

A1 Birtley to Coal House improvement scheme



Welcome

Thank you for coming. We want to hear your views on proposed improvements to the A1 between junction 65 (Birtley) and junction 67 (Coal House).

This is your opportunity to provide comments on our proposals. Your views are important to us and all responses will be reviewed and assessed and will help inform selection and further development of a preferred improvement option.

Highways England (formerly known as the Highways Agency) is the government company responsible for operation, maintenance and improvements to England's motorways and major A roads.

Tell us what you think today

Your views and feedback will help shape our proposal. You can:

- Talk to the project team here today
- Complete a questionnaire – available here and online

www.highways.gov.uk/a1-birtley-to-coalhouse

The consultation will run for six weeks from **Friday 26 August** to **Friday 7 October** 2016

Your feedback and comments must be received before the consultation deadline of **Friday 7 October 2016** so we can consider your response.

Following announcement of the preferred route, we will continue to consult with you as the scheme develops.

A1 Birtley to Coal House improvement scheme

Regional improvements

The A1 Newcastle/Gateshead Western Bypass (NGWB) is one of the most congested highway links in the north-east region. The route is of critical economic importance for the region as it strongly aids both local and national connectivity. The A1 provides the main north-south link connecting Scotland, north-east England, Yorkshire and the Humber, the east of England and London.

This section of the A1 currently suffers from the following problems:

- Delays due to congestion which affects journey time reliability
- Accidents can lead to lane closures causing further journey time reliability issues
- Allerdene Railway Bridge requires regular maintenance which can cause disruption and delays

Without improvement these problems are predicted to worsen. Traffic numbers are predicted to increase due to proposed developments in the region.

Benefits

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. Once completed it will:

- Reduce congestion by increasing road capacity for road users
- Improve the reliability for 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

A1 Birtley to Coal House improvement scheme

Proposed options

The existing road will be widened to provide a three lane carriageway to increase capacity. Additional lanes will be provided between junctions to help manage traffic joining and leaving the A1.

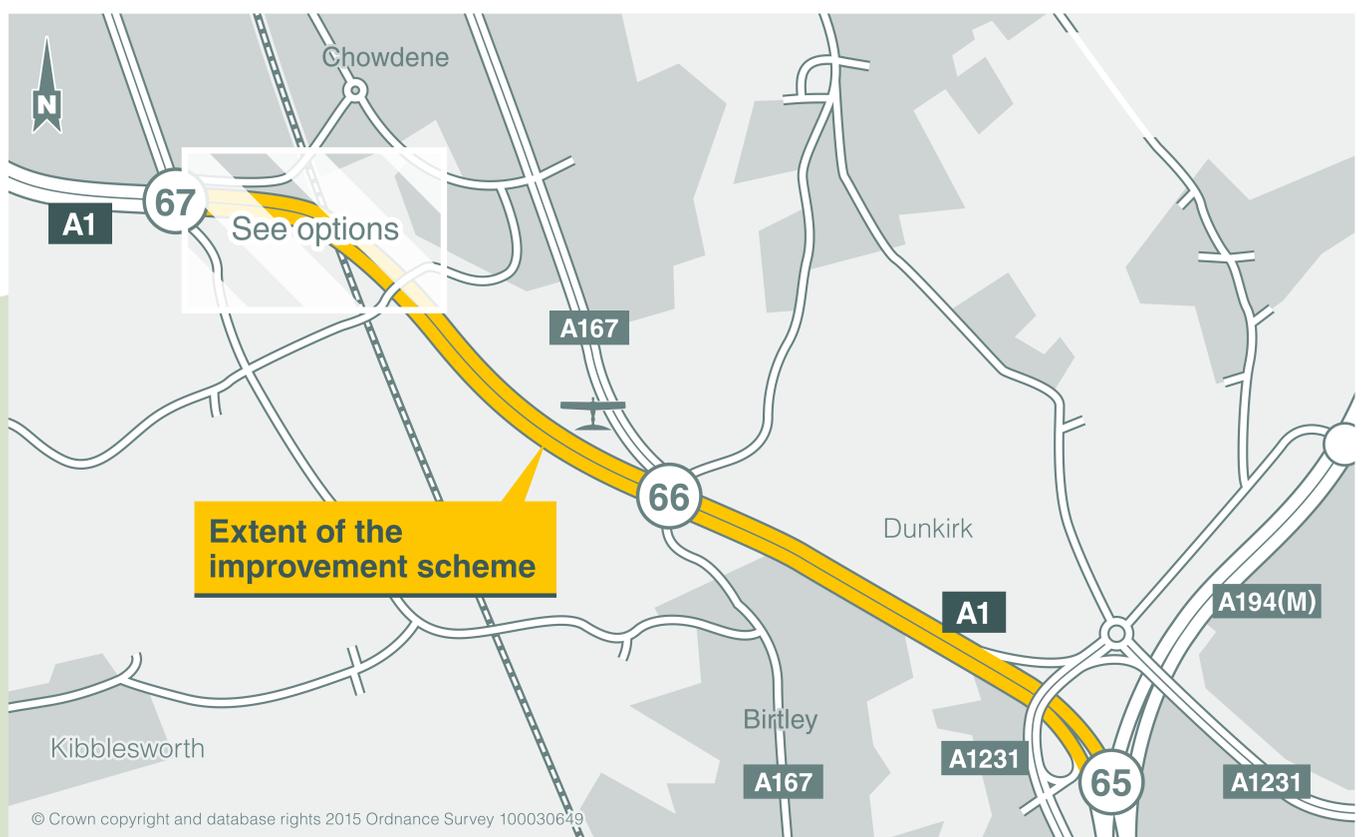
Modifications will be made to the existing structures at junction 65 (Birtley), junction 66 (Eighton Lodge) and junction 67 (Coal House) to accommodate the additional lanes.

