

Suffolk's Energy Gateway

Improving the road network and supporting
economic development in Suffolk

12 September - 25 October 2017

Public Consultation

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FOREWORD



Improving the road network and supporting economic development in Suffolk.



Councillor James Finch

Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport,
Suffolk County Council

I am delighted to announce the start of public consultation on proposals to build a bypass between Saxmundham (A1094) and Wickham Market (B1078), part of Suffolk's Energy Gateway (SEGWay).

At the end of 2016, we successfully secured funding from the Department for Transport's (DfT) Large Local Major Schemes Programme to further develop the business case for the schemes with the aim to deliver improvements to this section of the A12.

Since then, we have been developing the case for investment in more detail and we now wish to share two possible route options with you to understand and incorporate your views into the business case, which needs to be submitted to Government before the end of the year. We must make the strongest possible case for government funding as we will be competing with other schemes across the country.

Residents and businesses have long told us that this four-and-a-half-mile single carriageway stretch of the A12 through

Farnham, Stratford St. Andrew, Little Glemham and Marlesford is one of the most notable congestion pinch-points in Suffolk. I am well aware of the negative impacts that the volume of traffic and the standard of the road have on the health, safety and cohesion of our communities.

We know that the performance of existing businesses and our ability to attract new firms is highly dependent on the reliability, efficiency and quality of journeys on the A12 between Lowestoft and Ipswich. The region has numerous cultural and economic assets that make it well placed to support the successful delivery of sustainable growth, yet our infrastructure, whether it is the A12, East Suffolk rail line or digital connectivity does not yet fully support that potential growth.

Our overall objective is to support and deliver economic growth in East Suffolk and enhance the quality of life for residents.

I would urge you to get involved in the public consultation for this important scheme.

