



TRANSPORT
SCOTLAND
CÒMHDHAIL ALBA

A9 / A96

Inshes to Smithton scheme

Public exhibitions

transport.gov.scot/projects/a9a96-inshes-to-smithton

A9/A96 Inshes to Smithton scheme

Welcome to the exhibition

Transport Scotland has been taking forward options assessment work for the **A9/A96 Inshes to Smithton scheme**.

In August 2016, public exhibitions were held to seek feedback on the options being developed.

The purpose of today's exhibition is to provide you with an overview of the outcome of the options assessment work, and to present the preferred option for the scheme.

Transport Scotland staff and their consultants will be happy to assist you with any queries you may have.

JACOBS[®]



A summary overview leaflet is available for you to take away. There is also a feedback form where we would welcome your feedback and comments.



Looking east from Inshes
towards Smithton



Introduction – background

2008

The [Strategic Transport Projects Review \(STPR\)](#), published in 2008, set out the Scottish Government's transport investment priorities over the coming decades. Specific trunk road interventions emerging from the review included upgrading the A96 between Inverness and Nairn to dual carriageway, with a new link connecting the A96 and A9 south of Inverness.

2010

In 2010, Transport Scotland commissioned a [Design Manual for Roads and Bridges \(DMRB\) Stage 2 route options assessment](#) in relation to upgrading the A96 between Inverness and Nairn. This also considered the options for a new link connecting Smithton on the A96 with Inshes on the A9.

2012

Following this initial piece of work, [public exhibitions](#) were held in 2012, where Transport Scotland presented proposals for a dual carriageway trunk link road between Inshes and Smithton. A number of concerns were raised by members of the public on the scale of the scheme proposals and the severance, accessibility and integration impacts of the scheme.

In addition, further traffic modelling work carried out before and after the public exhibitions highlighted the degree of inter-dependency between Inshes, Raigmore and Smithton junctions, and the neighbouring road network.

Following receipt of public feedback after the 2012 exhibitions, Transport Scotland commissioned Jacobs to carry out the [A9/A96 Connections Study](#). This study examined the broader context of the A9/A96 and looked at challenges, opportunities and issues concerning traffic between Inshes, Raigmore and Longman junctions.

2014

In 2014, Transport Scotland held [public exhibitions](#) to present the outcome of the A9/A96 Connections Study. Two options were identified as the best performing. Transport Scotland appointed Jacobs to take forward the options assessment process on the A9/A96 road connection between Inshes and Smithton, further developing upon the outcome of the A9/A96 Connections Study.

2016

Following a sifting process, three options each with an 'A' and 'B' variant to reflect the alternative alignments close to Ashton Farm were progressed for further assessment. These were presented to local communities in August 2016 for vital feedback.

Introduction – scheme update

In January 2017, the £315 million **Inverness & Highland City-Region Deal** was signed. Central to the Deal is improving access to and within communities. The Deal will improve connectivity through investment in transport including the development of the A9/A96 Inshes to Smithton scheme.

The A9/A96 Inshes to Smithton scheme is interdependent with other projects and plans being progressed by The Highland Council, as well as being dependent on the proposed A96 Dualling Inverness to Nairn (including Nairn Bypass) project. As part of the Inverness & Highland City-Region Deal, the Highland Council will improve the local road network at Inshes to provide the infrastructure needed to support development in the local area.

Following the public exhibitions in 2016, work has continued on the options assessment process. Refinement of the options has taken account of the vital feedback from the exhibitions. For instance a change was made to the design options at Cradlehall roundabout in order to minimise the impact on the mature trees along Caulfield Road North.

Looking west from Cradlehall
towards Raigmore



Scheme assessment process

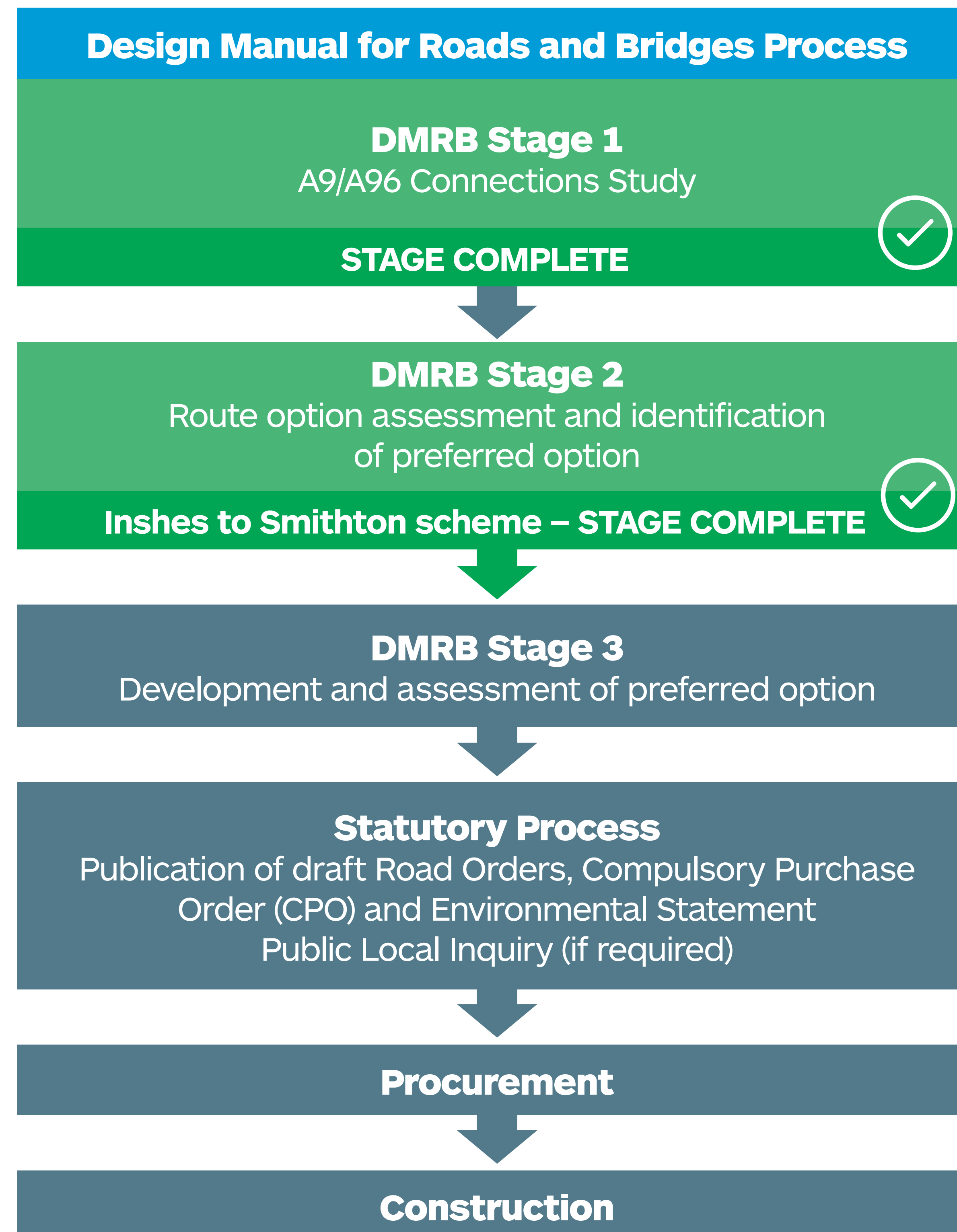
Transport Scotland carries out a rigorous assessment process to establish the preferred option for a road improvement scheme.

The preparation and development of road schemes follows the scheme assessment process set out in the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB). This three-stage assessment process covers engineering, environment, traffic and economic considerations.

Consultation

Throughout this process, Transport Scotland consults a large number of people and interested bodies including members of local communities, landowners, and other stakeholders.

The DMRB Stage 2 Assessment for the A9/A96 Inshes to Smithton scheme has been completed. Today's exhibition summarises the results of the options assessment and presents the preferred option.



Scheme objectives

The options assessment process takes into account the scheme objectives and the Scottish Government's five appraisal criteria, namely: environment; safety; economy; integration; and accessibility and social inclusion.

