

A66

Northern Trans-Pennine project

The story so far



Spring 2020



At Highways England we believe in a connected country and our network makes these connections happen.

We want to make sure all our major roads are more dependable, durable and, most importantly, safe.

Our improvements will transform east / west connectivity across the Pennines in the north of England. Quicker, safer and more reliable journeys will bring communities together, create new job opportunities and support long term, sustainable growth.

Why the project is needed

The A66 is a key local, regional and national route for east to west journeys in the north of England and provides vital connections for freight and businesses across the UK.

The road provides the most direct route between central Scotland and the east of England, connecting cities like Glasgow and Edinburgh with Leeds, Sheffield and Norwich. The A66 also plays an especially vital role in connecting Cumbria to much of England, and is often at its busiest at the height of the Lake District's tourist season.

The road has an important role in the life of nearby communities too, connecting people to jobs, education, health and other essential services.

But the A66 isn't up to modern standards. The route is a mixture of single and dual carriageway sections with varying speed limits which causes congestion, delays at key junctions, substandard access to jobs and leisure locations and a poor safety record.

That's why we're proposing to invest around £1 billion to dual the remaining single carriageway sections of the A66 which will significantly improve journeys, safety and connectivity. This would deliver a consistent quality of journey for the 50 miles between Penrith J40 on the M6 and Scotch Corner on the A1(M).

Background to the project

As part of the first Roads Investment Strategy (RIS 1), we were commissioned by the Department for Transport to carry out a study on the northern trans-Pennine routes with the aim to improve east to west connectivity.

The outcome of this study was published in November 2016, which recommended taking forward improvements to the A66 Corridor between the M6 and A1(M).

Since then, we've been talking to stakeholders, local communities, and people who use the road to better understand local issues, concerns, and gather general knowledge on the route and the surrounding areas.

We held an options consultation during summer 2019 which included 21 public events across 8 weeks, and we spoke with over 2,000 people to discuss the A66 proposed route options. In spring 2020 the Department for Transport made the preferred route announcement, which sets out the chosen route for the project.

Objectives

The A66 Northern Trans-Pennine project is one of the most important highways investments in the north of England and will significantly improve journey times, network resilience, and driver experience whilst reducing the number of accidents on this local and national route.

Our planned improvements for the road and a modern approach to design will also help protect the local environment and important historical areas such as the Roman fort at Carkin Moor, Brougham Castle and areas of outstanding natural beauty (AONB) that surround a lot of the A66.



Safety – provide a consistent standard of dual carriageway reducing accidents and improving safety. Use of the ‘old’ A66 as part of the local road network will provide better, safer routes for cyclists and pedestrians.



Connectivity – improve connectivity for people living and working nearby by creating better facilities for cyclists and pedestrians. The project will reduce congestion and improve the reliability of people’s journeys between the M6 at Penrith and the A1(M) Scotch Corner. It also improves connectivity between the key employment areas of Cumbria, Tees Valley, Tyne and Wear and North Yorkshire.



Economic – improve strategic regional and national connectivity, particularly for freight hauliers. Heavy goods vehicles account for a quarter of all traffic on the road and any delays to journeys can have an extremely negative effect on business and commerce, including lost working time, loss of perishable goods, and missed shipment slots.



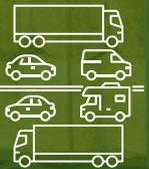
Tourism – improve access to key tourist destinations such as the North Pennines, Lake District and Yorkshire Dales.



Environmental – minimise noise levels for people living and working near the route and reduce the congestion currently occurring in the single carriageway sections. The project is also being designed to minimise any potential negative impacts on the natural environment and landscapes of the North Pennines and Lake District.



Community – re-connect currently severed communities and provide better links between settlements along the route, as well as improving access to services such as healthcare, employment areas and education.



Capacity – provide the additional capacity required to reduce delays and queues during busy periods and improve the performance of key junctions such as the A66/A6 at Kemplay Roundabout and the M6 junction 40.



