

A96 Dualling

East of Huntly to Aberdeen scheme

Route options – design update
Public drop-in sessions

May 2019



**[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)**



Introduction

Transport Scotland has been progressing options assessment work for the **A96 Dualling East of Huntly to Aberdeen scheme**.

In October 2018, public exhibitions were held to seek feedback from stakeholders and local residents on the initial route options being developed.

This leaflet provides a summary of the route assessment work carried out since last October, giving further information on the design and assessment process and on the options being progressed through the **Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB) Stage 2 Assessment**.

Transport Scotland is seeking vital feedback from local residents, road users and other stakeholders to help inform the ongoing design development work.



i A feedback form is available at the exhibition or on the project website: transport.gov.scot/projects/a96-dualling-inverness-to-aberdeen/a96-east-of-huntly-to-aberdeen

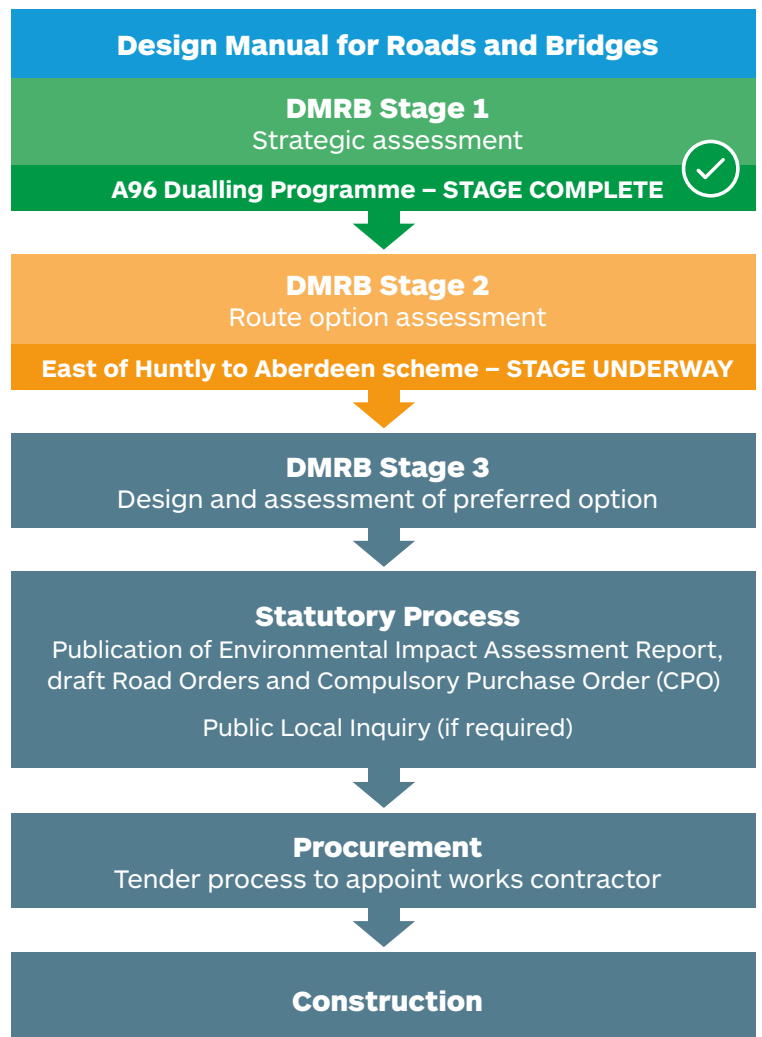
Scheme assessment process

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**.

You can view the scheme objectives on the website. 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.

The **DMRB Stage 2 Assessment** is now well underway for the A96 Dualling East of Huntly to Aberdeen scheme.

We aim to complete the DMRB Stage 2 Assessment and announce a preferred option by the end of 2019.



Option development and assessment

The route options have been developed from the initial route options that were presented in October 2018.