The scheme objectives are:

- To encourage more effective use of the road network hierarchy and thereby improve the operation of the network for longer distance and local journeys
- To contribute to The Highland Council's Development Plan aims for development east of the A9, and to complement the benefits arising from the dualling of the A96
- To improve safety for motorised and Non-Motorised Users (NMUs e.g. pedestrians and cyclists) where the trunk and local road networks interact
- To maximise opportunities for active travel and public transport connections arising from the road infrastructure improvements.

Looking west towards the A9 and Dell of Inshes



The scheme

For the DMRB Stage 2 options assessment process, three options, each with variants A and B to reflect the alternative alignments close to Ashton Farm, were considered.

The following panels provide details of the preferred option as well as a summary of the key findings of the options assessment process, which included consideration of public feedback received after the 2016 exhibitions.

Following the Stage 2 options assessment, Option 3 has been identified as the preferred option.

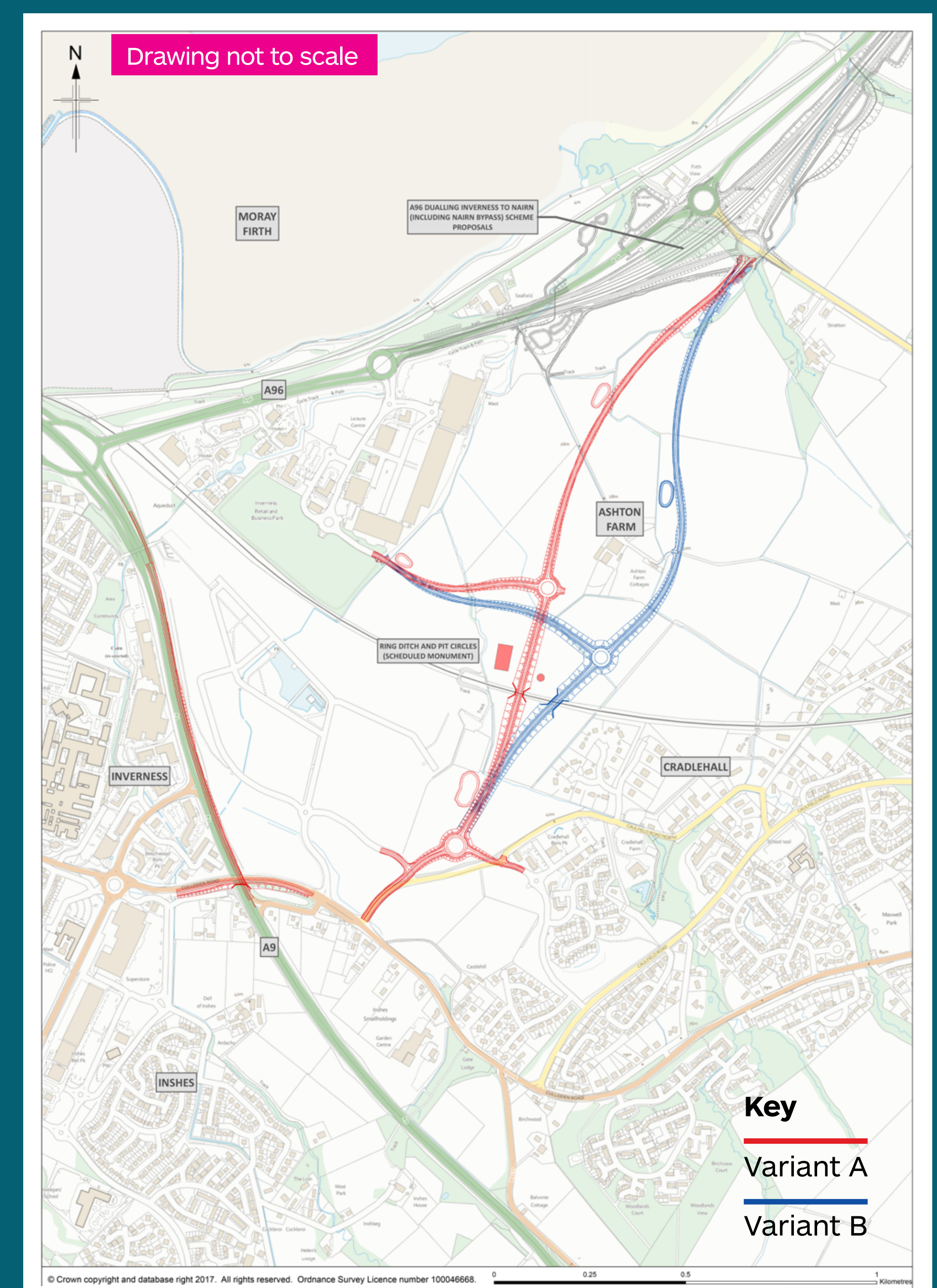
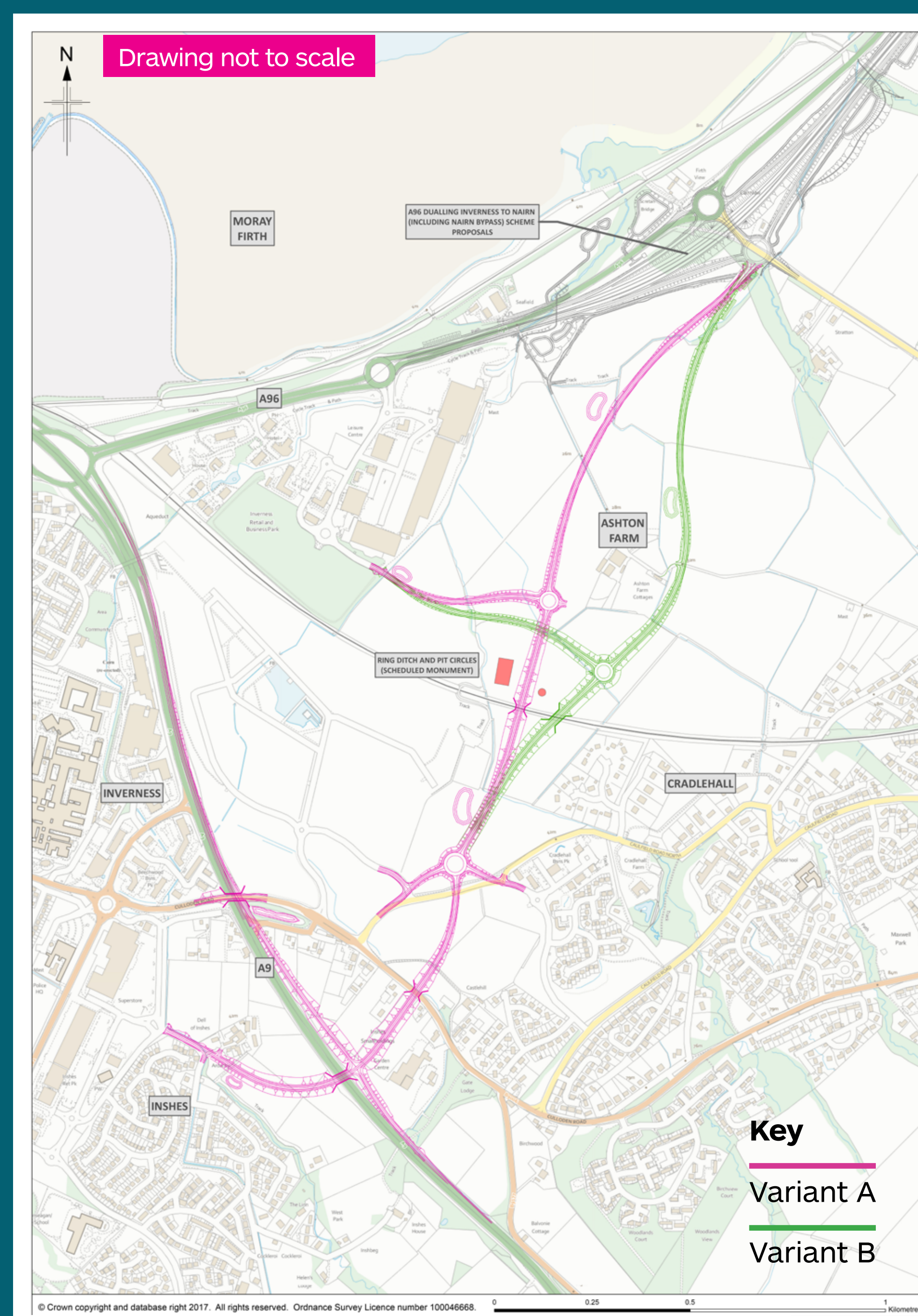
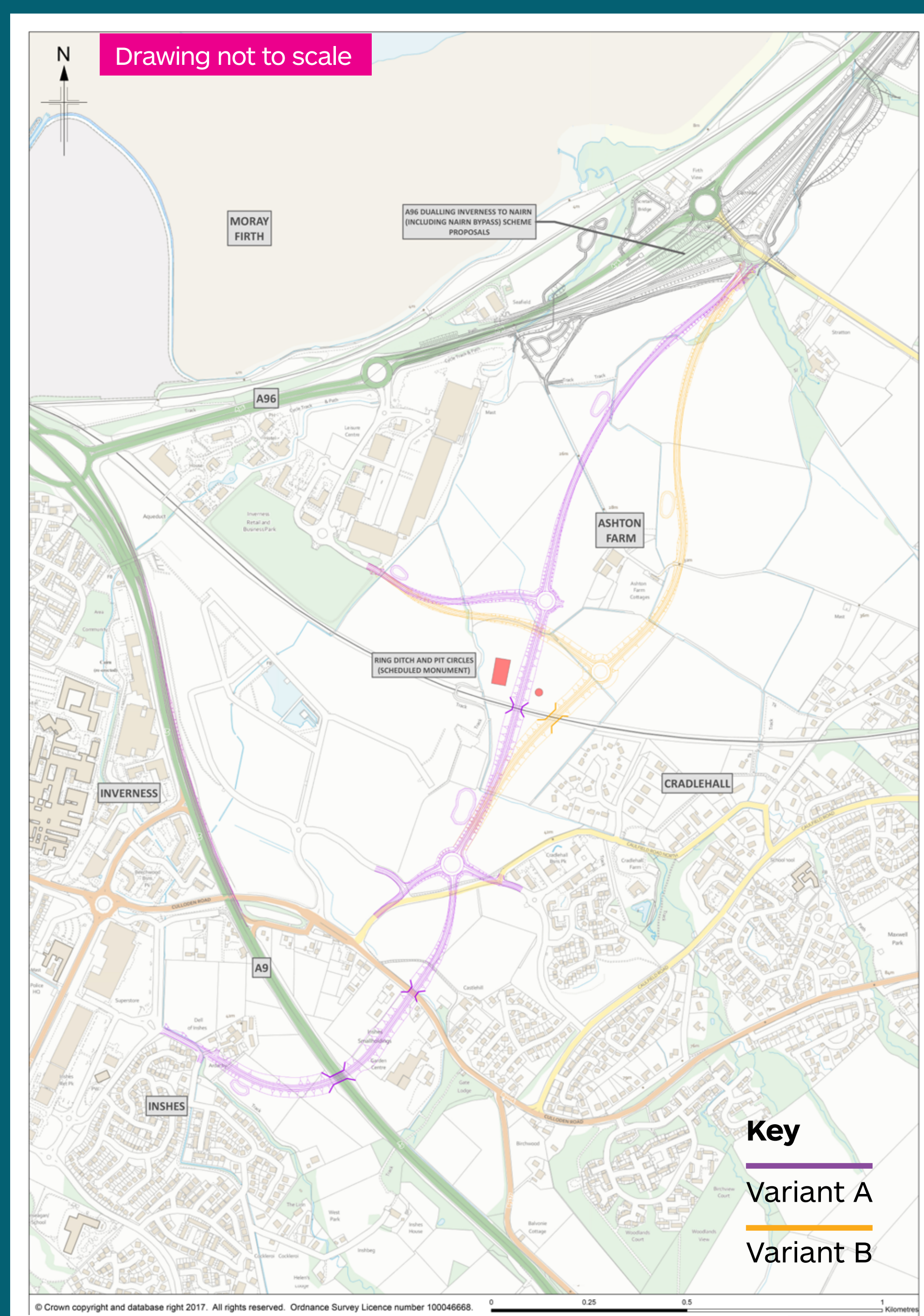
Option 3 includes:

