

Norwich Western Link Update – March 2022

I'm writing to let you know that a report providing an update on our Norwich Western Link project, to create a new dual carriageway road between the A47 and the western end of Broadland Northway, has been published on our website today. This report will be considered by the county council's cabinet when it meets on Monday 7 March and you can view it [here](#). You can also read a press release about the report on our website at www.norfolk.gov.uk/news.

The report gives some further detail on our work to develop the design of the Norwich Western Link, including ongoing work to refine the route to take account of findings from our 2021 bat surveys. We've provided a map with the report that gives an indication of the route refinement - this is indicated by the dotted line at the northern end of the route. I've attached this map here too.

Continuing to develop the design of the road and its associated measures in response to evidence is a normal and expected part of the process for an infrastructure project, and it's very possible that further updates may be needed following our upcoming pre-planning application consultation. This approach will help us to submit the best possible proposals for the project in our planning application.

I'm sure many of you will be aware that Sweet Briar Road, on the western side of Norwich's outer ring road, is currently closed due to a burst water pipe washing away an embankment. Anglian Water have said that repairs will take several weeks and the road will need to remain closed in the meantime, and the traffic congestion and queuing on other roads in the network will also continue.

One of the many benefits the Norwich Western Link will create is something highways engineers like to call 'network resilience'. In a nutshell this means having enough capacity so that the road network can cope in this kind of circumstance, or when road maintenance is needed or traffic collisions occur. Together with the planned dualling of the A47 between North Tuddenham and Easton, the Norwich Western Link will create a fully dual carriageway orbital route around the city, reducing the need for traffic to enter Norwich but also providing an excellent alternative route if and when problems arise on other routes.

When you consider the environmental impact of vehicles sitting and crawling along in tailbacks, the money being wasted in petrol costs on congested roads, and, most crucially, people - including emergency services and key workers - being held up in queues, this is a huge issue. Continuing to invest in our transport infrastructure, including creating the Norwich Western Link, will clearly make a big difference to this and will make many journeys quicker, more efficient and more reliable.

Do have a look at the cabinet report linked to above for more information on the Norwich Western Link, or visit the project's dedicated webpages at www.norfolk.gov.uk/nwl. Work to develop the design and mitigation measures is ongoing and we will provide further updates when we're able, including our intention to provide a further report to our June cabinet meeting. If you have any questions in the meantime, let me know and I and the project team will do our best to answer them.

