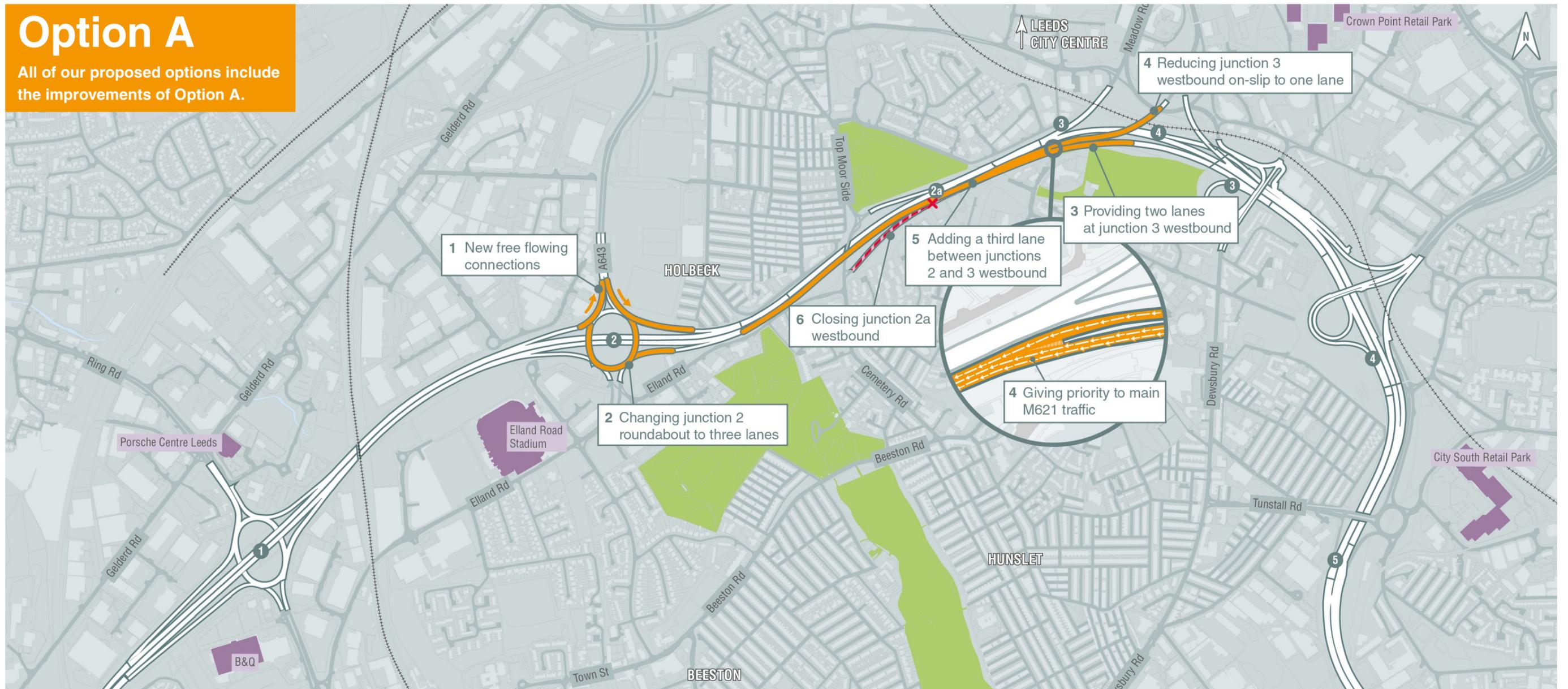
One of the best ways to have your say is to come to one of our public exhibitions. Here you'll be able to find out more about the scheme and speak to members of the project team who will be happy to answer any questions you may have.

Hillside Enterprise Centre		St Matthew's Community Centre	
Friday 8 September	1pm – 8pm	Saturday 16 September	10am – 4pm
Saturday 9 September	10am – 4pm	St Matthew's Community Centre, St Matthew's Street, Leeds, LS11 9NR	
Hillside Enterprise Centre, Beeston Road, Leeds, LS11 8ND			



Option A

All of our proposed options include the improvements of Option A.