- Approximately 2.4km single carriageway
- Junctions at Ashton Farm and Cradlehall
- New link to Inverness Retail and Business Park
- Bridge over the Highland Main Line Railway
- Increasing capacity of Inshes overbridge to two lanes in each direction
- Lane to be added on A9 southbound to assist merging and diverging traffic.

Option 1 A and B variant

Option 2 A and B variant

Option 3 A and B variant



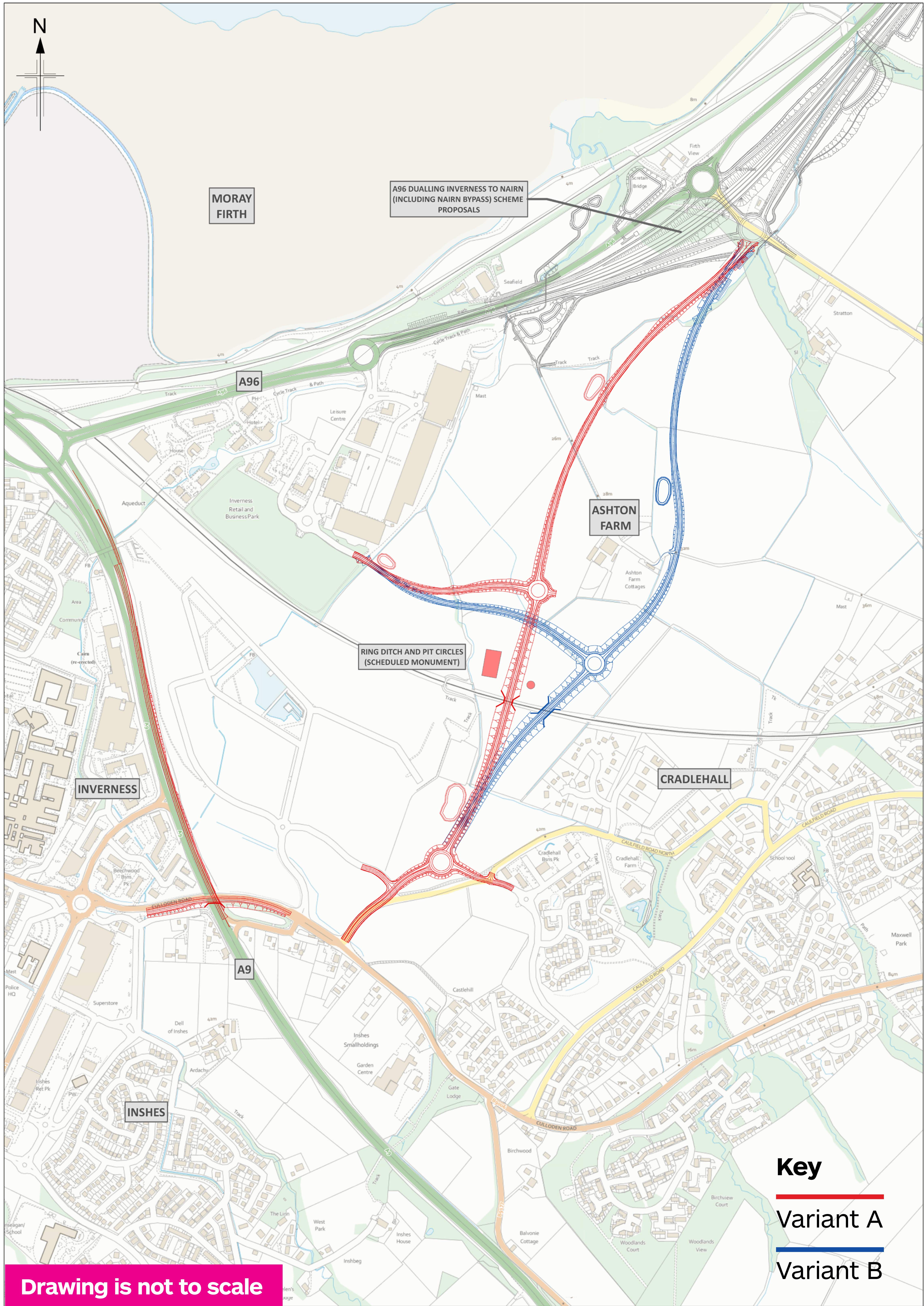
Where no variation is shown, the B Variant is the same as the A Variant.

