

A1 Newcastle-Gateshead Western Bypass

Feasibility Study

Scope Document

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1. DOCUMENT PURPOSE AND STATUS

- 1.1 This document sets out the scope of the A1 Newcastle-Gateshead Western Bypass Feasibility Study. It has been developed by the Department for Transport in conjunction with the Highways Agency and sets out the scope, timing, and management arrangements of the study.

2. INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 Following the 2013 Spending Review, the Government announced its plans for the biggest ever upgrade of the strategic national roads network. The HM Treasury document, Investing in Britain's Future (July 2013) set out details of the programmes of infrastructure investment, which included the tripling of annual investment on Highways Agency major roads enhancements from today's levels to over £3bn by 2020/21.
- 2.2 As part of that investment programme, the Government announced that it will identify and fund solutions, initially through feasibility studies to look at problems and identify potential solutions to tackle some of the most notorious and long-standing road hot spots in the country. The locations identified were as follows:
- The A303/A30/A358 corridor
 - The A1 North of Newcastle
 - The A1 Newcastle-Gateshead Western Bypass
 - The A27 Corridor (including Arundel and Worthing)
 - Trans-Pennine routes
- 2.3 In addition, the Secretary of State announced on 20th August 2013 that the Department would undertake a further feasibility study on the A47 corridor between Peterborough and Great Yarmouth.
- 2.4 These studies are to be progressed alongside the Highways Agency's Route Based Strategy programme which is considering the current and future performance of the entire network, to inform future investment decisions.

3. BACKGROUND AND STUDY NEED

- 3.1 The A1 Gateshead - Newcastle Western Bypass is comprised of 25km of primarily two lane dual carriageway. The bypass itself is some of the most congested highway links in the North East region.
- 3.2 The route has high economic importance for the region as it strongly aids both internal and external connectivity. At a national level, the A1 provided the main north-south link connecting North East England to Scotland, Yorkshire & Humber, the East Midlands and London.
- 3.3 Proposals for improvements to the bypass were considered as part of the wider Tyneside Area Multi Modal Study (TAMMS) in 2003. The then Secretary of State requested that further work be done by the Local Authorities to look at reducing

demand on the A1 corridor, and to then feed those outcomes into work being done by the Highways Agency (HA) who were charged with looking at potential solutions to the congestion/safety related problems.

- 3.4 A number of improvement options were progressed however due to the large cost of a potential the full widening solution, smaller scale improvements were identified as possible solutions. The 2010 Access to Tyne and Wear DaSTS study considered investment priorities in the 2014-2019 period and longer term transport improvements. The study concluded the A1 Western bypass route as one of the most pressing Transport problems in England.
- 3.5 As part of the Cabinet Office City Deal process, Government announced as part of the Newcastle City Deal, that DfT would work with the local partners on the development of measures to address congestion on the Western Bypass, specifically agreeing the refreshing the business case for the proposals at Lobley Hill. DfT and the HA also announced and undertook a pilot Route Based Strategy for the A1 Newcastle/Gateshead bypass. Government subsequently committed to fund the development and delivery of one of the previously identified proposals (Lobley Hill (£64m)) in the 2012 Autumn Statement and an extension to the scope of the scheme was announced following the 2013 Autumn Statement.
- 3.6 Major Improvements to this route are seen as crucial to enable the development aspirations of Newcastle and Gateshead Council to come forward in line with their joint Local Development Framework "Draft Core Strategy". Some of the major sites include areas around the Metro Centre, the Team Valley Trading estate as well as planned development associated with Newcastle International Airport and Newcastle Great Park.

4. STUDY AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

Study Aims

- 4.1 The aim of the study is:
 - To identify the opportunities and understand the case for future investment solutions on the A1 Newcastle-Gateshead Western Bypass that are deliverable, affordable and offer value for money.

Study Objectives

- 4.2 The specific objectives of the study are to:
 - a) Identify and assess the case, deliverability and timing of specific road investments that address existing and future priority problems on the Western bypass.
 - b) Identify and assess the case, deliverability and timing of specific complimentary investment on local transport modes that improve the performance of the Western Bypass.
 - c) Understand the balance of benefits and impacts from potential individual investment proposals and any additional benefits or impacts from investment on a corridor basis.