 M621 Scheme
 Option A improvements
 Landmarks
 1 2 2a 3 4 5 6 7 Junctions

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Our Improvement

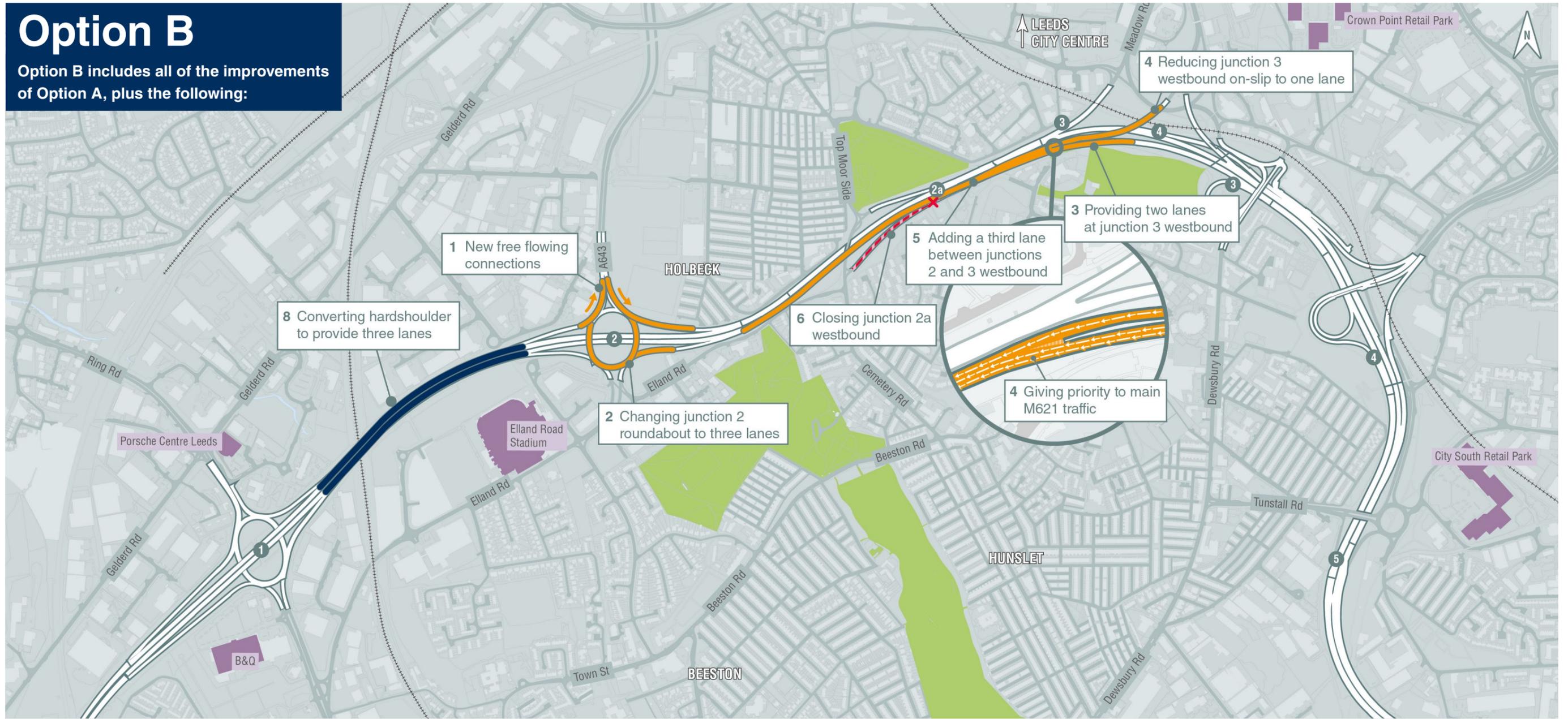
1	The introduction of free flowing connections between the M621 and the A643 at junction 2.
2	Adding an additional lane to the roundabout at junction 2.
3	Providing two lanes through junction 3 westbound, instead of the one lane at present.
4	Changing junction 3 westbound to give priority to the main M621 traffic and reducing the on-slip to one lane. This creates a junction where traffic merges from the on-slip road on the right-hand side of the carriageway.
5	Adding a third lane between junction 2 and 3 westbound by converting the existing hard shoulder and auxiliary lanes.
6	Closure of junction 2a westbound to enable the improvements at junction 3.
7	Providing improved motorway technology between junctions 1 and 7.