The scheme (continued)

The A9/A96 Inshes to Smithton scheme will form an important element of The Highland Council's masterplan for Inverness East. As these plans are currently in development, the decision on the selection of the 'A' or 'B' variant will be made during the DMRB Stage 3 Assessment.

This will allow integration with masterplan proposals to be better considered, alongside all other assessment criteria at DMRB Stage 3. The design will be subject to further development during the DMRB Stage 3 process.

Preferred Option A and B variant



i The preferred option variants shown are indicative and will be developed further during the next stage of design development.

Where no variation is shown, Preferred Option, B Variant is the same as Preferred Option, A Variant.

Options assessment

The following is a summary of the options assessment, including reasons why Option 3 has been chosen as the preferred option:

- **Option 3** has less adverse noise impacts. **Options 1** and **2** adversely affect a greater number of properties
- **Option 3** has the least impact upon landscape character and visual amenity. It avoids the necessity for significant road embankments to the west of Cradlehall Roundabout which **Options 1** and **2** would require
- **Option 3** requires no property demolition, requires the least land take and impacts the lowest number of land interests. **Options 1** and **2** are likely to require the demolition of properties
- **Option 3** will increase the capacity of Inshes overbridge to two lanes in each direction within the established travel corridor. This avoids significant impact on the operation of Inshes Retail Park and the Dell of Inshes road network
- **Option 3** requires the least construction material. It does not require major road embankments over Culloden Road and the A9
- **Options 1** and **3** are predicted to have lower impact on ecology and nature conservation. All options have the potential to effect habitat for bats and badgers
- **Option 3** has the greater safety benefit compared to **Options 1** and **2**. All options reduce the traffic levels on local roads within Smithton and Culloden residential area resulting in less potential conflict between vehicles and non-motorised users (NMUs)
- **Option 3** offers a reduction in traffic levels and improvements in journey times on the trunk road network, although the reductions are less than those that would be achieved with **Options 1** and **2**
- **Options 1** and **2** have the potential to significantly deteriorate the operation of the network at Inshes Retail Park and Dell of Inshes Road. **Option 3** overall provides a more balanced level of operational performance across the road network
- All of the options provide good value for money, with **Option 3** having the lowest estimated scheme cost
- All options impact the scheduled monument near Ashton Farm to the same extent. **Option 3** does not impact historic building elements of Castlehill House (Category B listed building). **Options 1** and **2** negatively impact the setting of the house
- All options enable the Scottish Government's drive for economic growth by assisting the realisation of The Highland Council's plan for development of Inverness to the east of the A9
- All options have the potential for both adverse and some positive impacts upon the environment. There are no potential impacts so significant that an option should be discounted on the basis of any individual environmental criteria
- All options have a similar impact in relation to air quality
- All options will function as a travel corridor through the Inverness East development area. Further assessment of NMU and public transport facilities will be undertaken during the Stage 3 assessment process working in conjunction with The Highland Council, and new facilities will be implemented with the design
- All options would have an impact on road users during construction. **Option 2** would have the greatest impact, due to the need to demolish and rebuild Inshes overbridge, and **Option 1** would have the lowest impact
- All options have the potential to impact upon drainage and flooding which may require mitigation and will be considered at Stage 3.

Preferred option

The preferred option for the A9/A96 Inshes to Smithton scheme is shown on the following panels, which include some artist's impressions.

The preferred option shown on the drawings is indicative and will be developed further during the next stage of design development. This includes refinement of the roads design, layout and location of junctions, the design of Non-Motorised User (NMU) facilities and consideration of private accesses.

The potential negative environmental effects, identified at this stage, will be investigated in more detail through the

DMRB Stage 3 Environmental Impact Assessment process, and will take into account the alternative alignments close to Ashton Farm.

The design will be developed to avoid environmental impacts where possible, and appropriate mitigation will be designed where required. Further consultation will also be undertaken with statutory bodies and other consultees.

In addition, the location and layout of detention basins/treatment ponds will be developed further during the next stage of the design process.

Legend

- Cutting
- Embankment
- Grass Verge
- Pavement
- Detention Basin/Treatment Pond

Please Note

The preferred option shown on the drawings is indicative and will be developed further during the next stage of design development. This includes refinement of the alignment, junction location and layout, NMU provision and private accesses. Environmental mitigation will also be added to the scheme.

The location and layout of detention basins/treatment ponds are preliminary and subject to further development during the next stage of design development.

This aerial photography was taken in 2017.

DMRB Stage 2
Preferred Option
Variant A



Legend

- Cutting
- Embankment
- Grass Verge
- Pavement
- Detention Basin/Treatment Pond

Please Note

The preferred option shown on the drawings is indicative and will be developed further during the next stage of design development. This includes refinement of the alignment, junction location and layout, NMU provision and private accesses. Environmental mitigation will also be added to the scheme.

The location and layout of detention basins/treatment ponds are preliminary and subject to further development during the next stage of design development.

This aerial photography was taken in 2017.