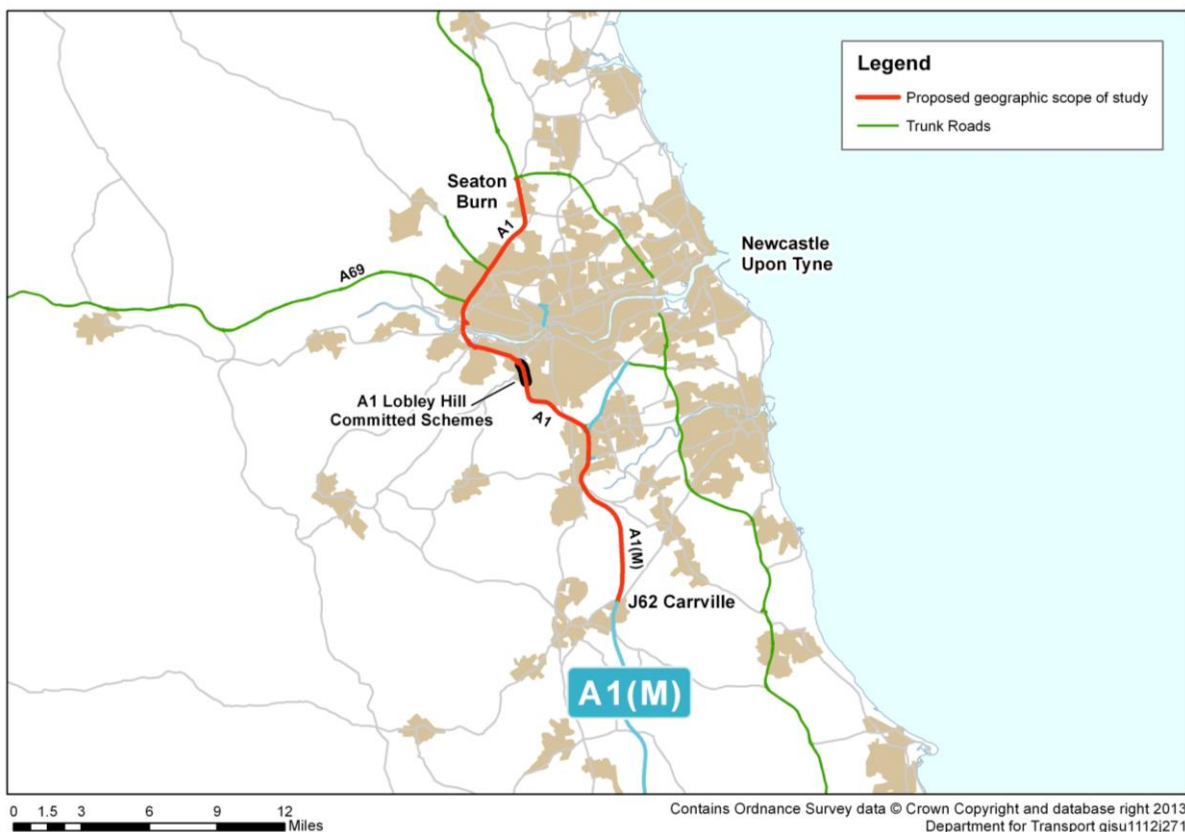
- d) Evidence where possible, the wider economic benefits from the transport investment in the corridor.

5. GEOGRAPHIC AND MODAL SCOPE

Geographic Scope

- 5.1 The geographic scope of the study should consider the length of the A1 from the A1(M) Junction 62 at Carrville in the south to the junction of the A1 with the A19 at Seaton Burn in the north. This would align with the geographic scope of the Highways Agency's A1 J62 to A1/A19 pilot Route Based Strategy. A map of the proposed geographical scope of the study is included at Figure 1 below.

Figure 1: Proposed geographic scope of A1 Newcastle-Gateshead Western Bypass study



Modal Scope

- 5.2 The modal scope of the study will be predominantly road-based and would need to understand the details of performance and current investment proposals for the identified parts of the strategic road network. Given the links with the agreements in the Newcastle City Deal, the study will need to consider the necessary complementary measures on the local authority road network and related local transport improvements.
- 5.3 It is not proposed to consider specific issues or proposals in relation to other parts of the strategic road network in the vicinity, as the case for further future investment will be being considered as part of the Highways Agency's London to Scotland East and North Pennines Route Based Strategy, or within other specific feasibility studies.