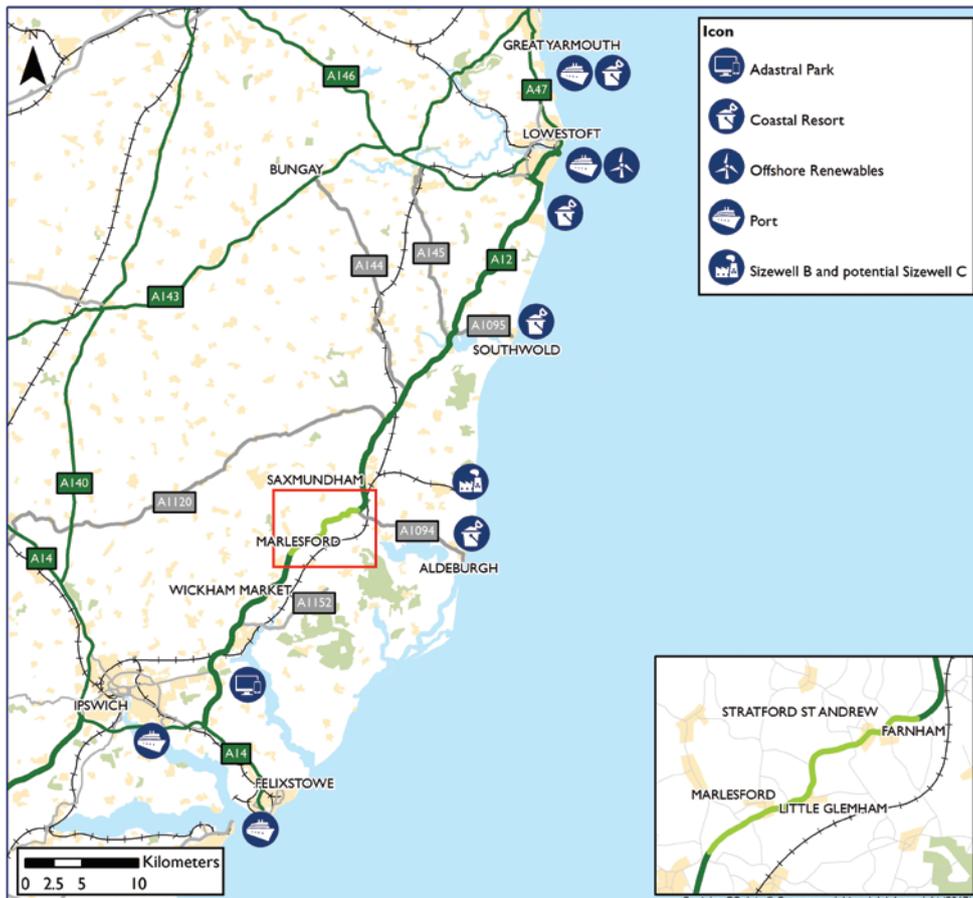
BACKGROUND

The A12 between Saxmundham (A1094) and Wickham Market (B1078) is a four-and-a-half mile section of single carriageway, linking two dual carriageway sections of highway.

The corridor attracts a significant number of visitors with tourism, a highly important sector for the economy of this area of Suffolk. Resorts and popular cultural events in the area have limited rail access, and as such depend largely on the A12. This results in high traffic volumes during the summer months of July, August and September.

The corridor provides essential access for:

- Regional centres such as Lowestoft, Saxmundham, Leiston, Woodbridge and Ipswich.
- The emerging nationally significant energy sector with offshore renewables served by firms and the port at Lowestoft, Sizewell B nuclear power station and a potential Sizewell C power station in the future.
- Food and drink producers supplying goods to the country's supermarkets and ports.
- Local communities and businesses to reach essential services, employment, customers, the countryside and each other.





The issues

This section of the A12 suffers from problems with congestion, reliability, resilience, accidents, air quality problems and community severance.

At the 'Farnham bend' the A12 narrows and bends sharply and heavy goods vehicles cannot pass each other. This location, and the narrow carriageway section before the bend from the south, has a significant reputation as a pinch-point on the A12 route.

Recent safety statistics have suggested the safety performance of the road is worse than typical rural 'A' roads, with substandard alignments and junctions enhancing the risk for all road users.

Negative impacts on the villages are associated with community severance limiting local residents' access to services and social networks, and an Air Quality Management Area in Stratford St. Andrew village. If left unaddressed, the current issues identified above would increase over time as the demand for transport on the A12 corridor rises and the following may happen:

- Local economic growth across Suffolk and Norfolk will not be realised.
- Congestion and journey times will increase due to natural traffic growth, seasonal agricultural and tourism impacts and the potential development of energy projects.
- Community severance and air quality issues will persist and increase.
- Noise levels and vibration issues will increase.
- Health and safety of road users and local communities will continue to be compromised.