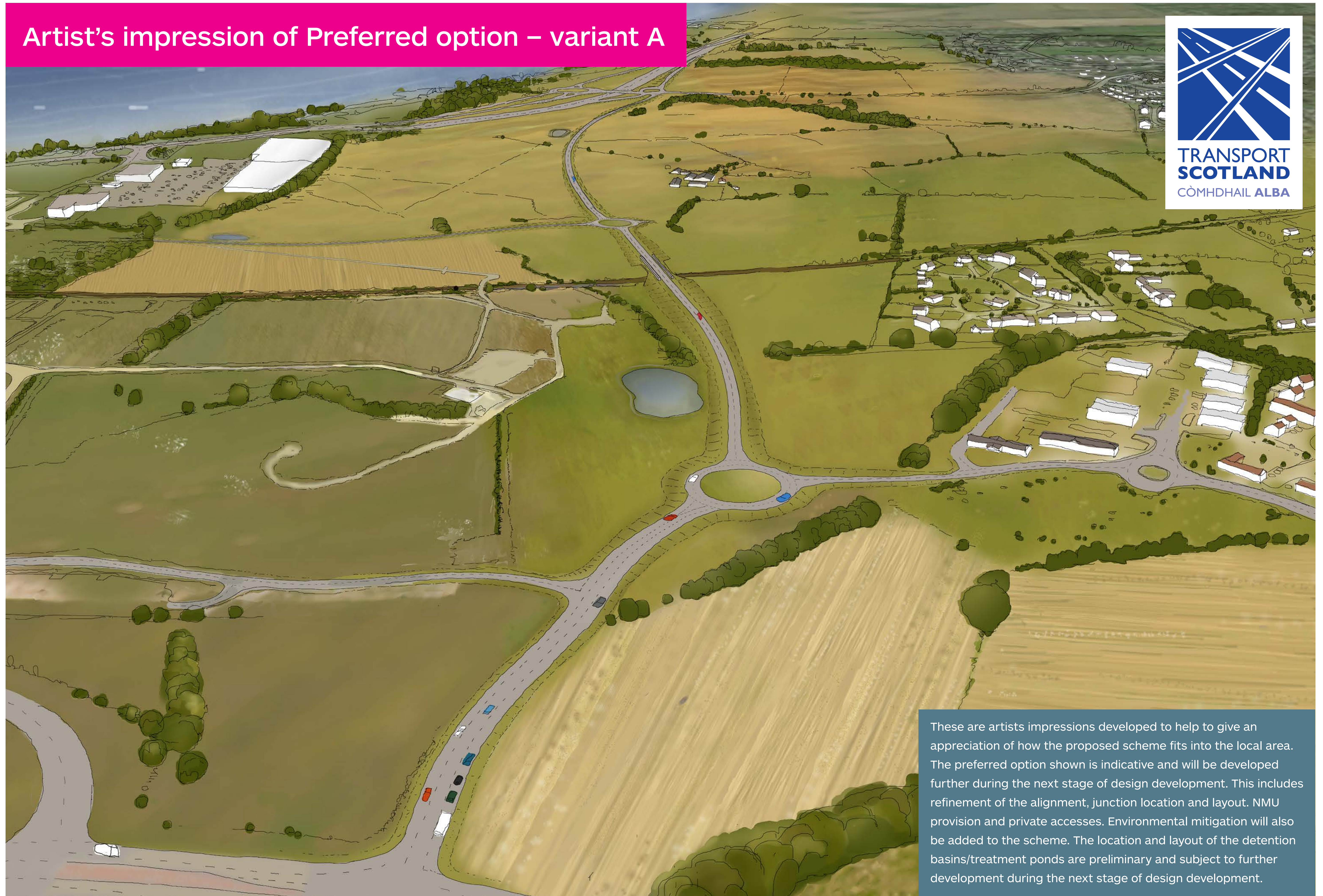
DMRB Stage 2
Preferred Option
Variant B



Artist's impression of Preferred option – variant A



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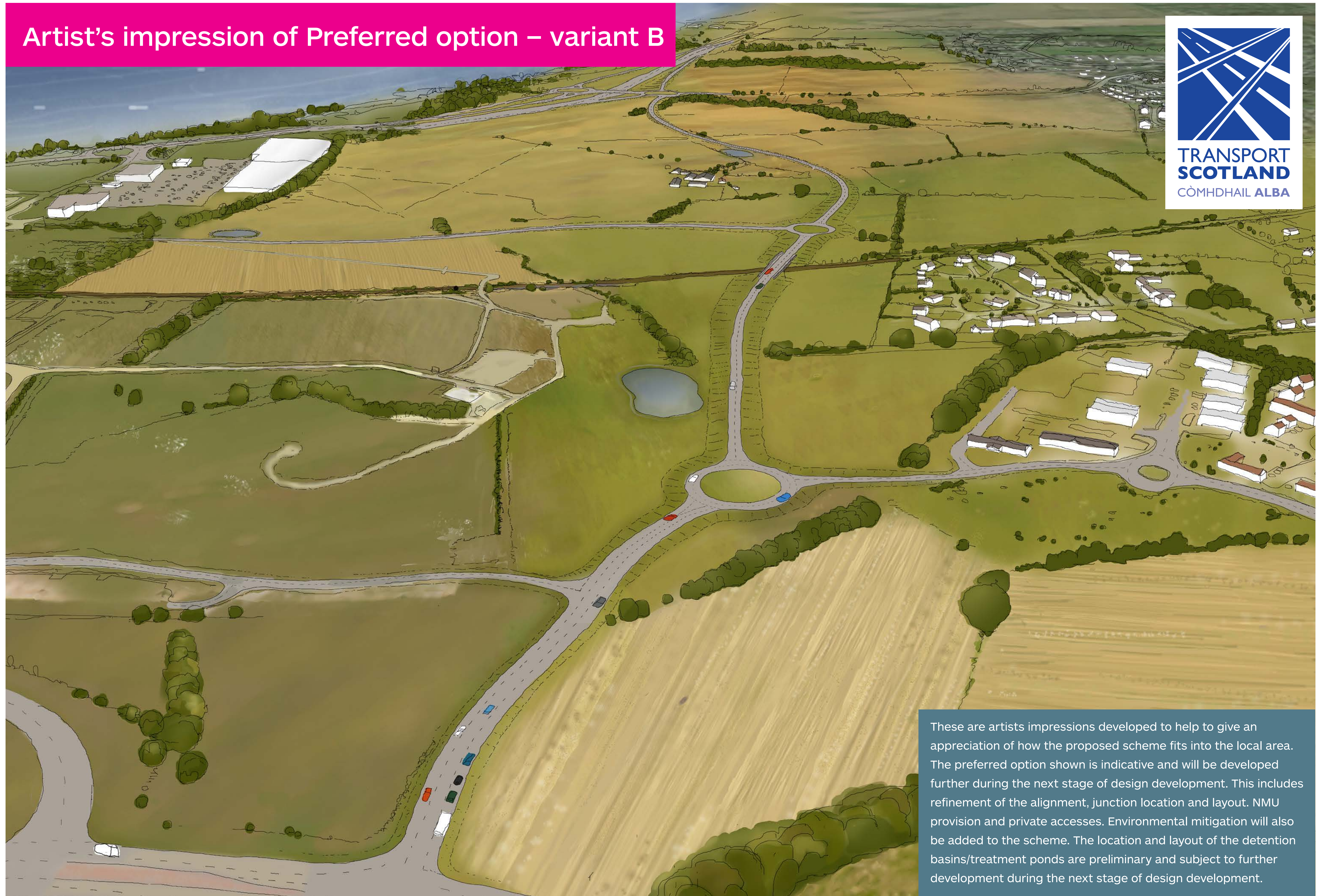


These are artists impressions developed to help to give an appreciation of how the proposed scheme fits into the local area. The preferred option shown is indicative and will be developed further during the next stage of design development. This includes refinement of the alignment, junction location and layout. NMU provision and private accesses. Environmental mitigation will also be added to the scheme. The location and layout of the detention basins/treatment ponds are preliminary and subject to further development during the next stage of design development.

Artist's impression of Preferred option – variant B



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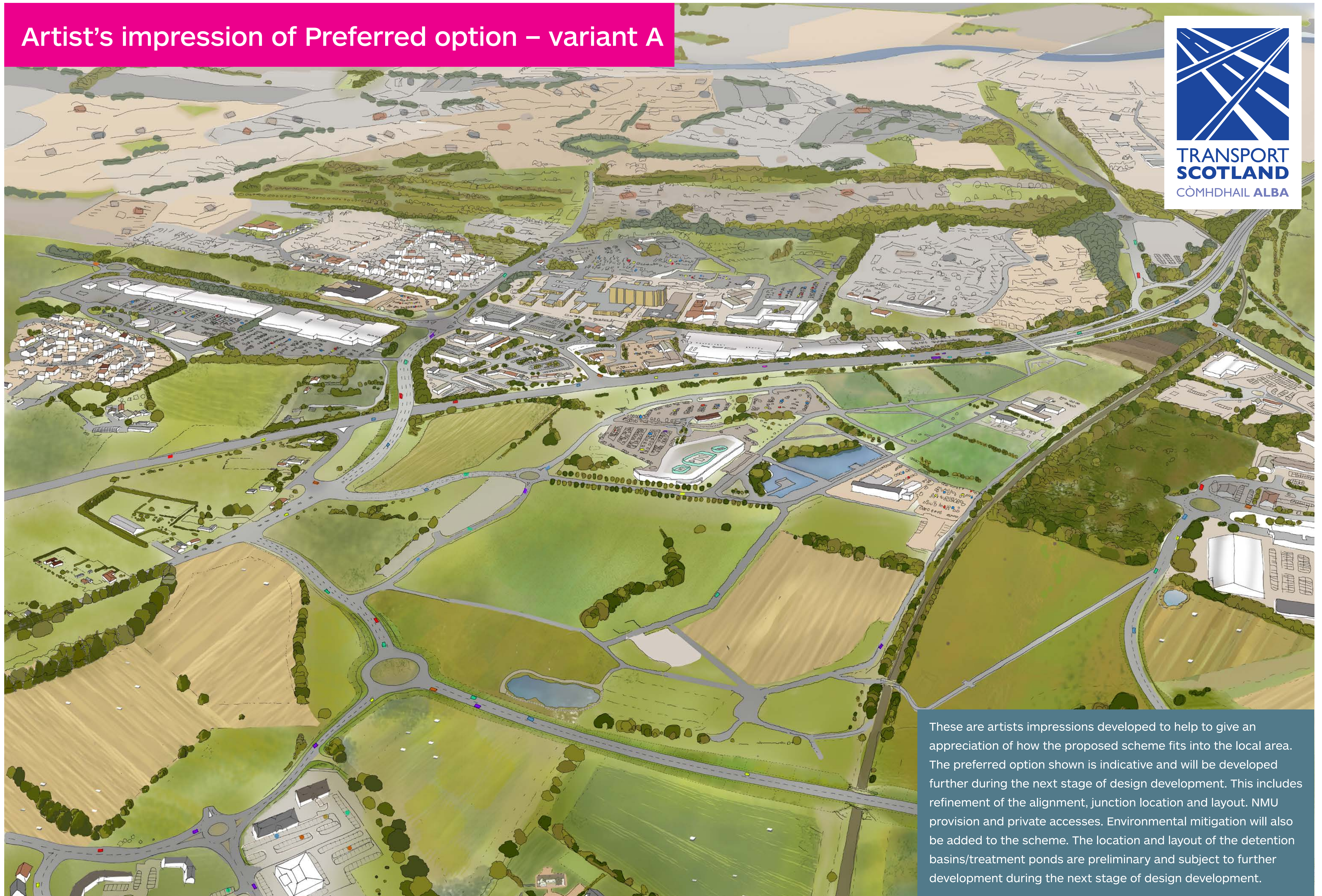


