

A1 Birtley to Coal House consultation report executive summary

Two options were presented to improve the A1 between Birtley and Coal House and we asked for your views on these between 26 August 2016 and 7 October 2016.

The consultation is now closed. Thank you for your feedback, this is now being taken into account as we refine the scheme and we hope to issue a preferred route announcement in spring/summer 2017.

The A1 between Birtley and Coal House will be improved by widening the existing road to provide a three lane carriageway and replacement of Allerdene Railway Bridge.

We're designing this improvement scheme to deliver greater benefits for road users, local communities, and to support the region's economy.

The consultation period commenced on 26 August 2016 and concluded on 7 October 2016. Residents local to the area and stakeholders with an interest in the scheme were engaged with in order to provide an overview of the proposed scheme and its benefits; outline the differences between the 2 options; provide an understanding of next steps and give them an opportunity to raise concerns or issues with the project team.



Once completed it will:

- Reduce congestion by increasing road capacity for road users.
- Improve the reliability of peoples' journeys by increasing capacity of the road network, which will help to reduce delays. Replacing Allerdene Railway Bridge will also improve reliability of journeys by reducing the amount of maintenance required.
- Make journeys safer, by improving the standard and capacity of the road, which will reduce the impact of safety issues along the route.
- Help support economic growth by improving the road to the Newcastle and Tyneside area (Team Valley Employment Zone), while supporting the government's initiative for growth in the north-east.

Invitations

An initial letter was issued to over 3,500 homes in close proximity to the scheme in July 2016. The letter was an opportunity to inform local residents of the scheme and raise awareness of the forthcoming public consultation.

Following this, a consultation booklet was sent to the same addresses in August 2016 which outlined the consultation, how to respond and details of public exhibitions.



Responses

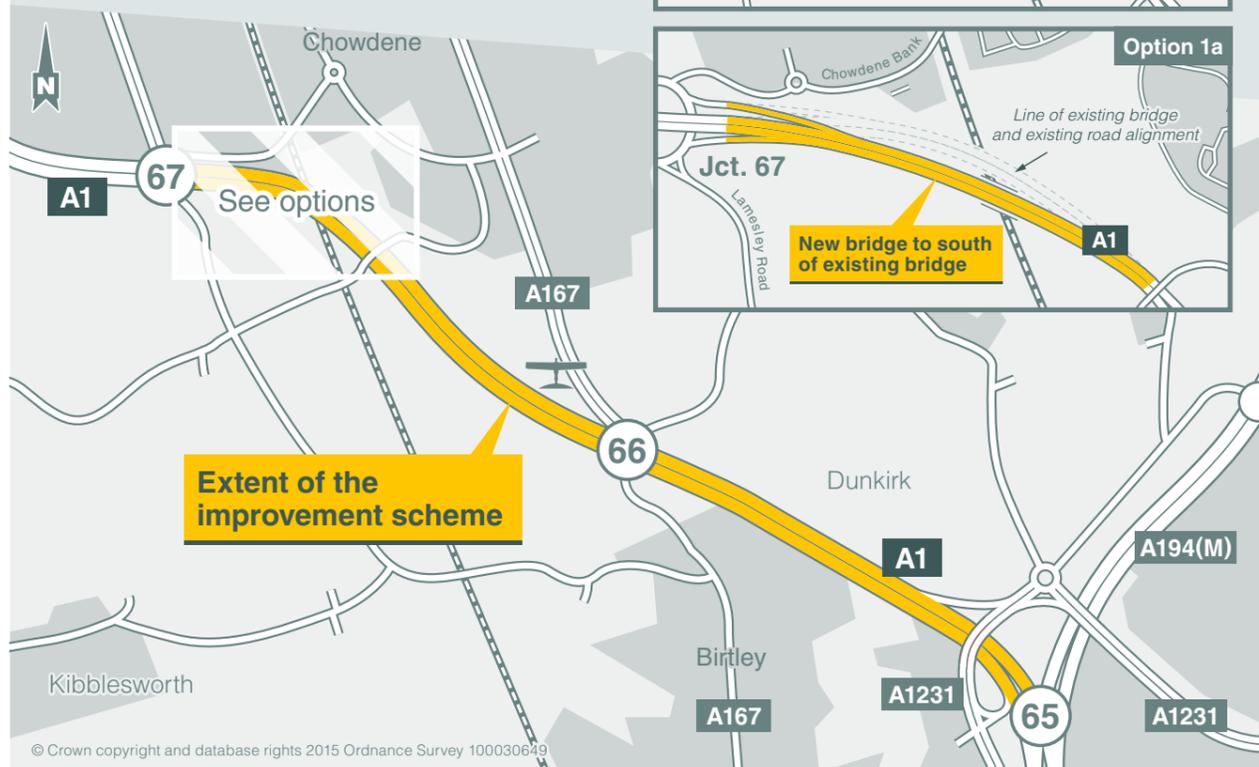
Over 100 people attended the public exhibitions, held Friday 9 and Saturday 10 September 2016. Local councillors and MPs were also invited to attend a briefing on the scheme on Thursday 8 September.

115 people responded to the consultation, either at the events, via the freepost address provided on the consultation questionnaire, or online at www.highways.gov.uk/a1-birtley-to-coalhouse

80% of respondents either agreed or strongly agreed with the need for improvements to the A1 between Birtley and Coal House, while only 9% disagreed or strongly disagreed. The clear preferred option was Option 1a with 73% of the returned questionnaires stating this in response to this question. Of the respondents which stated a preference of the two options, approximately 90% preferred Option 1a. This option makes improvements to the section with Allerdene Railway Bridge offline. The key reasons given for the preference for Option 1a was the shorter construction duration and it was perceived to be less disruptive to the local community and less complex to construct.

88% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that they understood the two options. This indicates that the majority of respondents, who stated a preference of the options, were aware of the benefits and implications of each option.

Written comments from respondents were varied. The main reoccurring themes were concerns over higher noise levels due to the increased capacity of the A1, disruption to the local area during construction, and widening of the road impacting on local roads and access routes. As we progress the development of the scheme we will undertake noise modelling and develop mitigation measures to address any increase. We will also fully detail how we intend to construct the scheme whilst minimising disruption to the local community and road users.



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Conclusions and next steps

Consultation has been undertaken with the local community, local Councillors and MPs, landowners, businesses and Gateshead Council. The level of consultation undertaken has resulted in a range of feedback and comments received have helped shape the proposals and ensure the best outcome for stakeholders.

All of the information and comments gathered during this process has been collated and fed into the scheme design. This will ensure that any comments or concerns from consultees have been considered within the proposals in order to produce a scheme that will have minimal adverse impact.

A final scheme proposal will be outlined in spring/summer 2017 and a preferred route announcement will be made. Statutory consultation will then be carried out detailing the proposed alignment before seeking formal permission to construct the scheme. We propose to begin construction by March 2020.

Contact us



For further information, please visit our webpage at: www.highways.gov.uk/a1-birtley-to-coalhouse

You can also contact the project team using the following details:



Telephone: 0300 470 4548



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Highways England creative job number N160394

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Registered office Bridge House, 1 Walnut Tree Close, Guildford GU1 4LZ
Highways England Company Limited registered in England and Wales number 09346363