6. QUESTIONS TO BE ADDRESSED

- 6.1 There are a number of questions that need to be addressed as part of the study work, and these are set out below.
1. Given the assessment of current and future performance of the A1 Western Bypass, and the surrounding local transport network, are there specific priority locations/problems that should be addressed?
 2. Are there viable potential solutions to these problems which are deliverable, affordable and offer value for money?
 3. What are the potential timescales for the delivery of identified potential solutions?
 4. Are there additional benefits or impacts from combinations of potential solutions over and above those for individual solutions?
 5. Is there evidence of the impact of investment in potential solutions on the resilience of the road network?
 6. Have the potential solutions identified fully considered and optimised the environmental opportunities and mitigation that the potential transport investment could bring?
 7. Is further work/analysis required for Government to be able to make specific investment decisions, and if so what are the timescales of such work?
- 6.2 These questions should be addressed by completing the study objectives.

7. STUDY STAGES

- 7.1 The study will be completed in accordance with WebTag guidance and in several stages which are set out below.

Stage 1: Review of evidence and identification of problems along A1 Newcastle-Gateshead Western Bypass

The study would review any relevant evidence gathered as part of the Highway's Agency's A1 J62 to A1/A19 pilot Route Based Strategy, as well as any emerging evidence from phase 1 of the Highways Agency's London to Scotland East and North Pennines Route Based Strategies, together with evidence from other relevant study work and analysis and form a view as to the nature and scale of current and future performance of the A1 Western Bypass.

The study would also look to set out details of previous historical work and decisions taken in terms of the approach to investment or management of the A1 Western Bypass with the aim of reaching agreement on the historical position in relation to previous investment proposals.

The study would also need to establish both the availability of transport modelling and the need to undertake specific transport modelling necessary to provide analysis that would be needed to evidence answers to some of the questions to be addressed in the study.

Stage 2: Work to finalise the range of infrastructure proposals that could address the problems along the A1 Western Bypass

Once the problems along the route have been identified, the study should review previous work, including the A1 pilot Route Based Strategy and proposals within the Newcastle City Deal and other related study work to identify infrastructure proposals that could address the problem.

This stage should culminate in the production of an Option Assessment Report (step 8, as set out in [Stage 1: Option Development of the Transport Appraisal Process](#)).

Stage 3: Work to assess the affordability, value for money and deliverability of prioritised infrastructure proposals

Work should be completed using the Department's transport appraisal guidance to develop or refresh strategic outline business cases for each of the prioritised infrastructure proposals.

Work should also be completed to consider the benefits and business cases for each of the transport investment proposals as well as the cumulative or additional benefits and impacts from investment in the corridor as a whole.

This stage should also document any additional work necessary for Government to be able to make an investment decision in one/all of the infrastructure proposals. The length of time needed to complete this additional work should also be documented.

8. POTENTIAL OPTIONS TO BE CONSIDERED

- 8.1 The study will need to consider a range of individual potential investment proposals and potentially combinations of investment propositions. However, the study will look to initially build on work done to date on potential proposals, rather than complete a specific fresh process of identification of investment proposals.
- 8.2 The study will need to draw upon a range of completed or recent related work in terms of studies and strategies for the A1 Newcastle–Gateshead Western Bypass. The study would therefore take as its starting point, the proposals recommended by the Highways Agency's A1 pilot Route Based Strategy along with the proposals from the work completed as part of the Newcastle City Deal and any other proposals recommended from other, more recent, related study work.
- 8.3 Below are references to a number of related pieces of work which the study may need to consider. The list is not exhaustive and may be added to in light of discussions/engagement with stakeholders.

- Access to Tyne & Wear Study (Department for Transport, 2010)

- A1(M) junction 62 Carville to A1/A19 Seaton Burn route based strategy (Highways Agency, January 2013)
- 8.4 The study would however not rule out consideration of other investment proposals and would need to capture details of potential investment proposals that would emerge from the first phase of the London to Scotland East and North Pennines Route Based Strategies that are within the study's geographic scope.
- 8.5 In considering potential investment options, the study needs to recognise the advice provided within national planning guidance in relation to development proposed within nationally designated areas. The guidance makes clear that great weight should be given to conserving landscape and scenic beauty in nationally designated areas. National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty have the highest status of protection in relation to landscape and scenic beauty. Each of these designated areas has specific statutory purposes which help ensure their continued protection and which the Secretary of State has a statutory duty to have regard to in decisions.¹
- 8.6 Agreement on the finalised or prioritised list of investment proposals would need to be agreed as part of the study process.