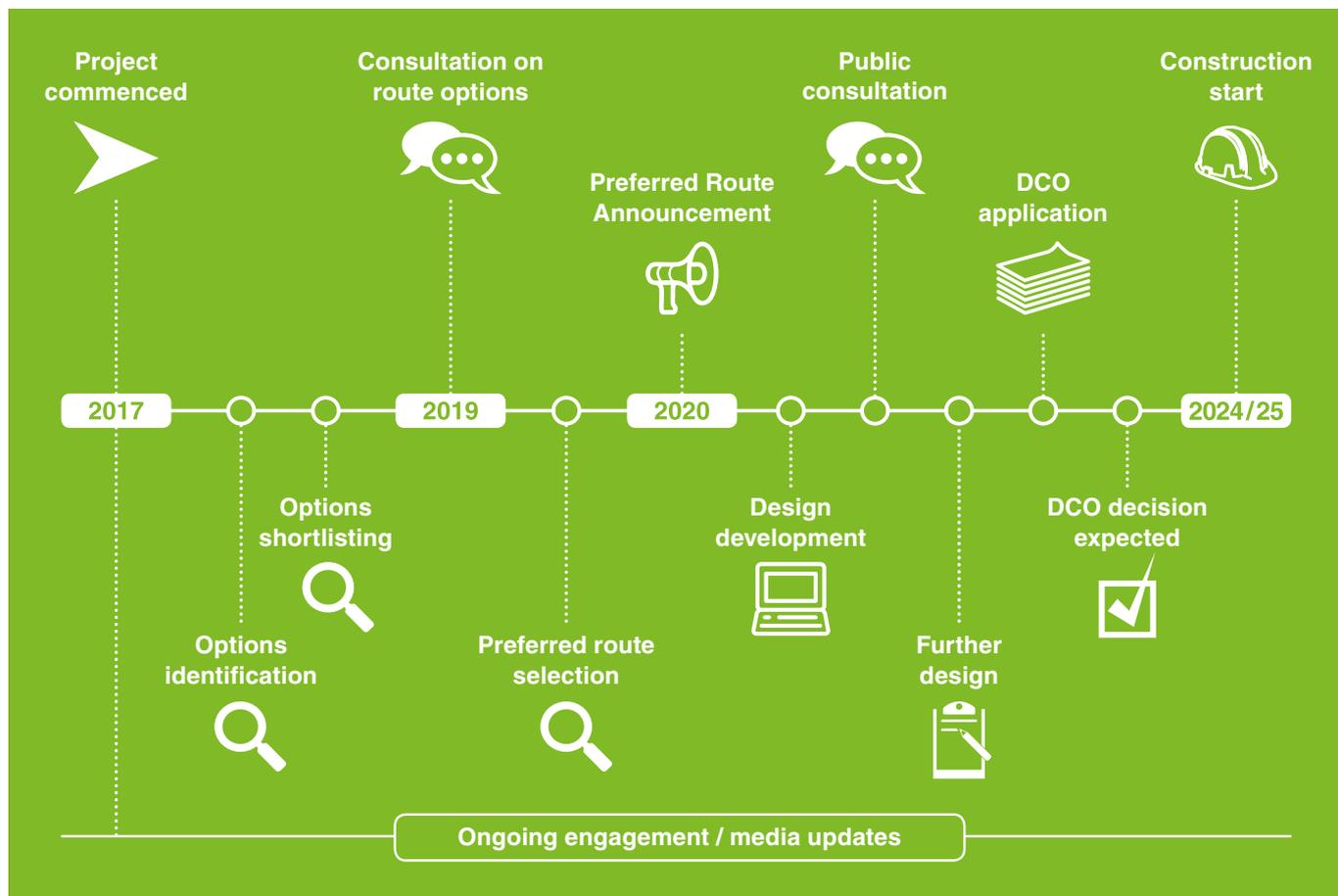
Increasing reliability – An improved A66 will lead to less accidents which will make the road more reliable. A dual carriageway also provides increased resilience allowing the option to close lanes where required due to accidents or break downs and keep still traffic moving.

What's next

In Spring 2020, the Department for Transport made the preferred route announcement. Following this, we will hold more public information events in summer 2020.

Our focus will then turn to preparing for our Development Consent Order (DCO) submission as the A66 Northern Trans-Pennine project is classed as a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project. During 2021, we will hold another public consultation for people to have their say on the preferred route, ahead of our DCO submission.

Project timeline



More information

You can find out more information and keep up-to-date with the project online by visiting www.highwaysengland.co.uk/a66-northern-trans-pennine

Contact us

Email: A66NTP@highwaysengland.co.uk

Telephone: **0300 123 5000** (Customer Contact Centre)

By post: **A66 NTP,**

**Highways England,
Piccadilly Place,
Manchester, M1 3BN**



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