Aims of the scheme

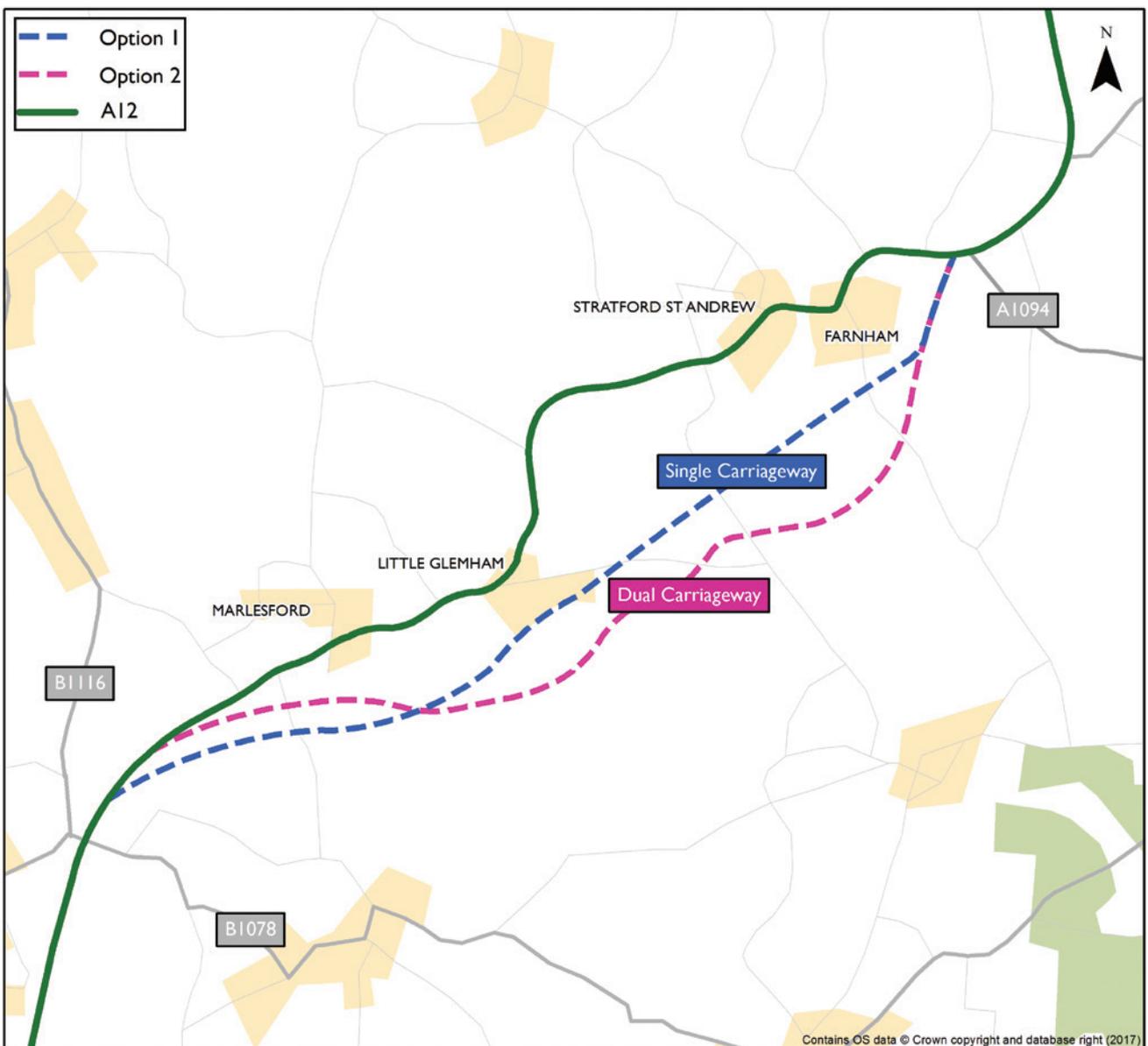
The proposed scheme aims to build a bypass for Farnham, Stratford St Andrew, Little Glemham and Marlesford to deliver the following objectives:

- Reduce congestion and journey delay.
- Improve journey time reliability providing support for the local economy and improved productivity.
- Reduce community severance.
- Provide the capacity required to enable, support and deliver growth across all economic sectors, including the potential future construction and operation of Sizewell C nuclear power station.
- Reduce accidents.
- Improve air quality and reduce noise impacts for communities alongside the A12.
- Future-proof the function of the A12 as part of Suffolk's emerging Major Road Network.

OPTIONS FOR CONSULTATION

The red and blue lines in the plan below represent the alternative route options, but do not provide detail about road alignments, junction design and environmental assessments and mitigation measures, which have not been completed. As with other major road projects this work is undertaken once a preferred option has been selected.

The plan below gives only the proposed route.



At this early stage, the options have been technically developed to a point where we are confident that they can be built.



Option 1

A single carriageway route that begins at a new roundabout junction with the A1094 and the A12 Saxmundham Bypass at Friday Street. It then runs south to the east of the A12 and the four villages of Farnham, Stratford St. Andrew, Little Glemham and Marlesford crossing the rivers Alde and Ore on bridge structures. It rejoins the current A12 alignment where the current dual carriageway Wickham Market Bypass begins.

The new road follows a relatively direct alignment to reflect the design standards appropriate for a 60mph single carriageway road. The existing A12 through the four villages is maintained for local access to homes and businesses with connections to the A12 at the new A12/A1094 roundabout and revised A12/B1078 Wickham Market interchange.

A single carriageway is a cost-effective option which has a slightly shorter build time, however it does not necessarily provide a long-term solution for future growth and development in the region.

