



**TRANSPORT  
SCOTLAND**  
CÒMHDHAIL ALBA

**A96**  
**DUALLING**  
EAST OF HUNTLY TO ABERDEEN

# **A96 Dualling**

East of Huntly to Aberdeen scheme

**Initial route options**

**Public exhibitions**

[transport.gov.scot/projects/a96-dualling-inverness-to-aberdeen/  
a96-east-of-huntly-to-aberdeen](https://transport.gov.scot/projects/a96-dualling-inverness-to-aberdeen/a96-east-of-huntly-to-aberdeen)

# Welcome

Transport Scotland held the first public exhibitions for the A96 Dualling Programme – a Scottish Government commitment to provide a dual carriageway between Inverness and Aberdeen – in **November 2013**. These exhibitions provided information on the design, development and assessment process we follow when undertaking major road construction projects.

Following this early engagement, we continued to increase our knowledge of the area leading to our development of broadly defined improvement strategies that illustrated how dualling of the A96 might be achieved. This information was presented to the public in **2015**, with the feedback received being used to inform future stages of design development.

In **August 2017**, we appointed the AmeyArup Joint Venture team to take forward the A96 Dualling East of Huntly to Aberdeen scheme. In **November 2017**, ‘Meet the Team’ events were held to give the local community an early opportunity to discuss the scheme with key project staff. Since then, work has continued to develop initial route options.

Today’s exhibition gives you the opportunity to see and comment on the early design work and the route options under consideration for the A96 Dualling East of Huntly to Aberdeen scheme.

Transport Scotland is seeking vital feedback from members of the public and other stakeholders to help inform the ongoing design development work.

Transport Scotland staff and members of the AmeyArup team will be happy to help you with any queries you may have.



A96 looking northwest from Blackhall roundabout, Inverurie



A leaflet summarising the exhibition content is available to take away. There is also a feedback form on which we would welcome your comments.

Further information can be found on the project website:

**[transport.gov.scot/projects/  
a96-dualling-inverness-to-aberdeen/  
a96-east-of-huntly-to-aberdeen](https://transport.gov.scot/projects/a96-dualling-inverness-to-aberdeen/a96-east-of-huntly-to-aberdeen)**

# Background

Transport Scotland is progressing an ambitious programme that will see the full length of the A96 between Inverness and Aberdeen upgraded to dual carriageway by 2030.

The route is approximately **160km (99 miles) long**, of which 138km (86 miles) is currently single carriageway.

Dualling of the A96, between Inverness and Aberdeen, will help tackle congestion in towns along the route, reduce journey times, improve journey time reliability, and improve road safety for all those who use this important transport connection between two of Scotland's major cities.



A96 looking north towards Inverurie roundabout

To assist the delivery of the design and assessment process associated with the A96 Dualling Programme, Transport Scotland has sub-divided the route into sections.



A96 Dualling Inverness to Aberdeen Programme

The **A96 Dualling East of Huntly to Aberdeen scheme** will provide dual carriageway from the tie-in with the existing A96, east of Huntly, to the A96 junction with the Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route (AWPR), a distance of **42km (26 miles)**.

\*The **Inverness to Nairn (including Nairn Bypass) scheme** also forms part of the A96 Dualling Programme and is at a more advanced stage of development relative to the Western, Central and Eastern sections.

