

A guide to the A417 Missing Link Development Consent Order application

July 2021

Document purpose

We've now submitted a Development Consent Order (DCO) application to the Planning Inspectorate. We're delighted to say that The Planning Inspectorate (PINS) has reviewed our application and accepted it for Examination.

As part of our application, we've submitted lots of documents, which among other things, cover:

- the reasons why this project is required and the options we considered and why they were discounted
- how we consulted with people and how they have influenced the project
- how this project is landscape-led and will be carried out to high environmental standards, conserving and enhancing where possible the special qualities of the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)
- the environmental impacts of the project and how we will avoid or reduce them where possible
- the improvements we're proposing to the local environment and public rights of way
- how we will manage construction traffic and reduce the impact of construction
- the land requirements for the project

There are 44 documents in total, all with their own unique reference number. This document is intended to help you navigate these documents and find what you're looking for.

The scheme

The A417/A419 provides an important route between Gloucester, Cheltenham and Swindon that helps connect the West Midlands and the north to the south of England via the M5 and M4 motorways. While most of the route is dual carriageway, there is one section that isn't. Known as the Missing Link, this three-mile stretch of single carriageway between the Brockworth bypass and Cowley roundabout severely restricts the flow of traffic.

Highways England plans to build 3.4 miles (5.5 km) of new dual carriageway, which will considerably improve road safety, reduce traffic congestion and improve connectivity for road users and local communities, while unlocking economic growth in Gloucestershire and beyond. We're committed to delivering the A417 Missing Link scheme with the support of central government, who confirmed funding in their second Road Investment Strategy (RIS2), published in March 2020.

DCO application documents

Here is a list of the documents we have submitted as part of our DCO application and a summary of what information they include. Follow the hyperlinks to read them in full. You can view our whole application on the [Planning Inspectorate's website](#).

Volume number	Volume title	Document number	Document title	What documents cover
1	Application Information	1.1a	Introduction to the application	A more detailed version of this document which provides a description of the documents that make up this application.
		1.1b	Application document tracker	A 'live' document that tracks document versions.
		1.2	Application covering letter	Explains how the application fulfils the conditions for acceptance by the Planning Inspectorate (PINS).
		1.3	Application form	Includes application details, including a high-level summary of the scheme.
2	Plans, drawings and sections	2.1	Location Plan	Shows the location of the scheme
		2.2	Land Plans	Sets out land requirements for the scheme
		2.3	Special Category Land Plans	Shows the boundaries of any Special Category Land
		2.4	Works Plans	Shows the extent of the proposed works and limits of deviation
		2.5	Rights of Way and Access Plans	Shows new or altered accesses, stopping up of streets, road diversions, removal or creation of public rights of way
		2.6a	General Arrangement Plans	Shows the levels of the proposed works, such as ground levels, structure heights, drainage details and depth of cuttings
		2.6b	Engineering Drawings and Sections	
		2.7a	Traffic Regulation Measures – Speed Limits	

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		2.7b	Traffic Regulation Measures – Clearways and Prohibitions	Shows speed limits, clearways, classification of roads and restrictions proposed to be applied to vehicles
		2.7c	Traffic Regulation Measures – Classification of Roads	
		2.8	De-Trunking Plans	Shows where trunk roads will be downgraded and now be looked after by Gloucestershire County Council instead of Highways England
		2.9	Environmental Features – Statutory or Non-Statutory Sites or Features of Nature Conservation	Shows statutory and non-statutory sites or features of nature conservation
		2.10	Habitats of Protected Species, Important Habitats or Other Diversity Features and Water Bodies in a River Basin Management Plan -Plans	Shows the location of protected species and important habitats
		2.11	Confidential: Habitats of Protected Species: Location of Badger Setts Plans	Shows locations of badger sets. This information is confidential and will not be available to the public
		2.12	Heritage Designation Plans	Shows listed buildings and scheduled monuments

