M5 Taunton to Southfields

Non-statutory consultation by Highways England

Presentation to Scrutiny for Policies and Place Committee 13 June 2017

Mike O'Dowd-Jones: Strategic Commissioning Manager: Highways and Transport

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Background

- Sustained campaign to secure improvements to the whole A303/A30/A358 corridor. Huge economic benefits to the area if designed appropriately.

- Strong support for a dual carriageway improvement from the M5 at Taunton to Southfields as part of the wider programme.

- Highways England responsible for design, delivery and operation of the route as a new link in the national road network. SCC are only a consultee.

- Scheme to be consented through the 'DCO' process for nationally significant infrastructure projects.

- HE's current 'non-statutory' stage in consultation is to help inform choice of preferred route. Commenced 28 March then paused with deadline extended from 20 May due to general election constraints.

Explaining the Development Consent Order (DCO) process

- **The Local Authority role:**
- Respond to consultation on the scheme
- Comment on adequacy of consultation
- Agree statement of common ground
- Prepare local impact report
- Participate in examination & respond to examiners questions/ requests for information
- Come to agreement on planning obligations as necessary
- Role in discharging requirements and monitoring/ enforcement.

- Experience on other similar road schemes indicates need to neogotiate a formal role in agreeing detailed designs where road interfaces with local network – this may well continue beyond the examination.

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Options development

- 26 initial options – widespread north & south of the current road.
- Sifted down to 4 options for further assessment – focusing on a central corridor.
- HE chose to consult on a single option to inform development of the preferred route.
- Summary of the assessment of the 4 options set out in a technical appraisal report (TAR).
- Technical material does not have detailed designs or quantification of performance or local impacts.

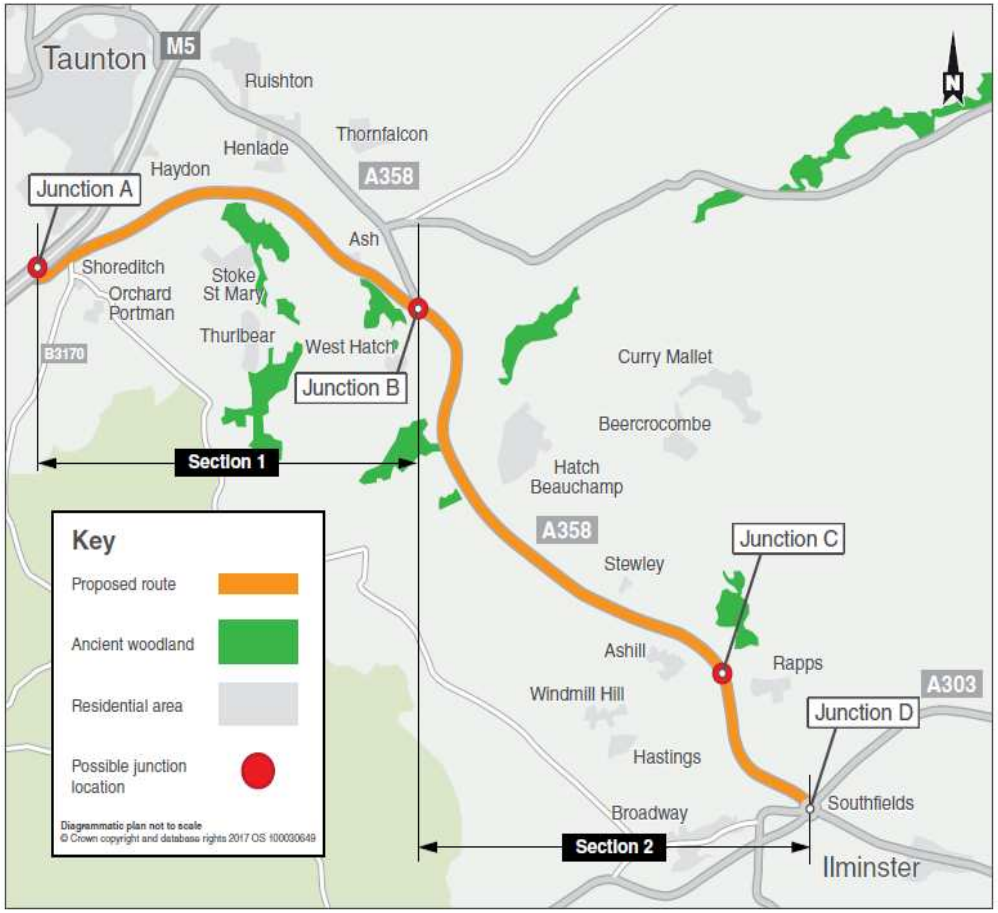

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Figure 6.2: A358 Taunton to Ilminster network – with option 1 with NFS