Allerdene Railway Bridge will be replaced with a wider structure and additional lanes to improve capacity. The height of the bridge and road at this section will also be raised to ensure the bridge meets current standards.

Most of the work will take place within the highway boundary; however, some additional land will be required at points along the route to enable us to deliver the improvements. We will make every

effort to minimise any impact on local residents, landowners and businesses

We are currently assessing two potential options, **1a** and **1b** to resolve the issues on this stretch. Both proposals are identical apart from the section between Smithy Lane Bridge (to the north of junction 66 (Eighton Lodge) and junction 67 (Coal House). This is because we are considering the best solution of replacing Allerdene Railway Bridge. We propose to replace the bridge in its existing location or to the immediate south of the current structure which will improve the alignment of the A1 at this section.



A1 Birtley to Coal House improvement scheme

Option 1a

Allerdene Railway Bridge will be reconstructed south of its current location, improving the existing road alignment and improving safety. To accommodate the new alignment, Smithy Lane overbridge will have to be replaced.



Option 1b

Allerdene Railway Bridge will be replaced in its current location. This will require a temporary bridge to be constructed to carry traffic over the A1 while the new bridge is constructed. This option is a more complex scheme to construct requiring more traffic management and a longer construction period.



A1 Birtley to Coal House improvement scheme

Option development

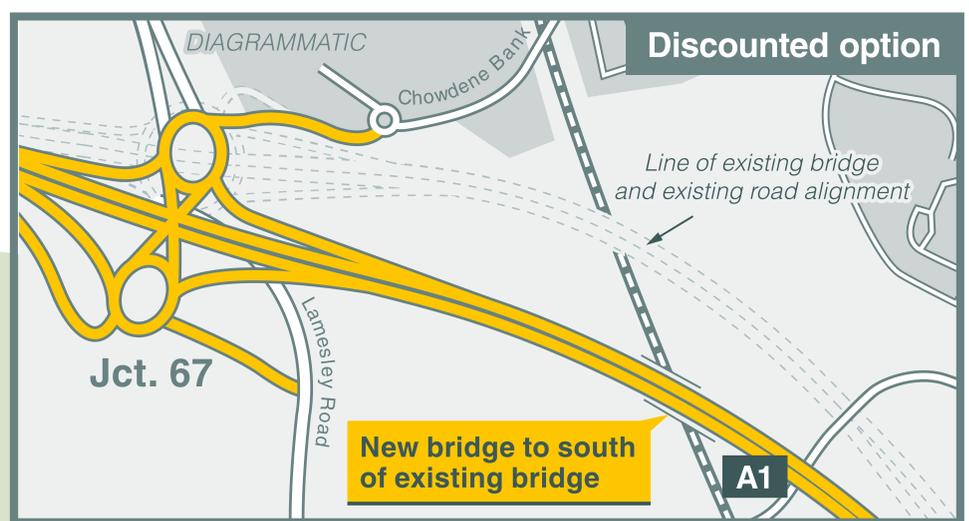
Since 2015, we have been developing and assessing options that have the potential to address the issues identified on this stretch of the A1. We have previously considered an offline option, as detailed below, but will not be progressing this any further.