# Scheme assessment process

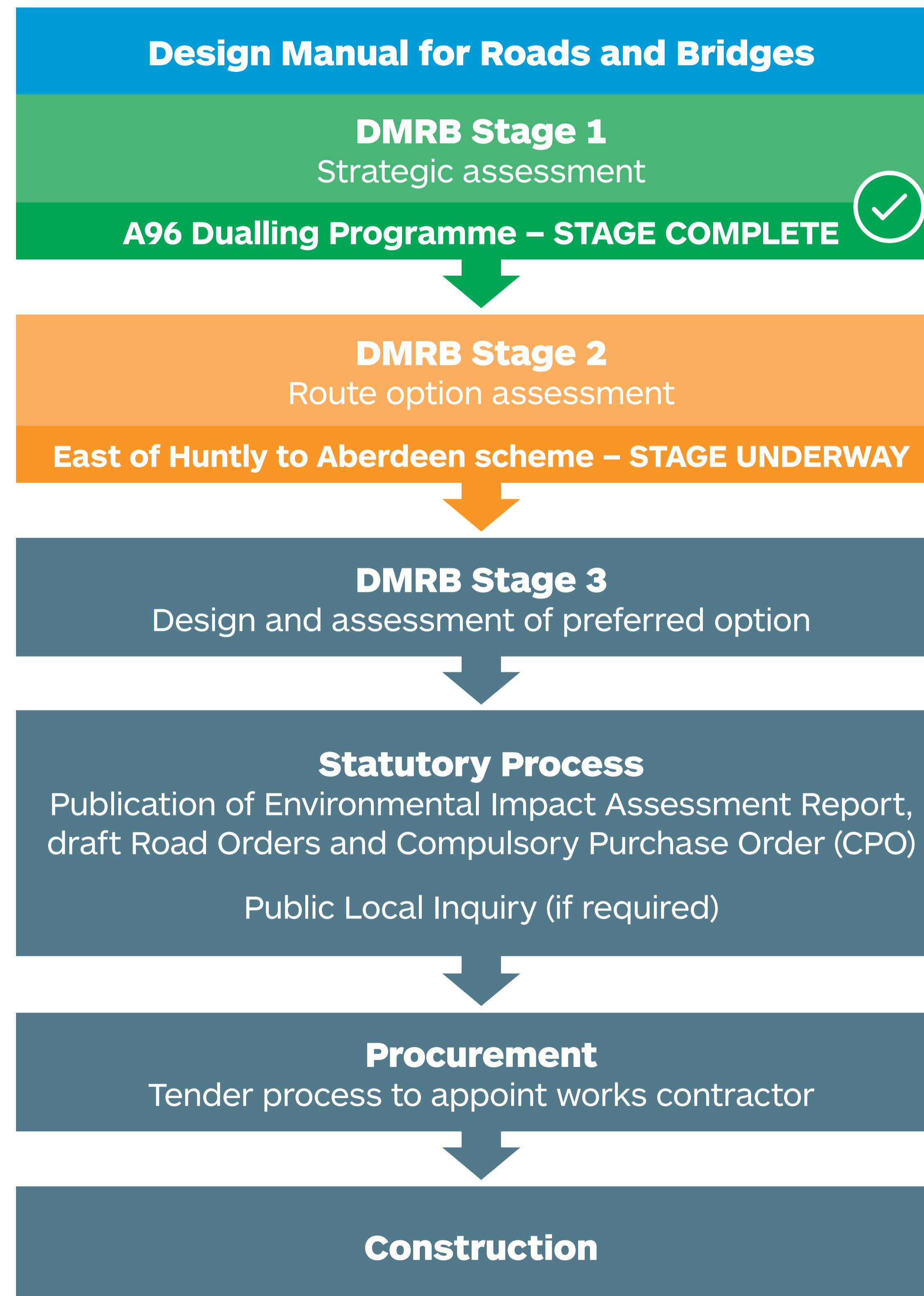
We are developing the scheme in accordance with guidance and standards set out in the [Design Manual for Roads and Bridges \(DMRB\)](#). This three-stage assessment process covers engineering, environment, traffic and economic considerations.

To support the design development, Transport Scotland consults with stakeholders, landowners, local communities and other interested parties such as heritage and environmental groups, as well as Non-Motorised User (NMU) groups such as pedestrians, equestrians and cyclists.

Following completion of the A96 Dualling Programme [DMRB Stage 1 Assessment](#) in 2015, we are now progressing the [DMRB Stage 2 Assessment](#) for the A96 Dualling East of Huntly to Aberdeen scheme.

Today's exhibition gives you the opportunity to view the range of route options that are being considered. Transport Scotland welcomes your vital feedback and comments.

We aim to complete the DMRB Stage 2 Assessment and announce a preferred option for the A96 Dualling East of Huntly to Aberdeen scheme in 2019.



# Scheme objectives

The design and assessment process allows the performance of route options to be considered against the scheme objectives. Performance is also assessed against the Scottish Government's five appraisal criteria, namely: **environment**, **safety**, **economy**, **integration** and **accessibility and social inclusion**.

**The following objectives have been developed for the A96 Dualling East of Huntly to Aberdeen scheme.**

- **To improve the operation of the A96 and inter-urban connectivity through:**
  - Reduced journey times.
  - Improved journey time reliability.
  - Increased overtaking opportunities.
  - Improved efficiency of freight movements along the transport corridor.
  - Reduced conflicts between local traffic and other traffic in urban areas and strategic journeys.
  - Improved network resilience.
- **To improve safety for motorised and Non-Motorised Users (NMUs) through:**
  - Reduced accident rates and severity.
  - Reduced driver stress.
  - Reduced potential conflicts between motorised and Non-Motorised Users (NMUs).