Option 2

A dual carriageway route that begins at a new roundabout junction with the A1094 and the A12 Saxmundham Bypass at Friday Street. It then runs south to the east of the A12 and the four villages of Farnham, Stratford St. Andrew, Little Glemham and Marlesford crossing the rivers Alde and Ore on bridge structures. It rejoins the current A12 alignment immediately to the north of the A12/B1078 Wickham Market interchange.

The new road follows a more curved alignment to reflect the design standards appropriate for 70mph dual carriageway roads. The existing A12 through the four villages is maintained for local access to homes and businesses with connections to the A12 at the new A12/A1094 roundabout and revised A12/B1078 Wickham Market interchange.

A dual carriageway provides greater capacity for future growth, safer vehicle overtaking opportunities and shorter journey times. However, it will take slightly longer to build and will also be costlier than Option 1.

Both options will:

- Reduce congestion on the A12.
- Reduce traffic volumes through the four villages and their associated impacts, providing greater opportunities for walking, cycling and horse riding.
- Reduce community severance.
- Provide more reliable journey times for people and businesses in East Suffolk.
- Enhance access to economic opportunities.

HOW DO OUR OPTIONS FULFIL OUR OBJECTIVES?

The table shows how the two options fulfil the initial objectives that have been identified for this scheme.

Objective	Route Option 1	Route Option 2
To enhance the quality of life for residents	✓✓	✓✓✓
To reduce congestion and journey delay	✓✓	✓✓✓
To improve journey time reliability	✓✓	✓✓✓
To reduce community severance	✓✓✓	✓✓✓
To provide the capacity required to enable, support and deliver growth across a wide range of economic sectors, including the future construction and operation of the potential Sizewell C nuclear power station	✓✓	✓✓✓
To reduce accidents	✓	✓✓✓
To improve air quality and reduce noise impacts for communities alongside the A12	✓✓	✓✓
To future-proof the function of the A12 as part of Suffolk's emerging Major Road Network	✓✓	✓✓✓



What the ticks mean:

Impact	Symbol	Description
Significant benefit	✓✓✓	Option could go a significant way towards accommodating the impacts of the new demand
Moderate benefit	✓✓	Option is a moderate improvement at base levels of demand, but is not sufficient to mitigate the full impacts of all the traffic issues and demand
Slight benefit	✓	Option is a slight improvement at the base levels of demand, but is not sufficient to mitigate the full impacts of all the traffic issues and demand

These two options best support the objectives for supporting economic growth, improve journey time reliability and importantly provide the best opportunity to remove the accident and community severance issues faced by local communities of Farnham, Stratford St Andrew, Little Glemham and Marlesford.

OUR FINDINGS

To help you make an informed decision as to which of the options you support, we have listed below our findings that we used when assessing how they meet the objectives for the scheme.

Environmental Impacts

Due to increased congestion, the A12 has become an area of concern in relation to the environment. The proximity of the current A12 to the local communities and the volume of traffic travelling on these roads contribute to a lower standard of living for residents.

1.1 Air Quality

Air pollutants are generally very low along the existing A12 route through the local villages. However, Stratford St Andrew has been identified as an area with poor air quality. Suffolk's Energy Gateway is predicted to improve air quality in this area.

1.2 Noise

The A12 has been identified as a 'hotspot' for high traffic noise levels. Communities in the four villages along the A12 currently suffer noise and vibration impacts due to the proximity and quality of the route.

1.3 Greenhouse Gas

Greenhouse Gas emissions associated with traffic are predicted to be lower if the bypass goes ahead than if nothing is done.

1.4 Landscape and Townscape

The proposed route options enter three valleys with Environmentally Sensitive Area status. Any option would affect the integrity of the landscape. The changes in level would require significant cuttings and embankments which would be visually intrusive, but could be mitigated.

1.5 Historic Environment

Both route options would run close to Grade II listed cottages on Hoo Lane, Little Glemham. The proposed options might also impact on local heritage assets, such as areas of prehistoric activity at the eastern end, and a Roman settlement near Hacheston.

