

# A417

## **Statutory consultation feedback questionnaire**

27 September - 8 November 2019







## Introduction

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.

## Government's response

The Government identified the Missing Link in its first Road Investment Strategy (RIS1) 2015 – 2020, making funding available to investigate possible route options. RIS1 acknowledged that any solution for the Missing Link needed to take into account both the environmental sensitivity of the site and the importance of the route to the local economy.

Delivery of the scheme will be subject to confirmation of funding within the second Road Investment Strategy (RIS2), which will cover the period between 2020 and 2025 and is due to be published towards the end of 2019.

## Why we're consulting

Since we announced Option 30 as the preferred route for the scheme in March 2019, we've been carrying out more surveys and assessment work to help us refine and design the scheme in more detail. This is to ensure that we achieve the best balance between maximising potential benefits and minimising environmental impacts.

The purpose of this consultation is to seek your views on the scheme proposals. Your feedback will inform our continuing development of the scheme to the point when we're ready to submit our Development Consent Order planning application.



## Your views matter

You can respond to this consultation in a number of ways:

- **Online:** Complete the online feedback questionnaire at: <https://highwaysengland.co.uk/projects/a417-missing-link/>
- **Email:** Email your response to: [a417missinglink@highwaysengland.co.uk](mailto:a417missinglink@highwaysengland.co.uk)
- **Post your feedback to us at:** FREEPOST A417 MISSING LINK

## More information

A consultation booklet has been produced to accompany the feedback questionnaire which describes our scheme proposals. The booklet and further information, including plans of the scheme and our Preliminary Environmental Information (PEI) Report can be found:

- online via: <https://highwaysengland.co.uk/projects/a417-missing-link/>
- at public information events, where the scheme proposals will be on display and members of the project team will be available to answer questions
- at deposit points, where copies of the consultation documents can be viewed.

Details about the public events and deposit points are available on the scheme website or you can call us to find out more on: 0300 123 5000. Information can also be requested by writing to us or emailing us using the contact details provided above.

## What we're proposing to improve the A417 Missing Link

We're proposing to upgrade the single carriageway section of the A417 between the Brockworth bypass and Cowley roundabout.

Our proposed scheme comprises 3.6 miles (5.8km) of new dual carriageway connecting the existing A417 Brockworth bypass with the existing A417 dual carriageway south of Cowley.

To help you provide comments on our proposed scheme as part of this consultation, we've split the scheme into three sections:

- **Climbing the escarpment (online section)**
- **Shab Hill to Cowley Junction (offline section)**
- **Repurposing the A417**

A plan showing the sections can be found on pages 6 and 7 of the consultation booklet.

### Climbing the escarpment (online section)

A section of road to the west of the existing Air Balloon roundabout which follows the existing A417 corridor. Our proposals for this section includes two lanes in each direction with a climbing lane for slow vehicles going up the escarpment, and a green bridge.

**More information on this section of the route can be found on pages 8 to 11 of the consultation booklet.**

1. Do you have any comments on our proposed route from the Brockworth bypass to Shab Hill Junction?

2. Do you have any comments on our proposed green bridge?

## Shab Hill to Cowley Junction (offline section)

This section includes:

- a new junction at Shab Hill, with a link road to both Birdlip and to the A436, for journeys towards Oxford and Cheltenham
- a new junction near Cowley, replacing the existing Cowley roundabout. Access to local villages will be maintained via an existing underbridge from the current A417.

**More information on this section can be found on pages 12 to 14 of the consultation booklet.**

3. Do you have any comments on our proposed route from Shab Hill to Cowley Junction?



## Alternative 2 as proposed A436 link road

We've carried out an assessment of the alternative routes for the A436 link road which were presented at the preferred route announcement in March 2019. We've engaged with stakeholders such as local councils, environmental bodies, and other organisations during this assessment process.

Highways England's proposal is that Alternative 2 is chosen as the link road for the A436 based on the assessments and engagement on the three possible alternatives to date. However, we will have regard to all responses received through this consultation process, including any comments about alternatives to our proposal for the A436 link road, before taking a final decision on which alternative is to be taken forward.

**More information about our assessment of alternatives for the A436 link road can be found on pages 15 and 16 of the consultation booklet.**

4. Do you have any comments on our proposal for Alternative 2 as the preferred A436 link road?

## Repurposing the existing A417 section

We will repurpose the existing A417 between the Air Balloon roundabout and Cowley roundabout. Some of the existing road would be converted into a route for walkers, cyclists and horse riders. Other sections would be kept to maintain local access for residents.

**More information on this section can be found on pages 17 to 19 of the consultation booklet.**

5. Do you have any comments on our proposals for repurposing the existing A417?

## Construction

We're continuing to look at how we'll build the route as we develop our proposals, and this includes looking ahead to what happens during construction.

We're working closely with landowners and stakeholders, including Gloucestershire County Council, to identify potential construction impacts and the measures that we'll use to reduce them.