- **To provide opportunities to grow the regional economies on the corridor through:**
  - Improved access to the wider strategic transport network.
  - Enhanced access to jobs and services.
- **To facilitate active travel in the corridor.**
- **To facilitate integration with public transport facilities.**
- **To avoid significant environmental impacts and, where this is not possible, to minimise the environmental effect on:**
  - The communities and people in the corridor.
  - Natural and cultural heritage assets.

# Developing the scheme design

## DMRB Stage 2 Assessment

At this stage, Transport Scotland is taking forward the route options assessment, involving the development of a range of route options, with a view to identifying a preferred option in 2019.

As part of the assessment process, we will consult with local **communities, stakeholders** and **members of the public** to seek vital feedback on the route options being considered.

The feedback we receive from this exhibition will be considered together with the outcomes of the **engineering, environmental, traffic** and **economic assessment** for each route option.

To help in the design development and environmental assessment of the route options, further information will be gathered over the coming months on engineering and traffic constraints and the current status of the natural environment.



## DMRB Stage 3 Assessment

Following the selection of a preferred route option, the design will be further developed, refined and assessed. This includes undertaking an environmental assessment, preparing an **Environmental Impact Assessment Report** and identifying land required for dualling the A96 in this area.

An important part of the assessment involves more detailed consideration of any mitigation measures to prevent or reduce impact on the environment and surrounding areas.

The needs of pedestrians, cyclists and other Non-Motorised Users (NMUs) will also be considered as our proposals develop.

Specific site surveys form a key part of the DMRB Stage 3 Assessment, and will include a range of ecological, archaeological and ground investigation surveys.

**Draft Statutory Orders** (which show the line of the proposed scheme and the land required for its construction) will also be prepared for publication at the same time as the Environmental Impact Assessment Report.

# Initial development and assessment of options

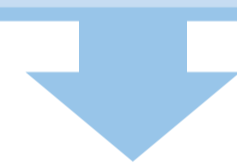
## Constraints

We have carried out a desktop study to gather information on existing constraints, including:

- International, European, national and local environmental designations.
- Residential properties and planning constraints.
- Listed buildings, historic battlefields, gardens and designed landscapes, scheduled monuments and protected landscapes.

During this stage we have also consulted with statutory bodies, including the **Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA)**, **Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH)**, and **Historic Environment Scotland (HES)**.

The information collected, supplemented by on-site observations, has enabled constraints to be mapped and **High Impact Areas** established.



## Corridors

Constraints mapping and the establishment of **High Impact Areas** have enabled the design team to make evidenced-based decisions on the suitability of route corridors for development.

Route corridors, **approximately 2km wide**, were developed to allow a range of route options to be considered, with **High Impact Areas** being avoided where possible.



## Route options assessment

Following the establishment of the corridors, route options were developed for assessment.

The performance of each route option was assessed against the **scheme objectives** and from an **engineering, environmental** and **traffic** perspective. This resulted in the best performing route options being identified within the corridor sections.

Some of the route options are flexible and can be combined.

The assessment outcomes resulted in a **shortlist of route options** being established.

The poorer performing route options, deselected as part of the assessment process, can be viewed on the **'Deselected options'** panel later in this exhibition.