These are artists impressions developed to help to give an appreciation of how the proposed scheme fits into the local area. The preferred option shown is indicative and will be developed further during the next stage of design development. This includes refinement of the alignment, junction location and layout. NMU provision and private accesses. Environmental mitigation will also be added to the scheme. The location and layout of the detention basins/treatment ponds are preliminary and subject to further development during the next stage of design development.

Artist's impression of Preferred option – variant A



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These are artists impressions developed to help to give an appreciation of how the proposed scheme fits into the local area. The preferred option shown is indicative and will be developed further during the next stage of design development. This includes refinement of the alignment, junction location and layout. NMU provision and private accesses. Environmental mitigation will also be added to the scheme. The location and layout of the detention basins/treatment ponds are preliminary and subject to further development during the next stage of design development.

Non-Motorised Users (NMUs)

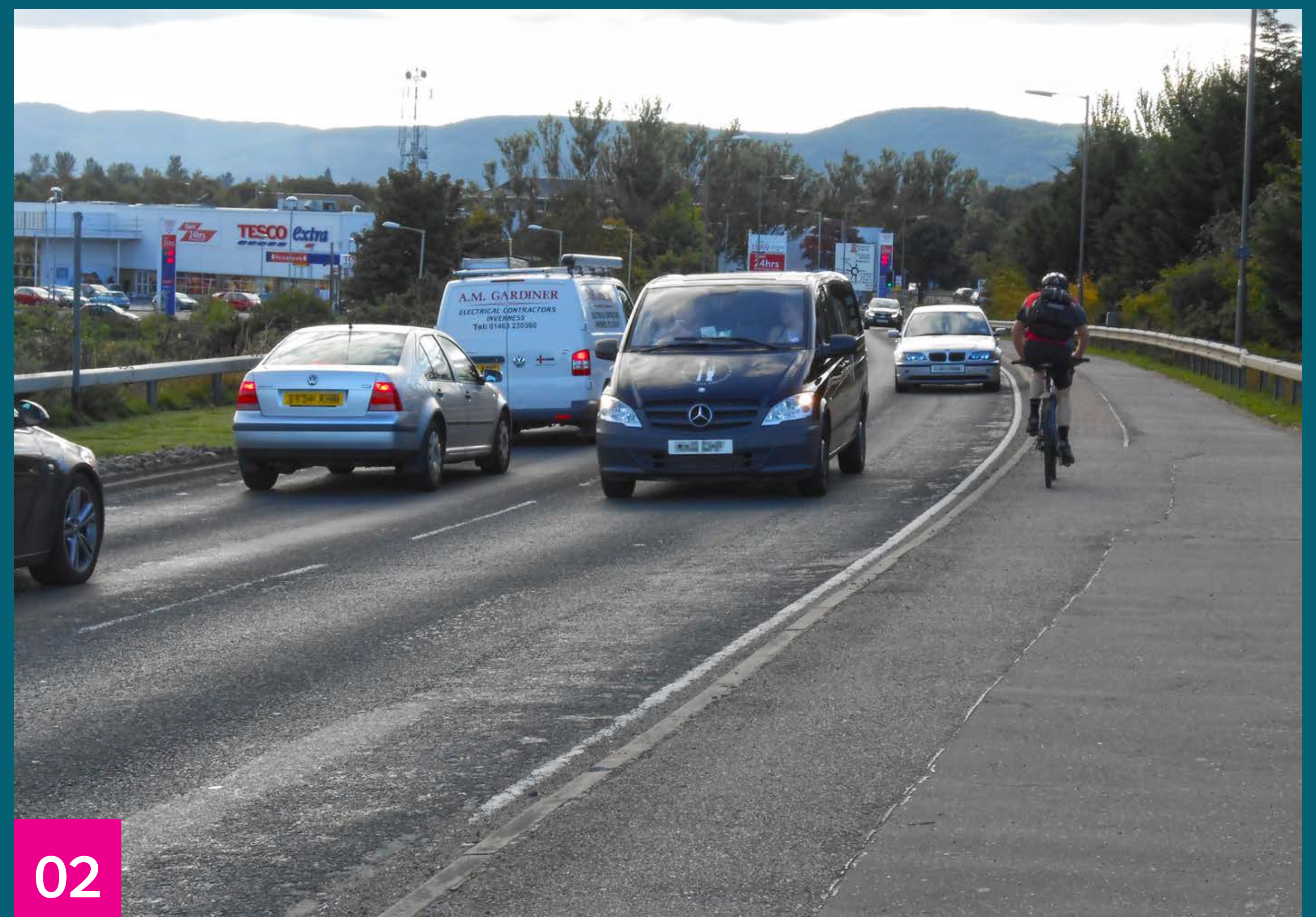
Suitable provision for NMUs is an important part of the scheme. Provision for NMUs will be incorporated as the scheme develops, in consultation with local interest groups.

As part of the DMRB Stage 2 Assessment process, we have identified and assessed impacts on existing Non-Motorised User (NMU) links. This was included in the overall consideration of options.

NMU provision for the preferred option will be designed and developed during the DMRB Stage 3 Assessment and will be developed in conjunction with The Highland Council's emerging masterplan for Inverness East.

The following objectives have been set in terms of NMU provision for this scheme:

- To maintain continuity of the existing National Cycle Network Route 1 as it passes through the scheme corridor
- To maintain continuity of the existing core path at Ashton Farm as it passes through the scheme corridor
- To maintain continuity of other existing NMU routes as they pass through the scheme corridor
- To take account of the proposed East Inverness Active Travel Corridor (EIATC) in the development of the scheme design
- To recognise and exploit opportunities to provide for existing and potential future NMU desire lines that pass through the scheme corridor and the surrounding area.



01. Existing NMU provision linking Inverness Retail and Business Park to UHI.

02. View looking west from Inshes Overbridge.

03. Ashton Farm core path.

What happens next?

Transport Scotland's design consultant, Jacobs, will take forward the development and assessment of the preferred option for the scheme (DMRB Stage 3 Assessment).

Transport Scotland will look to publish draft Road Orders, Compulsory Purchase Order and an Environmental Statement for the A9/A96 Inshes to Smithton Scheme in 2019.

The draft Road Orders will define the line of the developed preferred option.

The draft Compulsory Purchase Order will define the extent of the land needed to deliver the scheme.

The Environmental Statement will record a detailed assessment of the impacts of the developed preferred option, both positive and negative, and will outline any mitigation that is required.