Benefit to you

These will improve the connection between the M621 and the A643 for eastbound traffic, so these vehicles won't need to stop at the junction.
This will increase capacity, allowing more vehicles to use the junction.
This will increase the capacity of the junction and ease congestion.
Presently, the westbound on-slip road at junction 3 has priority over the main M621 traffic. We will change the priority to allow main M621 traffic to flow more freely.
This will create more capacity and smooth the flow of traffic.
This closure reduces the risk of collisions resulting from the short distance between junction 3 and 2a. This is explained in more detail later in this brochure.
This helps safely manage traffic in the event of incidents and to keep drivers better informed. This is explained in more detail later in this brochure.

Option B

Option B includes all of the improvements of Option A, plus the following:



○ M621 Scheme ● Option A improvements ● Option B improvements ● Landmarks

1 2 2a 3 4 5 6 7 M621 junctions

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Our Improvement

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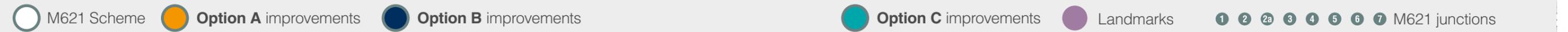
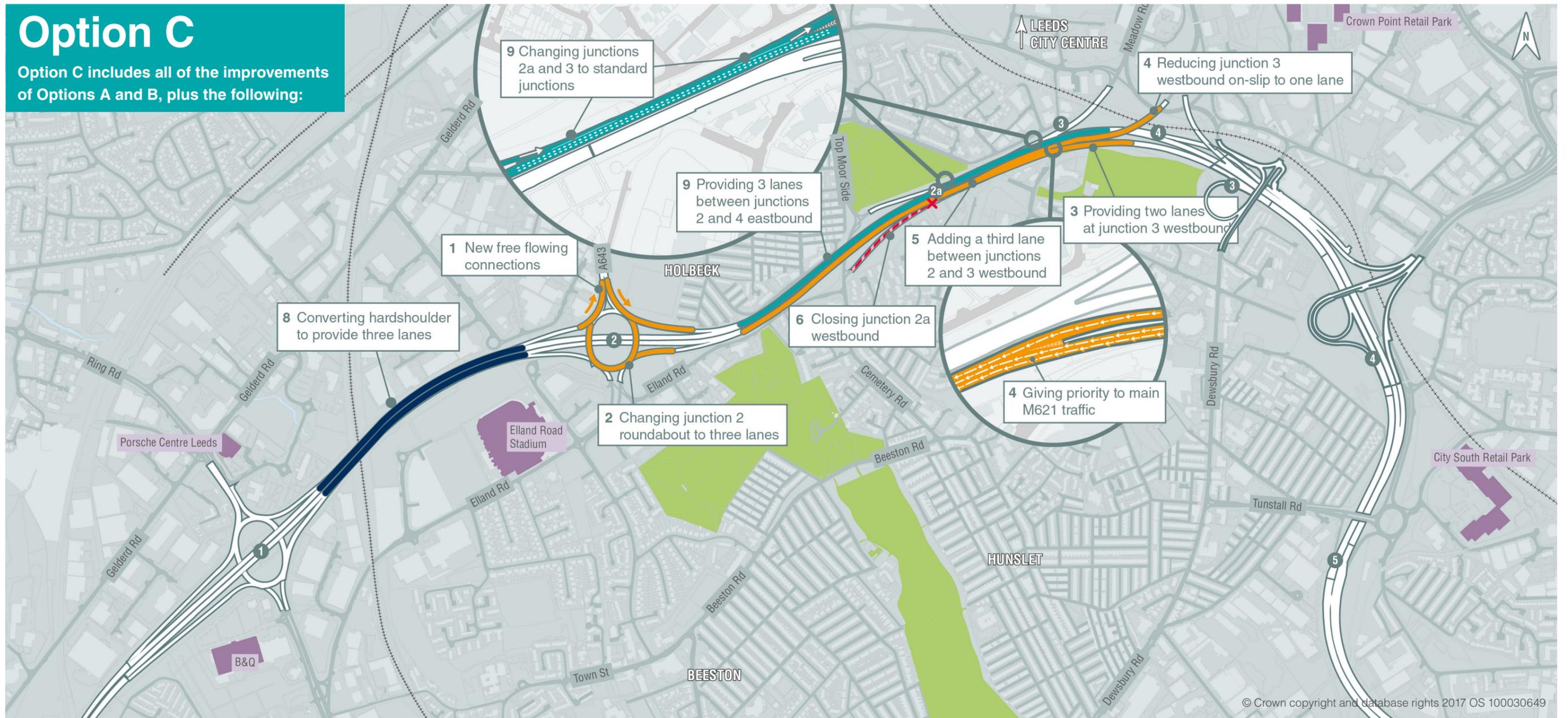
Adding a third lane in each direction between junctions 1 and 2 by converting the hard shoulder into a lane for traffic.