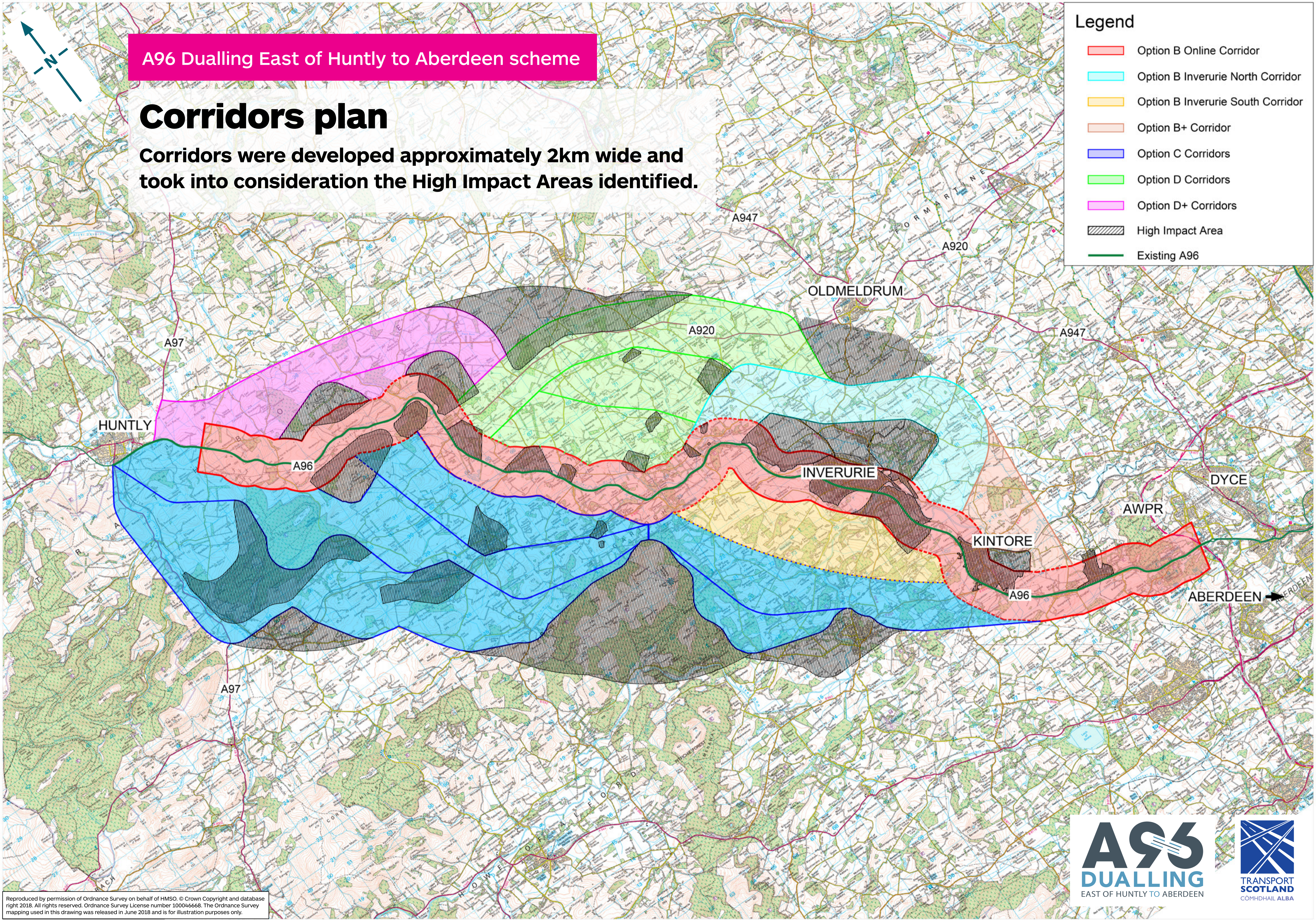
# A96 Dualling East of Huntly to Aberdeen scheme

## Corridors plan

Corridors were developed approximately 2km wide and took into consideration the High Impact Areas identified.

**Legend**

- Option B Online Corridor
- Option B Inverurie North Corridor
- Option B Inverurie South Corridor
- Option B+ Corridor
- Option C Corridors
- Option D Corridors
- Option D+ Corridors
- High Impact Area
- Existing A96



Reproduced by permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of HMSO. © Crown Copyright and database right 2018. All rights reserved. Ordnance Survey License number 100046668. The Ordnance Survey mapping used in this drawing was released in June 2018 and is for illustration purposes only.



# A96 Dualling East of Huntly to Aberdeen scheme



### Legend

- Lime Section
- Cyan Section
- Red Section
- Blue Section
- Pink Section
- Brown Section
- Green Section
- Violet Section
- Orange Section
- Deselected Route Options

## Deselected options

The design team has considered the complexity and extent of the engineering works, the environmental impacts and traffic and economic benefits of the initial route options. Through this detailed appraisal, better performing route options were shortlisted and the other options were deselected because of their poor performance.

**This plan shows the deselected route options in grey dashed lines.**

Route options to the north of the Hill of Skares and Tillymorgan were considered too remote from the existing A96 corridor, and were poorer performing when compared to an online corridor improvement.

Route options to the east of Kintore were deselected due to them duplicating large sections of the existing A96 dual carriageway.

Route options to the south of the existing A96, between Huntly and Inverurie, were sifted out as a result of topographical constraints and the environmental impacts identified.