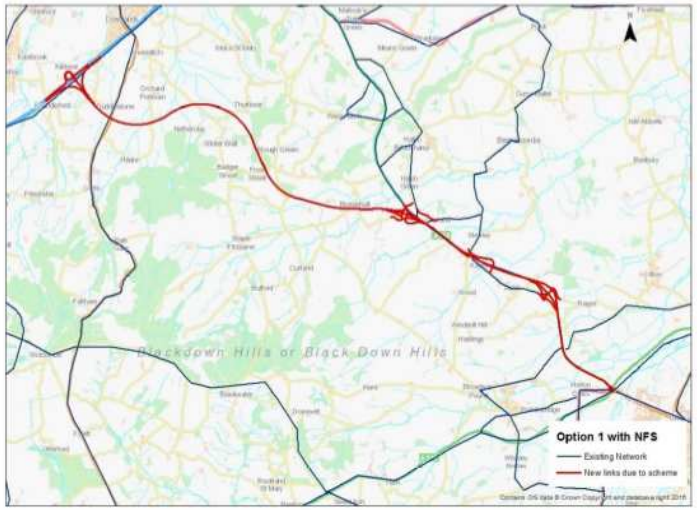

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Figure 6.4: A358 Taunton to Ilminster network – with option 8 with J25

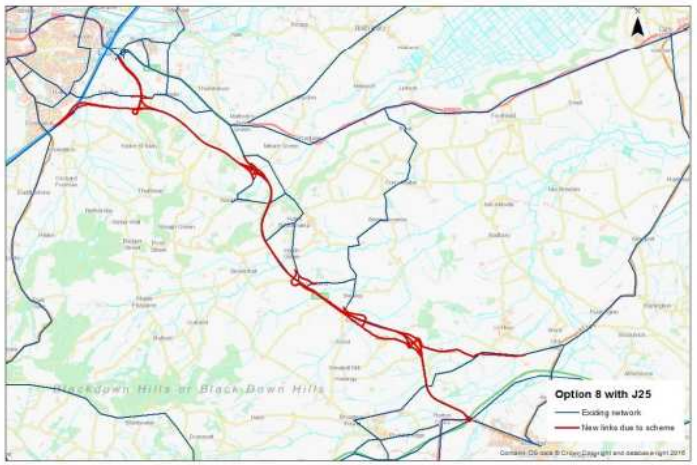

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Figure 6.5: A358 Taunton to Ilminster network – with option 2A/2B

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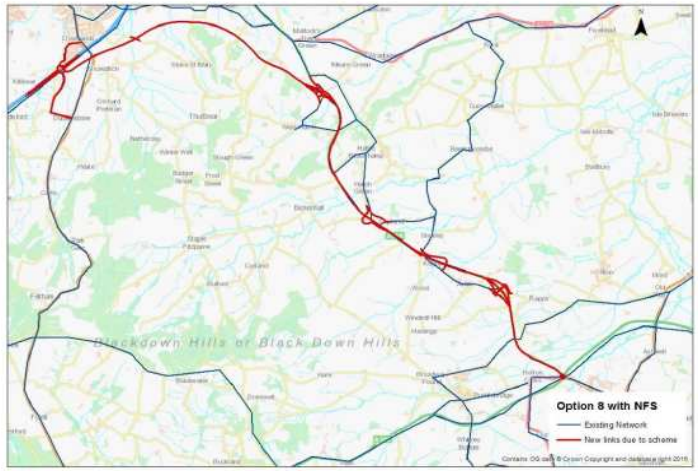
Figure 6.3: A358 Taunton to Ilminster network – with option 8 with NFS



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Options development

Table 0.1: Analysis of Monetised Cost Benefits (£000s)

Item	Opt 1 + NFS	Opt 8 + NFS	Opt 8 + J25	Opt 2A/2B
Accidents (not assessed by TUBA)*	6,977	-314	9,666	10,184
Roadworks (not assessed by TUBA)**	-28,162	-54,916	-54,691	-58,676
Greenhouse Gases (not assessed by TUBA)***	-22,330	-21,791	-16,589	-18,969
Noise (not assessed by TUBA)****	315	-837	2204	493
Air Quality (not assessed by TUBA)*****	76	71	180	-136
Economic Efficiency: Consumer Users (Commuting)	103,727	95,830	108,557	122,843
Economic Efficiency: Consumer Users (Other)	111,111	98,781	127,916	159,928
Economic Efficiency: Business Users and Providers	218,925	200,801	239,090	283,355
Wider Public Finances (Indirect Taxation Revenues)	36,496	33,533	28,412	30,474
Present Value of Benefits (PVB)	427,135	351,158	444,745	529,496
Broad Transport Budget / Present Value of Costs (PVC)	256,945	243,851	266,270	284,094
OVERALL IMPACTS				
Net Present Value (NPV)	170,190	107,307	178,475	245,402
Initial Benefit to Cost Ratio (BCR)	1.66	1.44	1.67	1.86
Reliability Benefits	52,269	47,738	53,621	62,545
Adjusted BCR	1.76	1.54	1.87	2.08