All decisions regarding the route selection process have been carried out whilst taking into account engineering, traffic, economic and environmental factors, as well as the important feedback received from stakeholders and members of the public.

Deselected options

This stage focussed on how to reduce the number of options that we are considering.

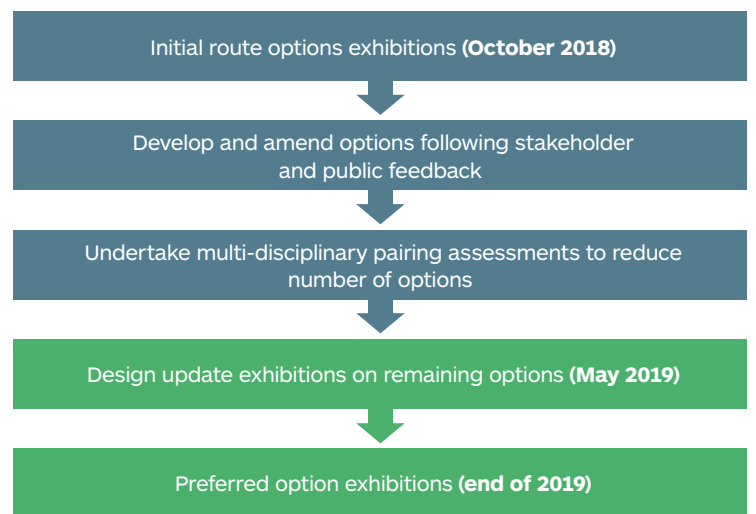
This led to multidisciplinary comparative assessments being carried out, comparing two options at a time, where they perform the same function. In each case, the better performing option was identified, and the poorer performing option was deselected.

The following sections from the initial route options presented in October 2018 were therefore deselected from further consideration:

- Lime Section L1
- Cyan Section C2 and Red Section R1 (part)
- Pink Section P1
- Blue Sections B1, B2 and B3
- Green Sections G1, G2 and G3