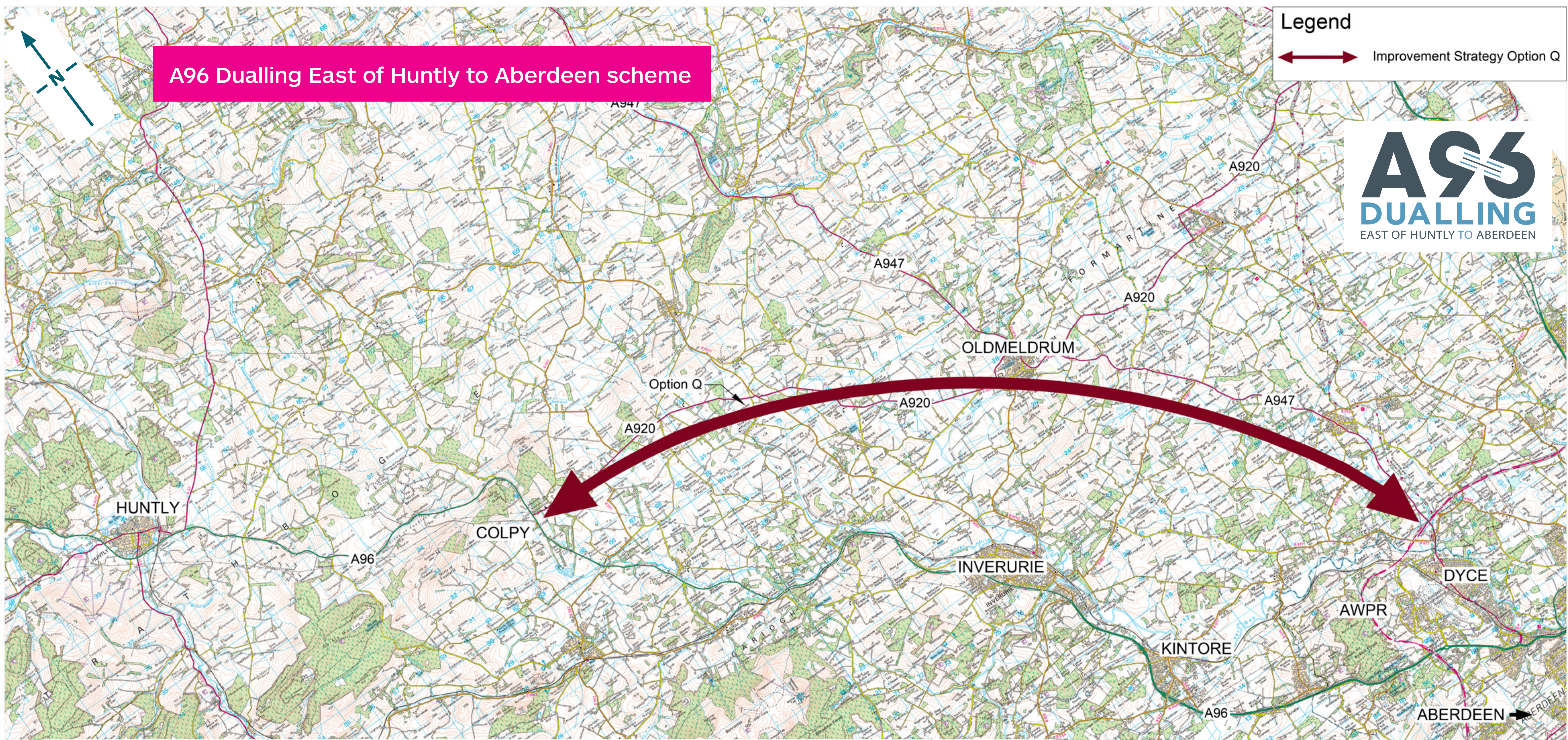

Deselected options to the north of the existing A96, between Colpy and Pitcaple, were sifted out as a result of their poorer engineering, environmental and traffic performance when compared to options retained for further consideration.

Route options were not progressed within the existing A96 corridor at Inverurie due to the proximity and extent of existing residential and commercial property to the trunk road.

Reproduced by permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of HMSO. © Crown Copyright and database right 2018. All rights reserved. Ordnance Survey Licence number 100046668. The Ordnance Survey mapping used in this drawing was released in June 2018 and is for illustration purposes only.

