

Norwich Western Link project update – Jan 2022

Firstly, you may have seen there has been a huge response to [a Build the Norwich Western Link petition](#) which was set up last week by Costessey town councillor Gary Blundell. In a little over a week, nearly 3,500 people have signed the petition.

This number, together with the comments left on the website, shows there is a great deal of support from Norfolk residents to get this vital link road built. Many of the comments raise concerns and frustrations about current problems including traffic congestion, queuing vehicles, air pollution and road safety to the west of Norwich, as well as fears that these issues will get worse due to growth in and around the city.

We know the Norwich Western Link will make a big difference to tackling these problems, and bring other benefits besides. I've attached a graphic that sets out some of the key reasons the Norwich Western Link is needed, information on the project and the difference it will make to people's lives and livelihoods. Please feel free to use and share this as you see fit, including posting it on social media and websites or using the information in articles or newsletters.

As for the project itself, work is continuing to develop our design proposals ahead of the pre-planning application consultation. You will hopefully be aware that we have been conducting surveys over the last three years in the area around where we are proposing to build the Norwich Western Link, and the findings of these surveys are informing our design proposals for the road and its associated measures. This is an important part of the process in delivering a large infrastructure project ahead of submitting the planning application.

Building on evidence collected in previous years, we continued to gather information through our surveys in 2021 which the project team have been analysing. This has identified notable bat activity in the woodlands in the area at the northern end of the proposed route which we need to take into account in our design. As a result, we're currently carrying out work to develop mitigation and refine the alignment to minimise the impact of the scheme on that area.

We need to complete this work before we can share our proposals with you in our pre-planning application public consultation, and we will need to allow time for this in our timetable for the project. Spending the time now to take account of the evidence is the right thing to do so that we can present the best possible all-round design when we come to submit our planning application.

As our work to develop the design progresses we'll be able to share more details with you and we plan to bring a report to our cabinet meeting on Monday 7 March which will provide a further update on this. I'll send you another email to coincide with the update report being published in a few weeks' time.

While the details of the design should continue to be developed in response to evidence, including through our upcoming consultation, the need for this link road is unchanged. There's work to be done but I'm looking forward to sharing details on the proposals with you through the consultation when we're in a position to do so.