Offline Replacement from junction 66 (Eighton Lodge) to junction 67 (Coal House)

This option involved replacing Allerdene Railway Bridge approximately 200m to the south of the existing structure, which would have required the section between Eighton Lodge and Coal House (junction 66 to junction 67) to also be offline. This option requires significant additional land to be purchased and would have resulted in a completely new layout of Coal

House junction with the existing structure at junction 67 (Kingsway Viaduct) being demolished and replaced.

After carrying out initial environmental and economic assessments, we have concluded that this solution would have a far greater impact on the surrounding area than our current proposals and would not provide any additional capacity or benefit. The estimated costs for this option show that it would also be far more expensive and so does not provide value for money.



© Crown copyright and database rights 2016 OS 100030649

A1 Birtley to Coal House improvement scheme

You and your community

The scheme will benefit local residents and business by relieving congestion and improving journey time reliability. It will promote growth in the local economy 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.

Ongoing environmental work

An Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) will be carried out to assess the impact of the work on the environment. Once the assessments outlined below have been carried out we will identify ways to reduce impacts and, where possible, enhance the environment. The assessment will consider a diverse range of topics as follows:

Noise and vibration

Information on traffic volumes and how the project will be built will be used to assess what the effects on noise and vibration levels will be both during construction and once the road is opened.

Landscape and visual amenity

We will look at how the project will impact on the local landscape and quality of views both during construction of the project and once the road is complete.

Waste and materials

As far as possible we will minimise the production of waste and identify opportunities to reuse or recycle the waste that is produced.

Air quality

The impacts of the project on local and regional air quality will be assessed both during construction and once the road is opened.

Cultural heritage

We are working with local organisations to understand the archaeological sites, historic buildings and landscape within our working area and any effects will be considered and properly managed.

Nature conservation

We are carrying out further surveys to see how the project could affect habitats and protected or sensitive species, and measures would be put in place to protect any of these affected by the works.

Geology and soils

Ground investigation surveys will be carried out to identify the potential impacts on soils and geology. We are working with the Coal Authority to understand the mining history of the area.

Road drainage and the water environment

The possible impacts on surface water, groundwater and flooding will be identified. We will put environmental features in place to maintain the quality of water discharged to local watercourses and will work with the Environment Agency to ensure local flood plain capacity is not affected.

People and communities

We will consider the effects of the project on everyone along the route including residents, vehicle travellers, pedestrians, cyclists, equestrians and landowners; and we will continue to consult local groups as our plans progress

A1 Birtley to Coal House improvement scheme

Next steps

The timeline below shows what will happen at each stage of the scheme, we are currently at **Stage 2 – Option Selection**. Once the consultation period is closed, we will analyse all feedback received.