The next stage of the assessment process will include:

- Consultation with affected parties
- Further consultation with statutory bodies, Community Councils and other relevant interest groups
- Design development of the preferred option (including junction layouts)
- Ground investigation works
- Development of Non-Motorised User (NMU) facilities
- Identification of the land required for the scheme and preparation of draft Orders
- Environmental impact assessment of the developed preferred option
- Development of suitable mitigation measures to reduce impact on the environment – including appropriate construction management plans, mammal (e.g. badger and otter) underpasses, ledges and fences, landscape planting and noise barriers or environmental bunds.

Comments and feedback

Transport Scotland welcomes your comments and feedback. Please take time to consider the information presented here today and provide any comments you may have as soon as possible and by

13 December 2017.

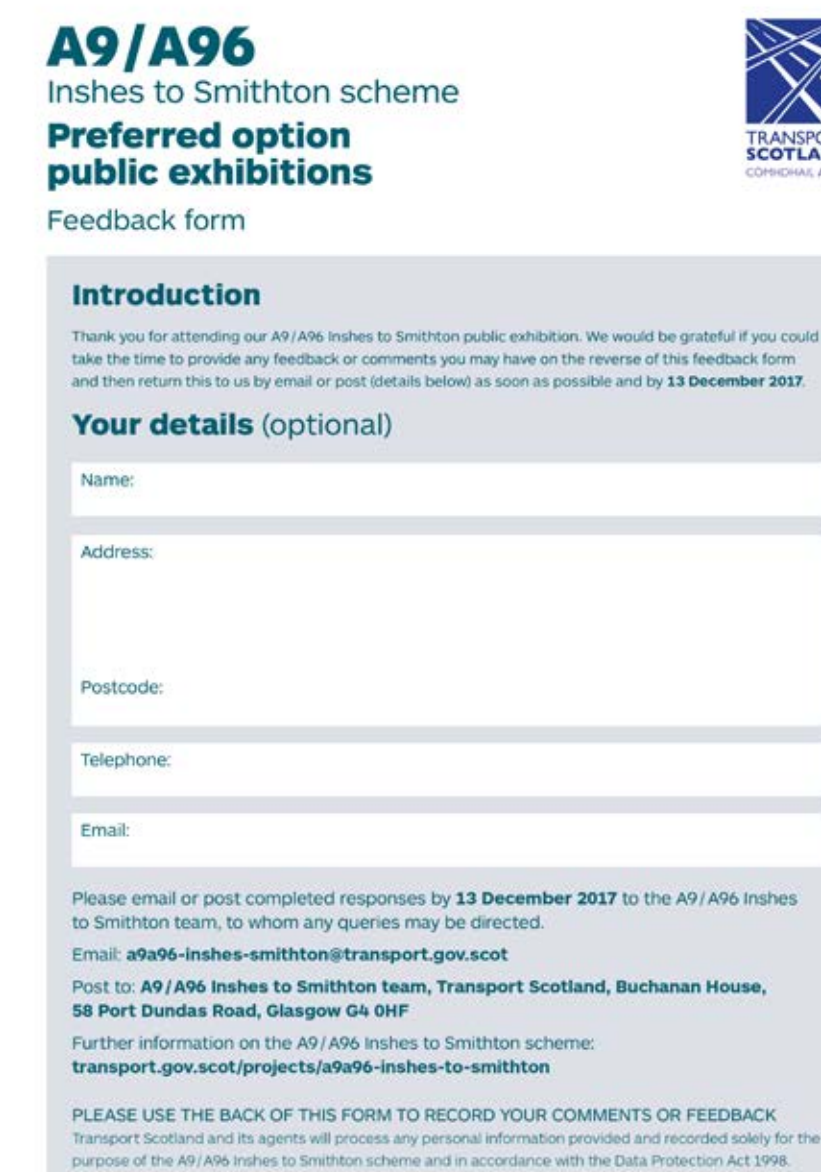
Comments can be made on the feedback forms provided and placed in the feedback box at the exhibition, or sent by email or post.

Feedback forms are also available to download on the Transport Scotland website.

Please email your comments to:
a9a96-inshes-smithton@transport.gov.scot

or alternatively post to:
A9/A96 Inshes to Smithton team
Transport Scotland
Buchanan House
58 Port Dundas Road
Glasgow
G4 0HF

A9/A96 Inshes to Smithton scheme leaflet and exhibition panels can be made available in alternative formats on request by contacting the project team.



A9/A96
Inshes to Smithton scheme
Preferred option
public exhibitions
Feedback form

Introduction
Thank you for attending our A9/A96 Inshes to Smithton public exhibition. We would be grateful if you could take the time to provide any feedback or comments you may have on the reverse of this feedback form, and then return this to us by email or post (details below) as soon as possible and by **13 December 2017**.

Your details (optional)

Name:

Address:

Postcode:

Telephone:

Email:

Please email or post completed responses by **13 December 2017** to the A9/A96 Inshes to Smithton team, to whom any queries may be directed.
Email: a9a96-inshes-smithton@transport.gov.scot
Post to: **A9/A96 Inshes to Smithton team, Transport Scotland, Buchanan House, 58 Port Dundas Road, Glasgow G4 0HF**
Further information on the A9/A96 Inshes to Smithton scheme:
transport.gov.scot/projects/a9a96-inshes-to-smithton

PLEASE USE THE BACK OF THIS FORM TO RECORD YOUR COMMENTS OR FEEDBACK.
Transport Scotland and its agents will process any personal information provided and recorded solely for the purpose of the A9/A96 Inshes to Smithton scheme and in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998.

For further information on the A9/A96 Inshes to Smithton scheme, please visit the Transport Scotland website:

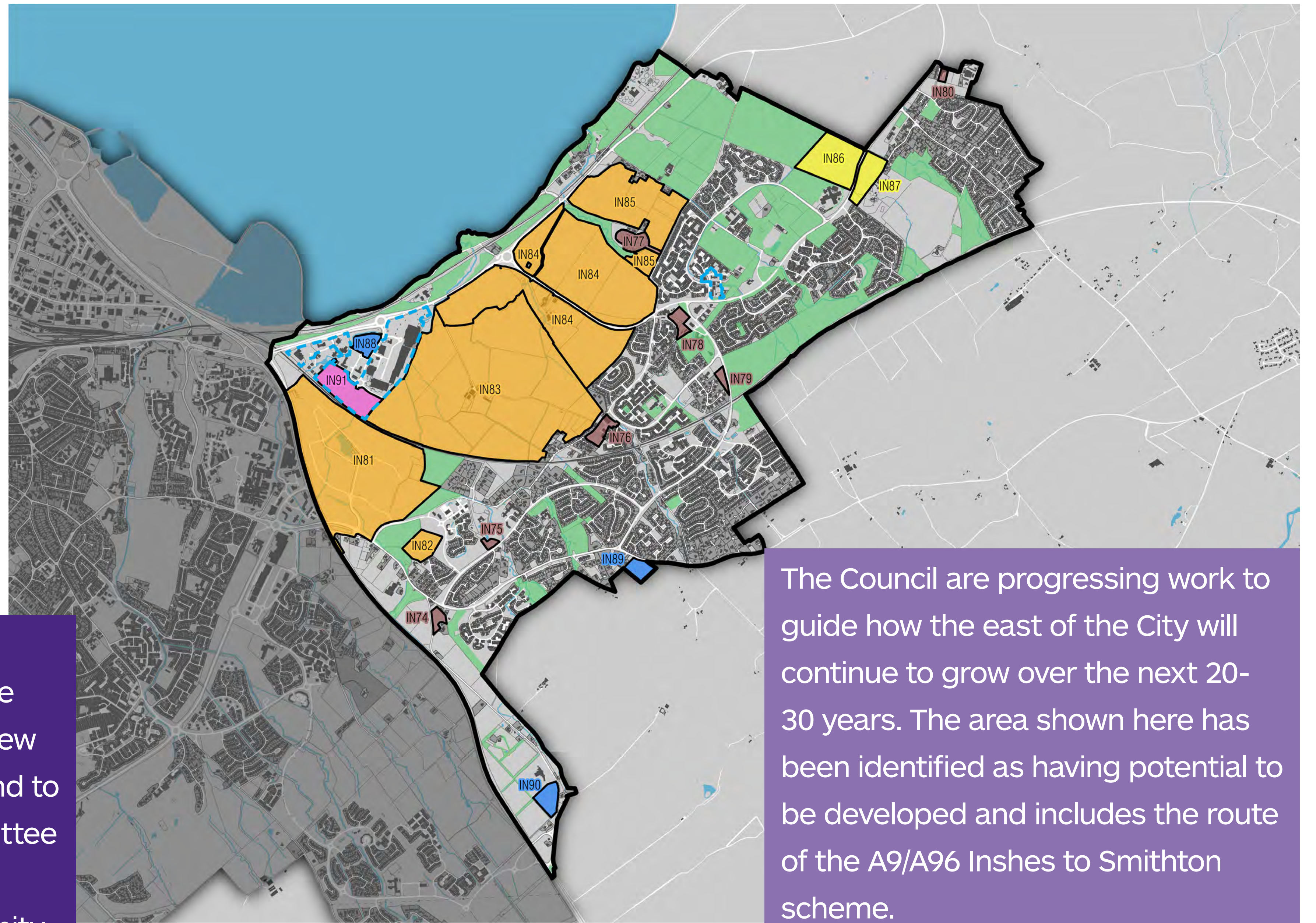
transport.gov.scot/projects/a9a96-inshes-to-smithton