9. STUDY OUTPUTS AND TIMINGS

- 9.1 The study will need to consider a range of individual potential investment proposals and potentially combinations of investment propositions.

Stage 1: Review of evidence and identification of problems along the corridor

A report which summarises the evidence gathered as part of the stage 1 London to Scotland East RBS and other relevant study work and analysis and sets out the problems/issues along the route.

Stage 2: Work to identify the range of infrastructure proposals that could address the problems along the corridor – complete by end July 2014

Produce an Option Assessment report (step 8, as set out in [Stage 1: Option Development of the Transport Appraisal Process](#)), which will be presented to the project board, which sets out the range of proposals that could address the problems along the corridor.

Stage 3: Work to assess the affordability, value for money and deliverability of prioritised infrastructure proposals

¹ National Planning Guidance is set out in the National Planning Policy Framework, and the draft National Networks National Policy Statement. The Department's consultation on the National Network National Policy Statement (NNNPS) closed on 26 February 2014 and the Department is currently considering consultation responses and will respond later this year. Should the planning policy adopted in the NNNPS affect the feasibility studies, this will be given due regard within the study work.

Where possible, document the appraisal of a small number of better performing options to strategic business case level (or as detailed and robust an appraisal as can be achieved within the timescale).

To also produce a strategic outline business case for addressing the problems on the A1 Western Bypass and determine whether considering the corridor as a whole produces more benefits than considering each proposal in isolation.

To also document the further work necessary to develop proposals to the stage to which Government would be able to take an investment decision if strategic outline business case could not be reached in the time available.

10. GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS

10.1 In order to manage and oversee the work within the study, the following governance and management arrangements have been established.

Study Project Board

10.2 The day to day control of the study will be undertaken by a Project Board, made up of representatives from the Department for Transport and the Highways Agency. The Project Board's role is to:

- Ensure agreement to the scope of the study, aims, timings and outputs of the study, and agree any amendments to the study's activities as the study progresses
- Provide day to day control of the study
- Take decisions as necessary throughout the life of the study and decide which decisions should be escalated or made by others
- Monitor progress against plan and review significant risks and issues

10.3 As the study progresses there may be a need to establish specific technical or working groups to take forward defined activities. Decisions on the establishment and membership of such groups would be for the Project Board to consider.

Study Reference Group

10.4 Given the wide range of stakeholder interest in the A1 Western Bypass study, it is proposed to establish a Reference Group for the study. The group will meet at the end of each stage of the study.

10.5 The main role of the Reference Group will be to ensure stakeholders' views are captured and considered during the study process, particularly at key points in the study's work and at times of the development of key outputs.

10.6 The establishment of the Reference Group would allow stakeholder organisations to be aware and feed into the work of the A1 Western Bypass study and allow representation from other organisations.

10.7 The current membership of the Reference Group can be found in Annex A. The membership of this group will be kept under review as the study progresses to

ensure that it continues to capture stakeholder views throughout the study process.

11. KEY MILESTONES

11.1 The following key milestones have been established for the study. These milestones will be kept under review as the study progresses, and may be subject to amendment if required.

Milestone	Timescale
Completion of stage 1 of study – evidence gathering and problem prioritisation	End of March 2014
Completion of stage 2 of study - identify the range of infrastructure proposals that could address the problems along the corridor	End of July 2014
Completion of stage 3 of study - work to assess the affordability, value for money and deliverability of prioritised infrastructure proposals	Autumn 2014

ANNEX A: MEMBERSHIP OF THE STUDY REFERENCE GROUP

A.1 The initial membership of the A1 Western Bypass Reference Group is as follows:

Local Highway and Planning Authorities:

- Newcastle City Council
- Gateshead Metropolitan Borough Council
- North Tyneside Council
- South Tyneside Council
- Sunderland City Council
- Durham County Council
- Tyne and Wear Integrated Passenger Transport Authority

Local Economic Partnerships:

- North Eastern Local Enterprise Partnership

Statutory bodies

- Natural England

Other organisations:

- The Wildlife Trusts