Existing A96 junction at Hill of Skares



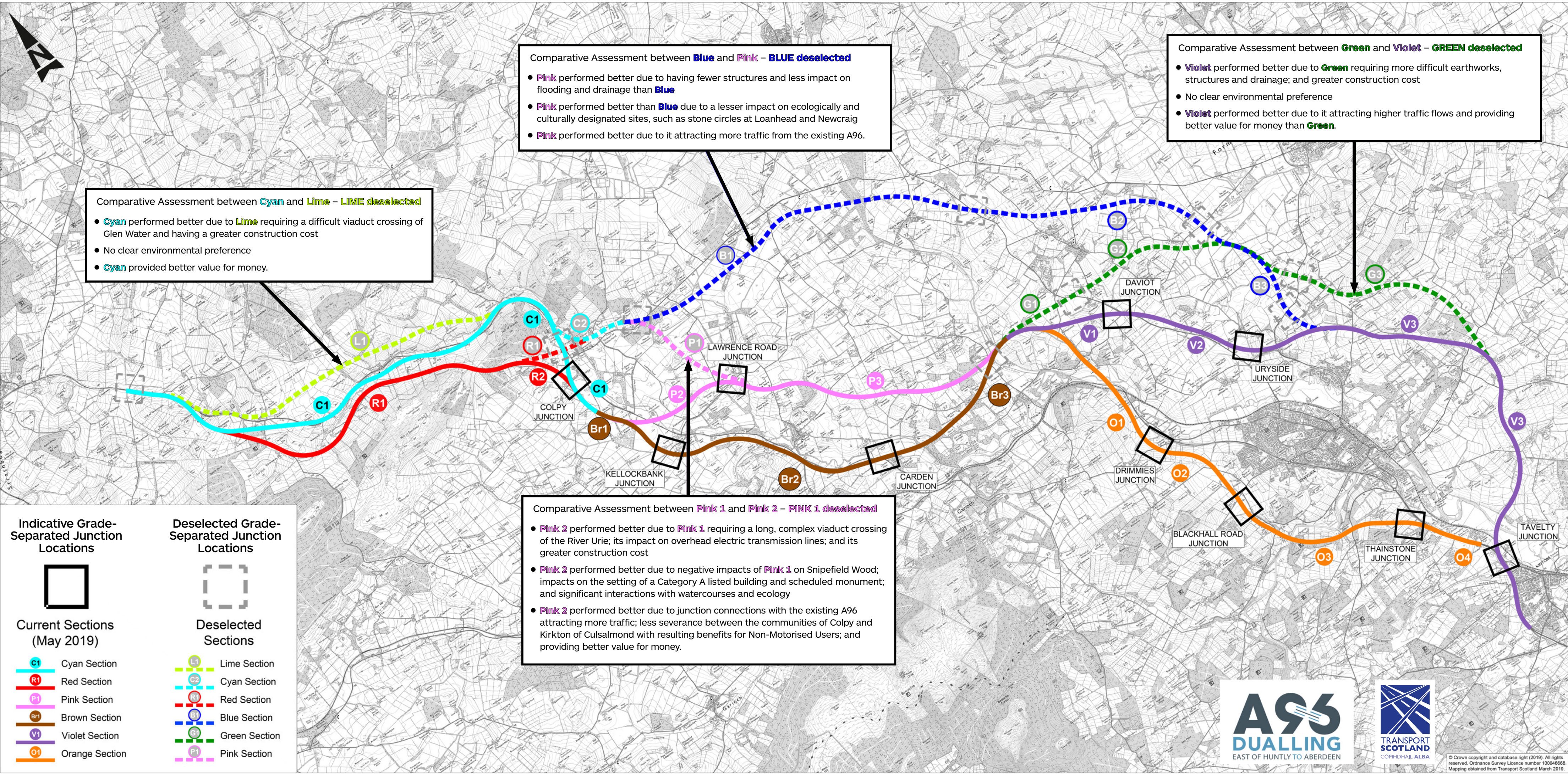
Exhibition events held in October 2018

Updated route options

The route options have been subject to further design and development work including:

- Consideration of vital feedback received from stakeholders, local residents and road users following previous consultations and public events
- Environmental walk-over surveys
- Traffic modelling to determine junction locations
- Preliminary earthworks and drainage design
- Initial flood risk assessment
- Access arrangements for properties affected by the remaining route options
- Consideration of Non-Motorised Users' requirements
- Consideration of safety during construction and operation.

Based on current information, no property demolition is required for any of the remaining route options. The exact positioning of the route options will be subject to further development and assessment as the scheme progresses.



Comparative Assessment between **Blue** and **Pink** - **BLUE deselected**

- **Pink** performed better due to having fewer structures and less impact on flooding and drainage than **Blue**
- **Pink** performed better than **Blue** due to a lesser impact on ecologically and culturally designated sites, such as stone circles at Loanhead and Newcraig
- **Pink** performed better due to it attracting more traffic from the existing A96.

Comparative Assessment between **Green** and **Violet** - **GREEN deselected**

- **Violet** performed better due to **Green** requiring more difficult earthworks, structures and drainage; and greater construction cost
- No clear environmental preference
- **Violet** performed better due to it attracting higher traffic flows and providing better value for money than **Green**.

Comparative Assessment between **Cyan** and **Lime** - **LIME deselected**

- **Cyan** performed better due to **Lime** requiring a difficult viaduct crossing of Glen Water and having a greater construction cost
- No clear environmental preference
- **Cyan** provided better value for money.

Comparative Assessment between **Pink 1** and **Pink 2** - **PINK 1 deselected**

- **Pink 2** performed better due to **Pink 1** requiring a long, complex viaduct crossing of the River Urie; its impact on overhead electric transmission lines; and its greater construction cost
- **Pink 2** performed better due to negative impacts of **Pink 1** on Snipefield Wood; impacts on the setting of a Category A listed building and scheduled monument; and significant interactions with watercourses and ecology
- **Pink 2** performed better due to junction connections with the existing A96 attracting more traffic; less severance between the communities of Colpy and Kirkton of Culsalmond with resulting benefits for Non-Motorised Users; and providing better value for money.