Guiding principles for Inverness East

We developed a set of principles to follow for preparing the Brief, based on the feedback we received and our understanding of the needs in the area. These principles were approved by the City of Inverness Area Committee in February 2017:

- Identify a central location for community, commercial and leisure facilities
- Identify a central district park that connects with the wider green network
- Support delivery of sports facilities
- Ensure high pedestrian, cycle and road connectivity
- Set out a strategy that prioritises walking, cycling and public transport and promotes diverse neighbourhoods
- Ensure a framework to deliver a viable high-quality city expansion.

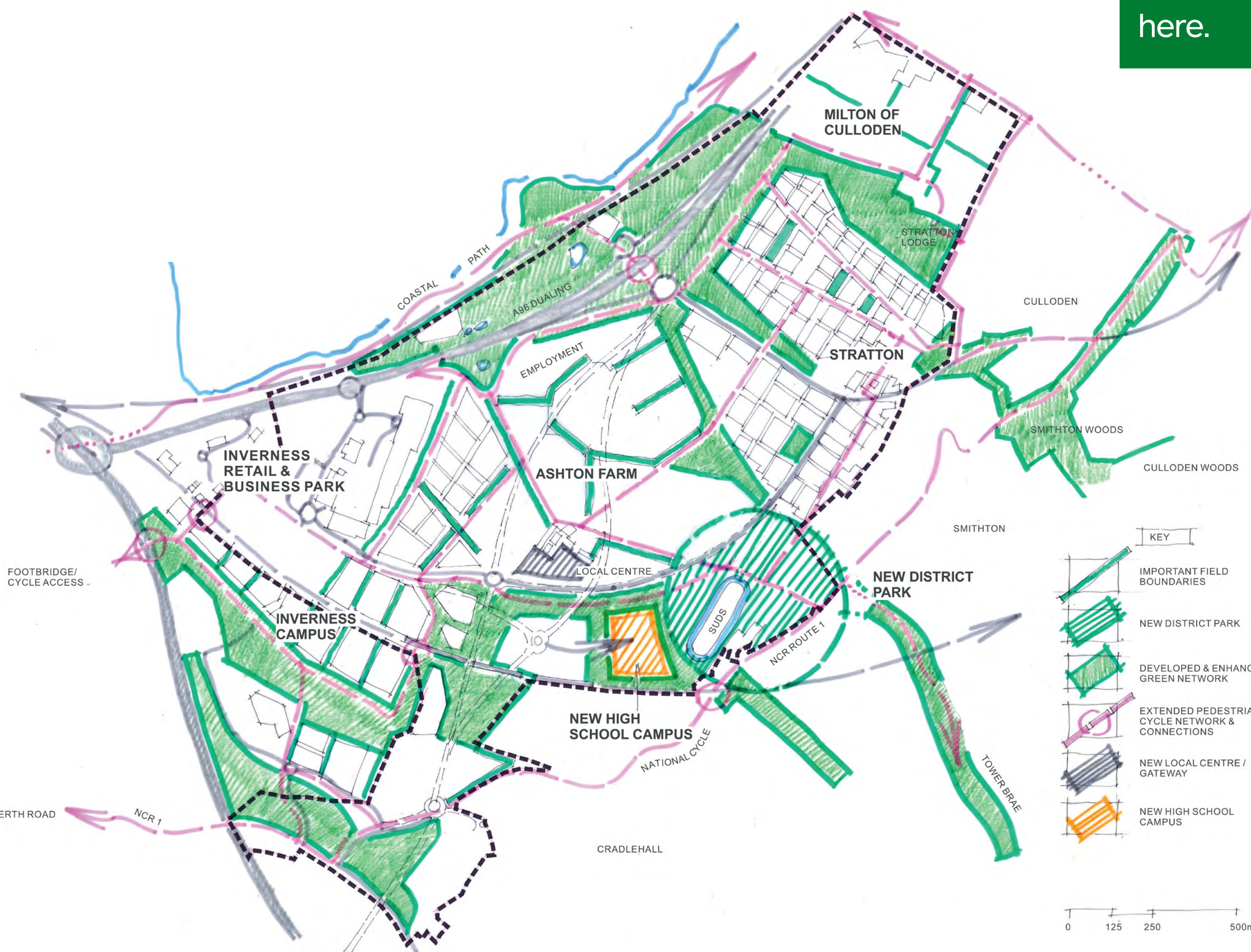
Since November 2016 we have been working hard to finalise a draft Brief that sets out how the Inverness East area will become a high quality new place for people to live, work and enjoy. We intend to take a draft to the City of Inverness Area Committee on 30 November 2017 and to consult on this in January 2018. The public will have a full opportunity to comment in more detail at that stage.



The Council are progressing work to guide how the east of the City will continue to grow over the next 20-30 years. The area shown here has been identified as having potential to be developed and includes the route of the A9/A96 Inshes to Smithton scheme.

We engaged the local community online and at a workshop in November 2016 and developed Emerging Ideas that are shown here.

Inverness East Development Brief: Emerging Ideas



This drawing shows an indicative line for the A9/A96 Inshes to Smithton scheme. The scheme will be subject to further design and development as part of the forthcoming DMRB Stage 3 scheme assessment works being undertaken by Transport Scotland and the development brief will be further refined as the scheme progresses.

The Inverness East Development Brief seeks to guide the growth of this area which will include 3000 new private and affordable homes, new schools, employment, leisure, sports uses and parks. The Brief will aim to ensure development is supported by the right facilities and infrastructure. It aims to create a high quality place that is compatible with the A9/A96 Inshes to Smithton scheme, including a network of new streets. The way people move along and across this new route is an important consideration for the Brief.



Keep up to date with the Brief online:
highland.gov.uk/invernesseast

Inshes junction: progress and future plans

Outline Proposals

Further work is required to better understand the optimum solution for improving Inshes Junction and access to Raigmore Hospital
Studies ongoing

An additional lane is planned to widen the carriageway to three lanes on Inshes overbridge to provide two lanes westbound and one eastbound
Planned Construction April 2018

At the same time as Transport Scotland progress design work for the A9/A96 Inshes to Smithton scheme, the Council will progress detailed design of how Inshes junction will be improved.

The designs shown in this panel date from 2012 but several improvements have already been delivered or will shortly be delivered. A number of other challenges still remain, which is part of the next stage of work, as described in the boxes opposite.

Flaring Works to Sir Walter Scott Drive
Constructed 2016

Flaring Works to Cullochen Road
Constructed 2016

LEGEND	
CARRIAGEWAY	
FOOTWAY	
VERGE	
FLOOD ATTENUATION BASIN	
CYCLE ROUTE ON FOOTWAY/ CYCLEWAY	
CYCLE ROUTE ON CARRIAGEWAY	
CROSS SECTIONS	