Benefit to you

This will provide additional road capacity, reduced congestion and better journey time reliability.

Option C

Option C includes all of the improvements of Options A and B, plus the following:



Our Improvement

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Adding a third lane between junctions 2 and 4 eastbound by converting the existing hard shoulder into a lane for traffic. This will include changing junction 2a on-slip and junction 3 off-slip to a standard junction, to enable the existing auxiliary lane to form part of the additional third lane.

Benefit to you

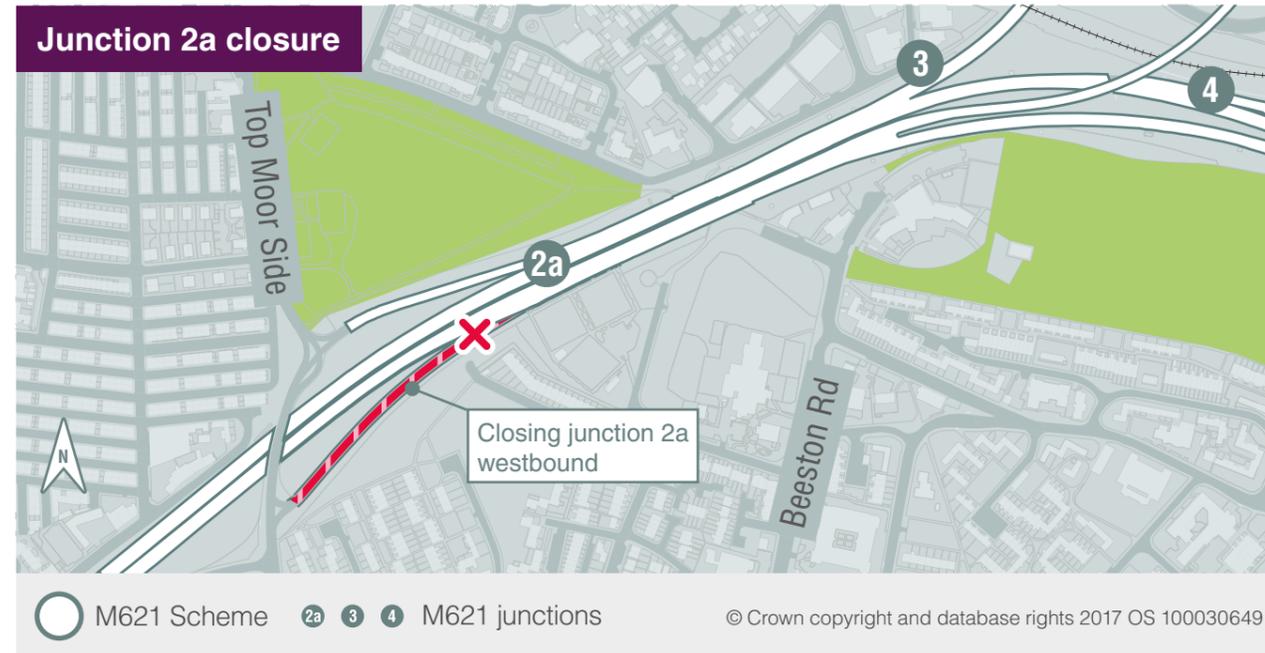
This will provide additional road capacity, reduced congestion and better journey time reliability.

Proposed closure of junction 2a

A key aim of the M621 improvement scheme is to improve journey time reliability by addressing the causes of existing congestion on the M621.

Alongside this we aim to maintain the highest possible level of safety for those using the M621. All three options include an alteration to the westbound junction 3 on-slip and the closure of the junction 2a off-slip road.

Currently, the westbound on-slip road at junction 3 is two lanes wide with the main M621 traffic being reduced to one lane. This causes significant congestion during peak periods. To help improve the operation of this junction we propose to reduce the on-slip road to one lane and widen the main M621 to two lanes. This will mean westbound traffic joining the M621 from junction 3 will join in the outside lane.



Traffic wishing to join at junction 3 and leave at junction 2a would need to cross two lanes of traffic in a very short distance. This manoeuvre is potentially unsafe and therefore junction 2a is proposed to be closed. We propose to increase the capacity of junction 2 to enable additional traffic to use this junction instead of junction 2a.