We're also looking to reduce disruption and the amount of lorries delivering or collecting materials. We plan to use the new road to transport material as soon as sections are built. Where possible, we'll also reuse excavated materials from the existing landscape.

**More information on our plans for construction can be found on pages 20 and 21 of the consultation booklet.**

6. Do you have anything you think we will need to consider as we develop our construction plans further?

## Environmental Mitigation

We've prepared a Preliminary Environmental Information (PEI) Report which sets out how each environmental topic area is being assessed, the potential environmental effects of our proposals and the measures we'll take to reduce any impact.

To read a copy of our PEI Report, please visit <https://highwaysengland.co.uk/projects/a417-missing-link/>. The table below illustrates some of the topic areas covered in our PEI Report.

**More information on our mitigation proposals and PEI Report can be found on pages 22 to 27 of the consultation booklet.**

Topic area	What we're assessing
<b>Air quality</b>	We're evaluating the potential effect of our proposals on local and regional air quality for the time when the road is built including considering dust, due to earthworks and construction.
<b>Climate</b>	We're assessing the carbon footprint of the scheme. We're also assessing the impacts of potential climate-related changes that might affect the scheme to ensure that the design takes into consideration any climate-related risks projected to occur in the future.
<b>Cultural heritage</b>	<p>We're undertaking surveys to identify areas where undiscovered archaeological artefacts may exist.</p> <p>As part of our assessment, we're considering the impacts of the proposed scheme on the diverse heritage of the area, including prehistoric burial mounds, the prehistoric camp at Crickley Hill and over 50 listed buildings that are near the proposed scheme.</p>
<b>Landscape and visual</b>	<p>Landscape has been an integral part of the scheme's development and is clearly recognised in our vision for the scheme.</p> <p>As part of our proposals, we're assessing the potential effects on the existing landscape character of the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). We've considered how the proposed scheme fits within the sensitive landscape of the Cotswolds AONB and assessed the potential effects on the area's special qualities and characteristics.</p>
<b>Nature conservation</b>	<p>As part of our assessments, we're considering the potential impact of the scheme on designated sites, and protected habitats and species.</p> <p>Working with the Cotswolds Conservation Board, Natural England, National Trust, Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust and the Forestry Commission amongst others, we're considering the potential effects on Cotswold Beechwoods Special Area of Conservation and five SSSI sites, including Crickley Hill and Barrow Wake.</p>
<b>Noise and vibration</b>	<p>We're assessing the potential noise and vibration effects of our proposals both during construction and once the road is operational.</p> <p>These assessments include exploring the potential impact on residential areas and other important areas close to the new road. These include local amenities and designated nature sites, such as Crickley Hill, footpaths within the Cotswolds AONB and cultural heritage sites. Further details of these locations can be found in the PEI Report.</p>

<p><b>Population and human health</b></p>	<p>There are many public rights of way close to the existing A417 and our proposed scheme, including the Cotswold Way National Trail and the Gloucestershire Way.</p> <p>We're assessing the potential effects of the scheme on all road users, communities, land and property, as well as the overall health of the affected communities.</p>
<p><b>Road drainage and the water environment</b></p>	<p>We're assessing the potential effect of the scheme on surface and groundwater quality and we've assessed the risk of flooding. If there is any impact identified following that assessment, we'll develop appropriate mitigation measures.</p>
<p><b>Consideration of cumulative effects</b></p>	<p>We're examining the potential cumulative effects of our proposals on all of the topics outlined in the PEI Report.</p> <p>We're also undertaking an assessment of cumulative effects arising from our proposals with other developments in the local area. These will be taken into consideration and we'll take steps to reduce any cumulative impacts.</p>

7. Do you have any comments on our Preliminary Environmental Information (PEI) Report and other proposed mitigation measures?

## General

8. Do you have any other comments you would like to make about our proposals?

## About you

Please tell us your name and address. This information is optional, but will enable us to update you on the outcome of the consultation and the next stages for this scheme.

If you do not want to provide these additional details, please provide us with your postcode.

<b>Name</b>	
<b>Email</b>	
<b>Postal address</b> This is optional but providing your email or postal address will allow us to update you with any news on this consultation.	
<b>Postcode</b>	
Are you an affected landholder: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
Are you responding on behalf of an organisation? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
If yes, which organisation?	

**It is important that you submit your response by 11.59pm on Friday 8 November 2019. Responses received after this time may not be considered.**

### Data protection

Your feedback will inform our continuing development of the scheme. Once we've taken your feedback into consideration, we plan to submit our application for a Development Consent Order in Spring 2020. We'll also prepare a report on the consultation, recording the feedback and our response, which will be published with our application. Your comments will be analysed by Highways England and any of its appointed agents. Copies may be made available in due course to the Secretary of State, the Planning Inspectorate and other relevant statutory authorities so that your comments can be considered as part of the Development Consent Order (DCO) application process. We will request that your personal details are not placed on public record and will be held securely by Highways England in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998 and will be used solely in connection with the consultation process and subsequent DCO application and, except as noted above, will not be passed to third parties.

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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