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		2.13	Trees and Hedgerows to be Removed or Managed Plans	Shows trees and plans affected by the scheme
3	Draft Development Consent Order	3.1	Draft DCO	Sets out the powers we are seeking to enable us to construct and maintain the new road.
		3.2	Explanatory Memorandum	Explains why the powers are needed
4	Compulsory acquisition information	4.1	Statement of Reasons	Explains why we need to permanently acquire land and rights, or use land temporarily for the scheme
		4.2	Funding statement	Sets out how the scheme will be funded
		4.3	Book of Reference	Identifies all parties who: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • own or occupy affected land • have an interest in or right over affected land • entitled to make a 'relevant claim' as defined in Section 57 of the Act
5	Consultation Report	5.1	Consultation Report	Summarises the pre-application consultation undertaken on the scheme
		5.2	Consultation Report appendices	Supporting documents, such as details of stakeholder responses and newspaper notices
6	Environmental information	6.1	Non-Technical Summary	An easy to understand summary of the likely significant environmental effects of the scheme

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		6.2	Environmental Statement	<p>A technical document that reports on the likely significant environmental effects of the scheme.</p> <p>This document summarises the project and the alternatives considered. It explains how we assessed the scheme's environmental impact and then looks in detail at:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • air quality • cultural heritage • landscape and visual • biodiversity • geology and soils • material assets and waste • noise and vibration • population and human health • road drainage and the water environment • climate <p>Within these chapters, effects are identified and mitigation proposed to reduce these effects.</p>
		6.3	Environmental Statement Figures	Includes diagrams and plans referred to with the Environmental Statement
		6.4	Environmental Statement Appendices	Provides further information and detail to support the Environmental Impact Assessment, including the Environment Management Plan (Appendix 2.1) which includes the Landscape and ecological Management Plan, Construction Traffic Management Plan, Public Rights of Way Management Plan and the archaeological mitigation strategy.

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		6.5	Habitats Regulations Assessment: Statement to Inform Appropriate Assessment Habitats Regulations Assessment and Screening Report	Helps to inform the Habitats Regulations Assessment process, which determines if a scheme will affect protected habitats and how
		6.6	Statement of Statutory Nuisance	Identifies whether the scheme will interfere with a person's use or enjoyment of land or some right over, or in connection with it, and if so, how this will be mitigated or limited
7	Other reports	7.1	Case for the scheme	Explains why the scheme is needed, its objectives, the alternatives considered, and how it is in line with government policy
		7.2	Consents and Agreements Position Statement	Explains how we will obtain consents and sets out the agreements need to implement the scheme
		7.3	Statement of Commonality	Provides the latest position between ourselves and some of our key stakeholders, in particular matters we agree on and matters that are outstanding. This will be updated throughout the examination process
		7.4	Scheme Assessment Report (March 2019)	Summarises the option selection process
		7.5	Route Options Consultation Report (March 2019)	Summarises the consultation that took place on route options and reports on the feedback received
		7.6	Combined Modelling and Appraisal Report	Explains how we collected traffic data, the process of traffic modelling and our traffic forecasts. It also includes an economic appraisal of the scheme
		7.8	Equality Impact Assessment	Details how we have considered the impact of the scheme on all groups of people

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		7.9	Technical Appraisal Report (February 2018)	Provides detail of the identification, sifting and appraisal of options for those that want more technical detail
		7.10	Transport Report	An easy to understand summary of how traffic forecasts help us predict the transport impacts of the scheme, influence the scheme's design, and inform the environmental impact assessment and economic appraisal of the scheme
		7.11	Cotswold Way National Trail Diversion Report	Provides details of the permanent and temporary diversions required of the Cotswold Way National Trail

What happens next

PINs will now examine the DCO application through written representation and public hearings and then review all the evidence before making a recommendation to the Secretary of State for Transport, who has the final decision on whether the scheme should go ahead. The examination and decision making process will take over a year.

Further information about this process and how people can get involved can be found on PINS' website, here: [Participating in the process | National Infrastructure Planning \(planninginspectorate.gov.uk\)](https://www.planninginspectorate.gov.uk). We've also produced a video that explains each step and how you can stay involved, here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xIH64JG_KqA.

Subject to approvals, we expect to start construction work in 2023, and the road to be open to traffic in 2026.

Further information

You can keep up to date by visiting our project website, emailing us, or following us on Twitter or Facebook.

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