The closure of the junction 2a leads to:

- A safer road environment for traffic leaving Leeds city centre and entering the M621 at junction 3
- A safer environment for traffic on the mainline of the M621
- Smoother traffic flow through the section leading to less congestion and more reliable journey times



Pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders

All three options would result in little impact to footpaths and cycle routes. At junction 2, however, there would need to be some changes. The current junction 2 eastbound exit has a signalised pedestrian crossing which would need to be removed.

We will consider making improvements to other existing pedestrian routes, for example the underpass at Lowfields Road, to mitigate the impact of this change.

New motorway technology

The scheme involves installing new technology between junctions 1-7 of the M621. This technology will be used to smooth the flow of traffic, helping us better detect and monitor incidents and improve the information we provide to drivers.

New signs will be installed either above each lane of the carriageway or on the verges next to the road. The signs will be used to display advisory speed limits when traffic volumes increase. Sensors in the road will detect changes in traffic volumes and will activate lower speeds to be displayed on the signs.

Reducing speed during peak demand decreases stop – start conditions and allows traffic to move smoothly.

Along some sections of the M621 we plan to use the hard shoulder as a permanent extra traffic lane. Signs will tell drivers when lanes are closed.



Environmental impact

The scheme is being designed to minimise the effect on the environment. We have undertaken a range of environmental assessments to evaluate the impact our proposals may have on the environment and to influence our designs.

Our work so far has shown that there are no significant differences in the environmental impacts between any of our three options. Further assessments will be undertaken to identify any



Noise and vibration

Construction is likely to generate noise that may disturb local areas, such as houses and community facilities. We will make every effort to make sure the noise impact on local properties is kept to a minimum.



Landscape and visual amenity

The technology improvements are unlikely to have an impact due to the existing urban nature of the M621. However, we will continue to look at the effects on the local landscape and the quality of views.



Waste and materials

We will identify opportunities where possible to reduce, reuse or recycle waste.



Air quality

Assessment work so far indicates all options are unlikely to have a significant effect on air quality. We will consider emissions that may arise from the project both during construction and once it is open to traffic.

effects the scheme may have along the route and once we have identified these we will consider how we can reduce our impact on the environment, where possible.

All future findings will be published on our webpage however, in the meantime, the following covers a wide range of environmental themes that we take into consideration:



Nature conservation

No significant effects have been identified to date however we will consider the effects on ecologically important sites, protected species and other sensitive species including bats and newts.



Geology and soils

We will carry out ground investigation surveys to identify the potential impacts on soils and geology and to understand the mining history of the area.



Road drainage and the water environment

It is unlikely that there will be any significant changes to the current drainage or water environment although we will work with the Environment Agency and continue to assess the effects on surface water, groundwater and flood risk.



People and communities

All options include the loss of a small allocated area of protected playing pitch and the potential removal of a footpath at junction 2. However, the overall impacts to local communities are predicted to be neutral or beneficial.



Next steps

The timeline below shows what will happen at each stage of the scheme. We are currently at Stage 2 - option selection.



Once this consultation is closed we will analyse all the responses and write a consultation report which summarises the feedback. We will then use the findings of this report and further assessment work to refine the option designs and select our preferred option, known as Preferred Route Announcement. We expect to announce a preferred route in spring 2018.

Once our preferred route has been identified we will move to the next stage. In this stage we will develop our preliminary design and carry out surveys. This is also when the next stages of environmental assessments are completed and we look at mitigations to reduce any negative environmental impacts.

We will then publish our proposals under the Highways Act 1980, this is known as publishing our draft orders. This is the start of the statutory planning process and another public consultation will be held after our draft orders are published. Our proposals will be assessed by an independent inspector who will make a recommendation to the Secretary of State for Transport for a final decision to be made.

Subject to successfully completing all of the necessary statutory processes and the scheme remaining value for money, we expect construction work to start in 2020. As we are in the very early stages of designing our proposals we are still developing our construction plan but we expect construction to be completed by 2022.

Find out more

For more information about the scheme and for the latest updates you can visit our website www.highways.gov.uk/m621j1-7. Here you can sign up for email alerts whenever the page is updated

If you have questions at any time about this project or require this brochure in a different format you can contact the project team:
M621J1to7@highwaysengland.co.uk

M621 Junction 1-7 Project Team, 3rd floor south, Highways England, Lateral, 8 City Walk, Leeds, LS11 9AT



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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