# A96 Dualling East of Huntly to Aberdeen scheme

Legend



## Improvement Strategy Option Q

To inform the previous DMRB Stage 1 Assessment, **Improvement Strategy Option Q** was considered as part of the early work undertaken to define how dualling of the A96 might be realised.

It was discounted from the DMRB Stage 1 Assessment on the grounds that it did not perform well against the A96 Dualling Programme objectives.

Acknowledging the feedback received from stakeholders and members of the public following the 2015 exhibitions, and the more recent 'Meet the Team' events in 2017, a further review of Improvement Strategy Option Q has been completed as part of the initial development of the A96 Dualling East of Huntly to Aberdeen scheme.



Reproduced by permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of HMSO. © Crown Copyright and database right 2018. All rights reserved. Ordnance Survey License number 100046668. The Ordnance Survey mapping used in this drawing was released in June 2018 and is for illustration purposes only.

# Improvement Strategy Option Q review outcomes

## A920 – Colpy to Oldmeldrum

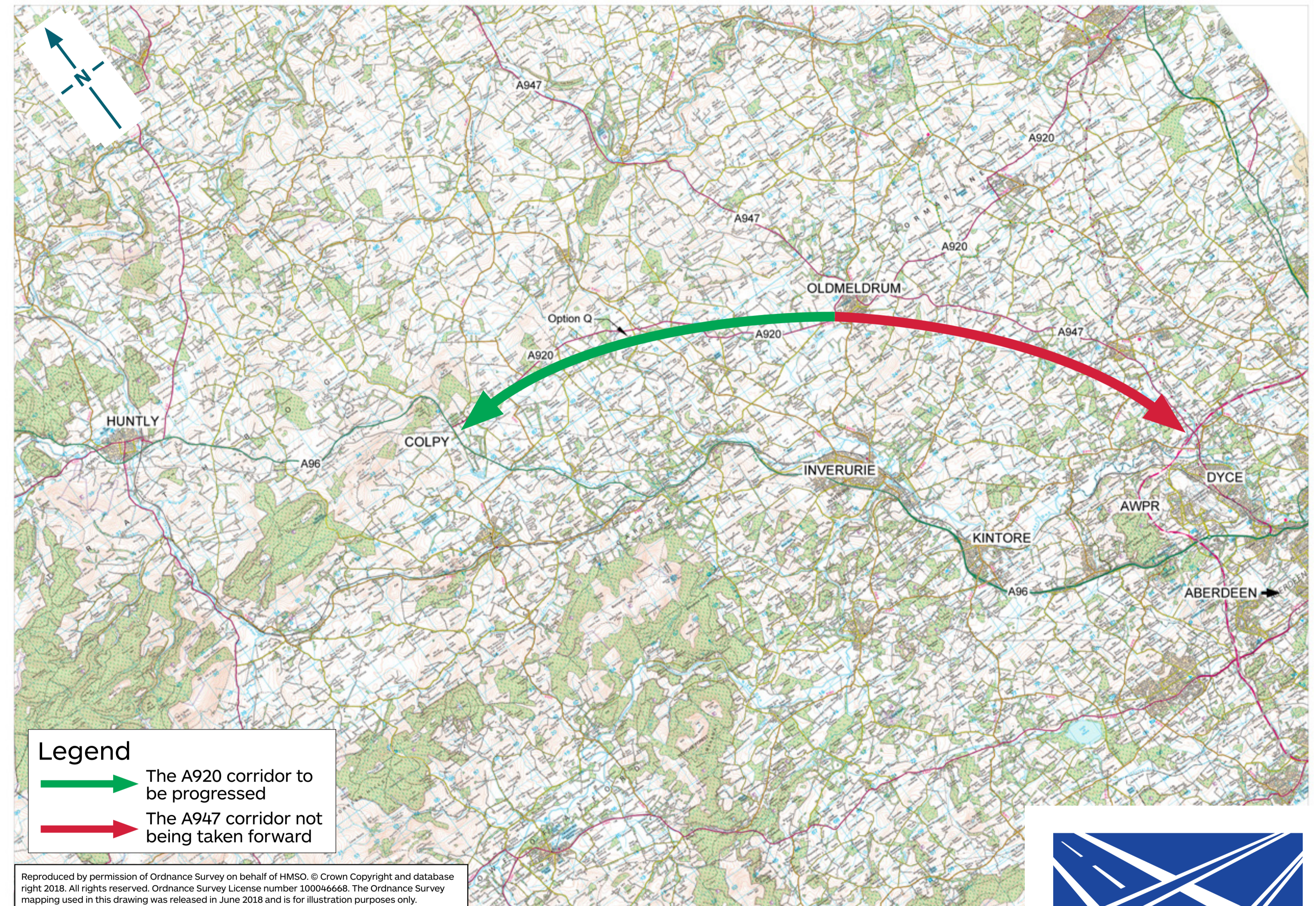
The A920 corridor is being considered further as part of the DMRB Stage 2 Assessment Process for the following reasons:

- It follows an existing road corridor and facilitates a connection to a northern bypass of Inverurie.
- It forms part of a route that performs well against the scheme objectives.