Indicative Grade-Separated Junction Locations

Deselected Grade-Separated Junction Locations

Current Sections (May 2019)

- C1** Cyan Section
- R1** Red Section
- P1** Pink Section
- Br1** Brown Section
- V1** Violet Section
- O1** Orange Section

Deselected Sections

- L1** Lime Section
- C2** Cyan Section
- R2** Red Section
- B1** Blue Section
- G1** Green Section
- P2** Pink Section

Why is the existing A96 not being widened?

In response to feedback received following the previous public exhibition, below is a further explanation of the reasons for not widening the existing A96.

The widening of the existing A96 carriageway was investigated as part of the early assessment work. This work determined that the existing A96 single carriageway is constrained at several locations by the standard of the existing road geometry, by a high number of roadside properties and by a high density of existing junctions and accesses.

This limits the opportunity for an online dual carriageway upgrade of the existing route. Online construction is also more disruptive to the road user and the local community.

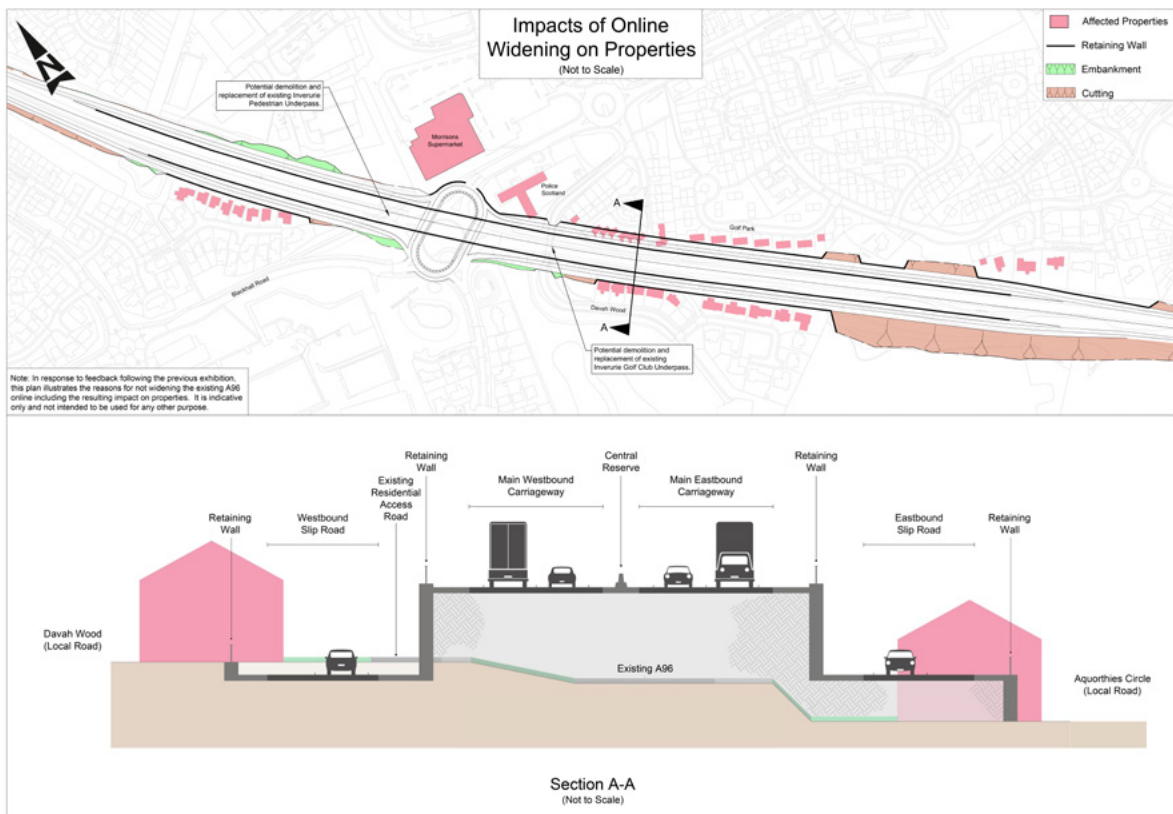
It was concluded that it is generally more suitable to develop the new dual carriageway offline from the existing road, with the existing A96 retained for use as part of the local road network. This also helps to meet one of the scheme objectives to reduce the potential conflicts between local and strategic traffic journeys.