1.6 Biodiversity

The proposed route corridor passes through two floodplain systems (of the River Alde and River Ore), both classified as coastal and floodplain grazing marsh Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) habitats. The route study area is also known to support a number of uncommon and legally protected species, such as water voles, otters, badgers, bats and several species of plant, including Sandy Stilt Puffball. Both route options are also likely to result in the loss and severance of ancient and species-rich hedgerow network and the loss of ancient woodland and fragmented woodland sites.

1.7 Water Environment

The route study area is dissected by the River Alde and River Ore, as well as two subsidiary channels and both route options will require crossings over all of these channels.



Economic Impacts

1.8 Journey Times

Both route options will provide a high quality road for businesses, commuters and transport providers and will shorten journey times in East Suffolk. Route Option 2 will provide a 70mph road, further reducing journey times.

1.9 Journey time reliability and resilience

The reliability of journey times will be improved by removing the conflicts associated with heavy goods vehicles and agricultural traffic at the Farnham bend and vehicles seeking to turn into and out of sideroads through the four villages.

Journeys will also be more resilient to incidents through the provision of an additional route. Other than the slower B1069/A1152 route to the east, the A12 is the predominant focus for travel in East Suffolk.

1.10 Impacts on the Energy Sector

Both of the proposed route options will provide the capacity to cope with additional car-based and heavy goods vehicle traffic demand associated with potential future growth in the area's energy sector, whether that is the successful offshore renewables industry centred around Lowestoft or potential future construction and operation of Sizewell C power station. It will also improve links with the region's technology firms centred around Martlesham Heath and their potential to capitalise on future growth.

1.11 Specific impacts on the Tourism Sector

Both of the proposed route options will support sustainable growth in the region's vitally important tourism industry, better catering for existing summer peaks.

1.12 Safety and Security

Both route options will move traffic away from the current A12 through the four villages and the A1152/B1069 route to the east on to a new purpose-built modern alignment. Both route options will improve safety at the A12/A1094 junction by replacing the existing 'give-way' junction accident hotspot with a new roundabout.

1.13 Access to services and public rights of way

The re-routing of the A12 will improve local residents' access to community services and public rights of way in the four villages. It is envisaged that local bus services will still use the existing road and bus stops to provide access to neighbouring towns. Suffolk County Council will work with local businesses to promote roadside services through appropriate signage at the A12/A1094 and A12/B1078 junctions. Where the new route crosses public rights of way suitable mitigation measures will be provided to maintain access to the countryside for all users. The segregation of strategic traffic from local roads will also encourage walking, cycling and horse riding, supporting sustainable links between the four villages, their hinterland to the west and Tunstall Forest to the east.

HOW TO GET INVOLVED

We need to understand the views of everyone who may use or be affected by the scheme. The consultation will run for six weeks, commencing on 12 September 2017 and closing at 23:59 on 25 October 2017.

How to give your views

Online: www.suffolk.gov.uk/consultations

Email: You can email your response to: SEGway@suffolk.gov.uk

Post: You can post your response and additional material to the following address:

[Suffolk County Council](#),
[SEGway consultation](#),
8 Russell Road,
Endeavour House,
Ipswich,
IP1 2BX

Complete a hard copy of survey: You can get a copy by visiting www.suffolk.gov.uk/consultations or by calling **0345 6031842**

We cannot accept responsibility for ensuring responses that are sent to addresses other than those described above are included in the consultation process.

Two exhibitions will be held at the Riverside Centre in Stratford St Andrew (6 Great Glemham Rd, Stratford St Andrew, Saxmundham IP17 1LL) on the following days:

- Wednesday 20 September 2017 - 10am to 6pm
- Saturday 23 September 2017 - 10am to 6pm

All responses will be analysed and summarised in a report that will help to inform the development of our outline business case for Government funding.



Next steps

Department for Transport reviews the outline business case.

Suffolk County Council continues with detailed work on its preferred option.



2018

Outline business case goes to the Department for Transport

2017
December



Analysis and refinement of outline business case



2017
November

Consultation Period ends

2017
October



Consultation Period



2017
September

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Portuguese

Jeżeli potrzebujesz pomocy w zrozumieniu tych informacji w swoim języku zadzwoń na podany poniżej numer. 03456 066 067

Polish

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