## A947 – Oldmeldrum to Dyce

The A947 corridor does not perform as well against the scheme objectives and is therefore not being considered further on the basis that:

- Traffic modelling indicates that the majority of A96 traffic will continue to use the existing route rather than transferring to a new dual carriageway located in the A947 corridor.
- Existing A96 operation performance issues between Inverurie and Craibstone are not addressed.
- Existing A96 dual carriageway would be de-trunked without improvement, despite it carrying the majority of the traffic.
- Side roads, accesses and existing settlements limit opportunities for online dualling of the A947.
- Dualling in the A947 corridor will induce impacts in an area unspoiled by dual carriageway, with no compensatory benefit generated along the existing A96 dual carriageway.



- Significant junction amendments to the new AWPR Goyal junction would be required to facilitate dual carriageway connection.
- The A947 route through Dyce towards Aberdeen is longer and of a poorer standard than the existing A96.

# Route options

The route options on display will be subject to further development as part of the ongoing DMRB Stage 2 Assessment process. Engineering and environmental considerations will influence further development, as will vital feedback from stakeholders and members of the public.

The performance of end-to-end route options will then be assessed from an engineering, environmental, traffic and economic perspective to determine a preferred route option.

## About the maps/plans

The following maps show **several coloured sections**, each with their own reference number. The preferred option will comprise of a combination of these sections, ultimately forming a continuous route between the east of Huntly and Aberdeen.

The lines showing the route options are not fixed and do not yet represent the actual width of the road footprint required in any particular location.

We aim to avoid the potential for property demolition in the development of route options wherever possible.

The location and form of junctions connecting the new dual carriageway to the local road network will be considered further as the design process continues.

The maps show indicative **grade-separated junction locations** with a **black dashed square area**.

Improvements to the existing A96 dual carriageway and its junctions will be considered as part of the further development of route options.

# Environmental assessment

The environmental impacts of the route options are being assessed in accordance with the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB) and recognised guidance. At DMRB Stage 2, the environmental assessment is a key component in the identification of a preferred route option. At DMRB Stage 3, the environmental assessment informs the scheme design as reported in the Environmental Impact Assessment Report.

## The environmental assessment considers the following topics:

- **Air quality:** Traffic-related changes at sensitive receptors (e.g. residential areas, schools, hospitals).
- **Noise and vibration:** Traffic-related changes at sensitive receptors (e.g. residential properties, schools, hospitals).
- **People and communities:** Land-use changes, agriculture and forestry effects. Non-Motorised Users (NMUs), such as walkers, cyclists and horse riders, and severance of routes used by the community. Travellers using the new road.
- **Policy and plans:** Land allocations for development, key planning proposals, development plan policy.
- **Materials:** Material resources, waste management.
- **Cultural heritage:** Archaeological remains, battlefields, landscapes and historic buildings.
- **Landscape and visual:** Landscape character (including designated areas), effects on topography and potential visual impacts affecting views from properties and on people outdoors.
- **Nature conservation:** Effects on designated ecological sites, and on important habitats (including rivers and woodlands) and species.
- **Geology, soils, hydrogeology and contaminated land:** Geological and soil resources, including designated sites. Groundwater, private water supplies, other sources of drinking water.
- **Road drainage and the water environment:** Flooding and flood risk, water quality, drainage and river processes, forms and sediments.

Environmental mitigation measures will be considered as part of the further assessment required to establish a preferred route option. The outcomes from the environmental assessment of the preferred option will then be reported upon within the **Environmental Impact Assessment Report**. This is published alongside the **draft Orders**.



Inverurie town centre



River Urie looking north from Howford Bridge, Inverurie



Loanhead of Daviot Stone Circle – example of scheduled monument



Queueing traffic approaching the existing A96 at Port Elphinstone

# Non-Motorised User (NMFU) provision

Non-Motorised Users (NMFUs) include **pedestrians**, **cyclists** and **equestrians**. They may be recreational users of the route, active travellers or daily commuters.