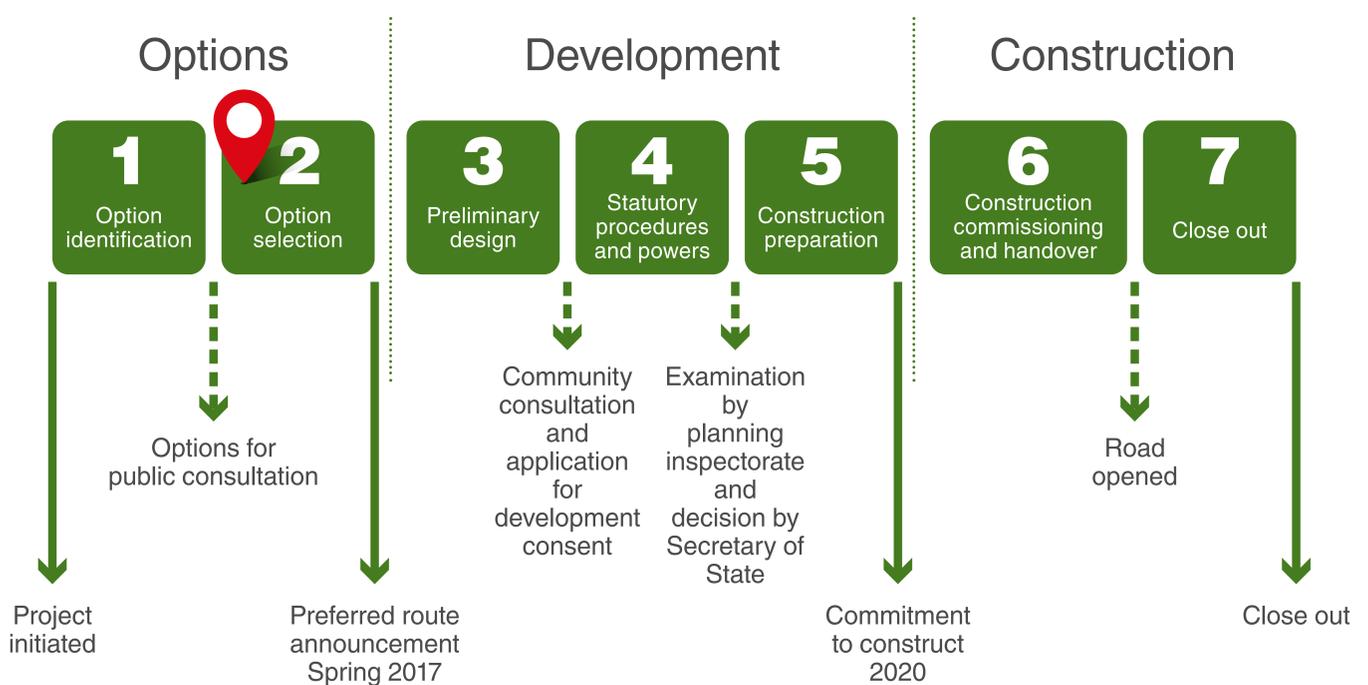
Your views are important and we will consider them carefully during the development of the proposals. All views and comments received will be summarised in our Consultation Report which will be available in winter 2016. This will be reported to the Secretary of State for Transport who makes the decision on the final option to be progressed.

Following the announcement of the preferred option, we will continue to consult with local people and other stakeholders as the scheme develops.

We will carry out surveys and investigations to assess the potential impacts, benefits and costs of the scheme to ensure the improvements are viable and allow us to design the scheme in more detail.

We will consult further on the detailed proposals and you will have an opportunity to engage with us about the selected option and how we go about carrying out the work.

We currently expect work to start by the end of March 2020.



A1 Birtley to Coal House improvement scheme

Keeping you up to date



Online – up to date information will be posted on our scheme web page as it becomes available, at:

www.highways.gov.uk/a1-birtley-to-coalhouse



Questionnaire - questionnaires are available for you to complete and return to us at:

**A1 Birtley to Coal House Team, Highways England, Lateral,
8 City Walk, Leeds, LS11 9AT.**

Or the questionnaire can be downloaded at:

www.highways.gov.uk/a1-birtley-to-coalhouse

All comments made during the consultation process will be made public, but personal details such as address will not.



Email alerts - you can sign up to receive email alerts as they are made via our web page at:

www.highways.gov.uk/a1-birtley-to-coalhouse



Contacting us - If you have any queries about this improvement scheme please contact the Highways England information line by emailing:

info@highwaysengland.co.uk

Or call:

0300 123 5000

Alternatively, you can contact the project team directly at:

a1birtleytocoalhouse@highwaysengland.co.uk

Thank you for visiting us today.

**Please ensure your completed questionnaire
or comments are returned to us by**

Friday 7 October 2016.