The existing A96 Inverurie Bypass

Online widening of the existing A96 between Inveramsay Bridge and Inverurie Roundabout (approximately 6.6 kilometres) was assessed against the scheme objectives and was found to perform poorly against the environmental and engineering criteria for the following reasons:

- An online dual carriageway and associated grade-separated junction would unavoidably encroach into and permanently impact on adjacent residential and commercial properties, requiring demolition in some cases
- There would be visual and noise impacts on a high number of receptors, including residents living and working in properties adjacent to the road, during construction and operation. There will be additional effects on receptors within Inverurie that would be impacted upon by construction traffic routing through the town
- Local roads in Inverurie currently suffer from peak hour delay and congestion. A dual carriageway located along the existing A96 is considered not to offer the benefits that an offline option would in terms of improving the traffic conditions within Inverurie itself
- Dualling the Inverurie Bypass in such a constrained corridor will be extremely challenging and will require major traffic disruption during construction, together with the associated impacts this will have on the community.

Therefore, as already confirmed in the October 2018 public exhibitions, an online dual carriageway upgrade of the A96 through Inverurie is not being considered further as part of the DMRB Stage 2 Assessment.



Non-Motorised User (NMU) provision and Environmental assessment

NMU provision

Facilitating active travel is one of the objectives of the A96 Dualling Programme. This scheme will seek to improve active travel in the area by providing NMU facilities, which will be segregated from the new dual carriageway wherever possible. An [NMU Forum](#) has been established, information gathered, surveys and an initial assessment have been carried out.

Environmental assessment

A comparative assessment of the environmental impacts of each route option, during construction and operation will be carried out as part of the [DMRB Stage 2 work](#).

This assessment will cover a broad range of topics and comparatively appraise potential impacts of each route option for each topic area. All relevant planning policy at national, regional and local levels is considered. Where appropriate, outline mitigation measures will be suggested. This work will be further developed during [DMRB Stage 3 Assessment](#) once a preferred option is selected.

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.

Detailed assessments of options that consist of a combination of the remaining coloured elements shown on the plans will be carried out to select a preferred option.

These assessments will take into account:

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

Transport Scotland aims to confirm a preferred option for the A96 Dualling East of Huntly to Aberdeen scheme by the end of 2019. Further public exhibitions will be held when the preferred option is announced to provide an opportunity for comments and feedback from stakeholders, local communities and members of the public.


Comments and feedback

Transport Scotland welcomes your comments and feedback on the route options. Your comments will be taken into account during the route options assessment process.

Comments can be made on the feedback forms provided and placed in the feedback box at this exhibition, or sent by email or post.

Email to: a96dualling@transport.gov.scot

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

 Please take time to consider the information presented and provide any comments you may have as soon as possible and by **12 July 2019**.

Should you have any specific accessibility requirements, the contents of this leaflet and information on the project website can be made available in an appropriate format on request by contacting the project team.

Further information

Should you wish to contact **AmeyArup**, details for their 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, Offices 5&6, 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

For further information on the wider A96 Dualling Programme, please visit the Transport Scotland website at:

transport.gov.scot/a96dualling

Or email: a96dualling@transport.gov.scot

Transport Scotland will consider your comments and feedback as part of their further design development and assessment of the scheme, and all submissions will be shared with our consultants. We 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 us. 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.