Suitable provision for NMFUs is an important part of the **A96 Dualling Programme** and the **East of Huntly to Aberdeen scheme**. Provision for NMFUs will be included as the scheme develops, in consultation with local communities, members of the public and interest groups.

In line with the overall NMFU strategy for the A96 Dualling Programme, we are considering NMFU needs within the trunk road corridor. This includes examining existing facilities and likely future demand, so that potential issues can be identified, and associated measures can be taken into account as the scheme develops.



The scheme will look to improve facilities for Non-Motorised User (NMFU) groups



Existing footway/cycleway facility at A96 Tavelty junction

# What happens next?

Transport Scotland and its design consultants, AmeyArup, will continue to progress the development and assessment of route options for the **A96 Dualling East of Huntly to Aberdeen scheme**.

We will provide updates during the process and further public exhibitions will be held when the preferred option is announced to provide an opportunity for vital comment and feedback from stakeholders, local communities and members of the public.



A96 looking southeast toward River Don crossing at Inverurie

The route options presented today will be subject to further design development as part of the **DMRB Stage 2 Assessment process**, and will take into account:

- Continued dialogue with stakeholders.
- Continued environmental assessment, including specific site walkover surveys.
- Potential form and location of junctions using traffic modelling.
- Preliminary structures, earthworks and drainage design.
- Flood modelling.
- Consideration of the needs of Non-Motorised Users (NMUs).

Comparative assessments will be carried out to select a preferred option. These will take into account:

- Engineering aspects (including health and safety considerations).
- Environmental impacts.
- Traffic operation.
- Economic performance.

Transport Scotland aims to present a preferred option for the A96 Dualling East of Huntly to Aberdeen scheme in 2019.

# Comments and feedback

We welcome your comments and feedback. Please take time to consider the information presented and provide any comments you may have as soon as possible and by:

**22 November 2018**

Comments can be made on the feedback forms provided. Completed forms should be placed in the feedback box at this exhibition, or submitted via email or post.

Please email your comments to:  
**a96dualling@transport.gov.scot**

Alternatively, post to:

**A96 Dualling Team, Transport Scotland, Buchanan House, 58 Port Dundas Road, Glasgow G4 0HF**

Feedback forms are also available on the Transport Scotland website. Should you have any specific accessibility requirements, the leaflet and the information panels presented at today's exhibition can be made available in an appropriate format by contacting the project team.

For further information on the wider A96 Dualling Programme, please visit the Transport Scotland website at:  
**transport.gov.scot/a96dualling**



The image shows a screenshot of a feedback form titled 'A96 Dualling East of Huntly to Aberdeen scheme Initial route options Public exhibitions Feedback form'. It includes an introduction section with a deadline of 22 November 2018, a 'Your details (optional)' section with fields for Name, Address, Postcode, Telephone, and Email, and a consent checkbox. A note at the bottom says 'PLEASE USE THE BACK OF THIS FORM TO RECORD YOUR COMMENTS OR FEEDBACK'.

## Contact details

Should you wish to contact **AmeyArup**, details for the stakeholder team are:

Stakeholder Coordinator:  
**Bonny Pailing** Tel: **01467 672516**  
Email: **bonny.pailing@arup.com**

Landowner and Communities Manager:  
**Billy Gordon** Tel: **01467 672516**  
Email: **billy.gordon@amey.co.uk**

By post: **AmeyArup, Office 7, Thainstone Business Centre, Thainstone, Inverurie AB51 5TB**

All of the information presented at today's exhibition is available on the A96 Dualling East of Huntly to Aberdeen scheme website:

**transport.gov.scot/projects/a96-dualling-inverness-to-aberdeen/a96-east-of-huntly-to-aberdeen**

**i** Transport Scotland will consider your comments and feedback during further design development and assessment of the scheme, and all submissions will be shared with its consultants. It may also use your submission to inform future reports or public documents related to this scheme.

If you choose to provide contact details with your submission, Transport Scotland will be able to send you updates about the scheme, for example invitations to future public engagement events. If you wish us to do so, please provide your consent when contacting the agency. You can withdraw your consent at any time by contacting the project team.

The provision of contact details is optional and your comments will still be considered if provided anonymously. However, Transport Scotland will be unable to respond to you directly if you choose not to provide these details.