Notes: All monetary values are expressed in 2010 prices discounted to 2010. 1 - From COBALT; 2 - From QUADRO; 3 - TAG Unit A3 Chapter 2; 4 TAG Unit A3 Chapter 3; ,5 - TAG Unit A3 Chapter 4

Quantified Benefits £m

Cost 2010 £m

Cost/benefit ratio

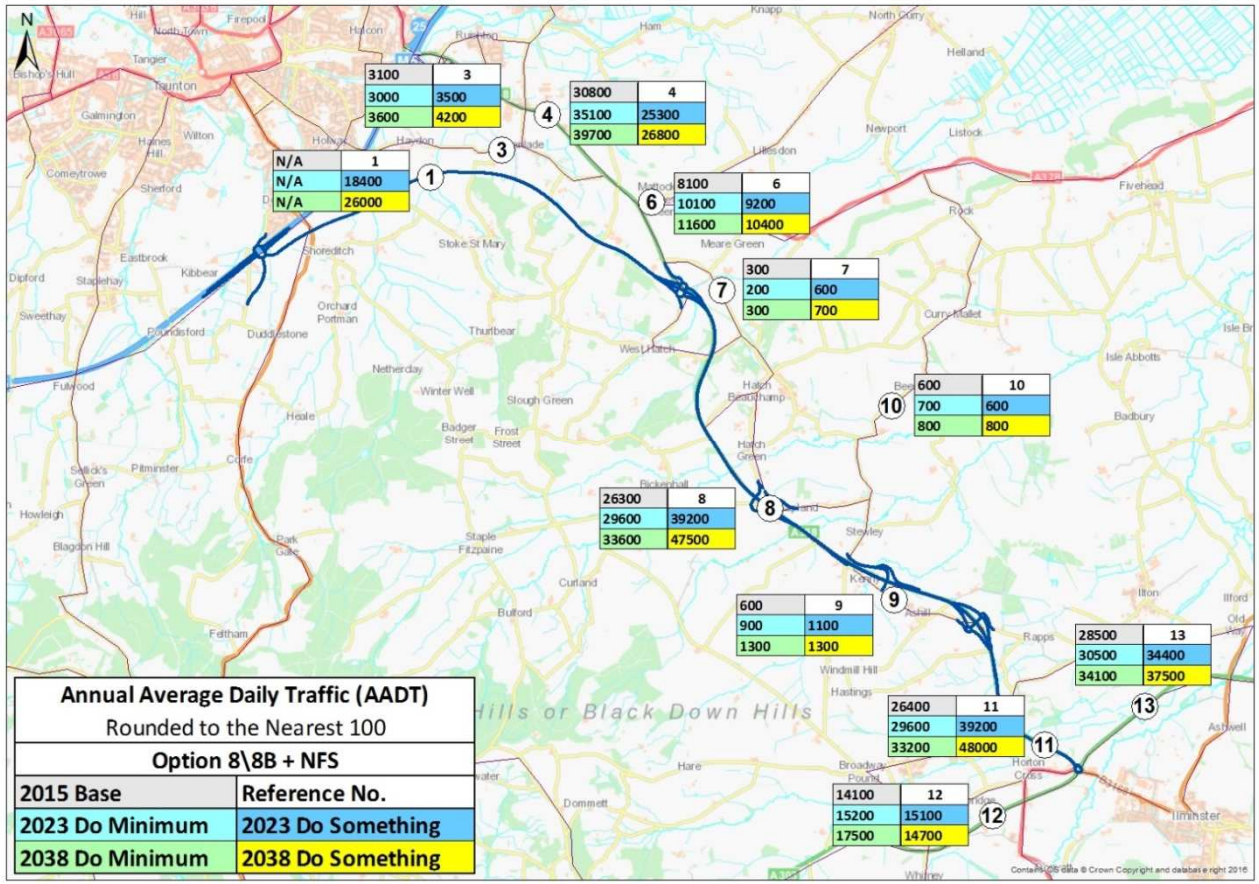
HE Proposed option

- Not possible at this stage in the process to say definitively which the best option is in terms of congestion or local impacts, or what design features would be most beneficial.
- Enables consultees to identify features of those options that should be given further consideration in finalising and consulting on a preferred route.
- Early cost/benefit assessment shows option ‘2A/2B’ (link to J25 and M5 south facing slips only); has greatest quantified benefits although is the most expensive.

Traffic implications

- Early traffic modelling undertaken.
- SCC has not yet been able to validate how robustly this measures performance of the improvement and local impacts.
- A great deal of further work on this needed.
- Insights from the limited data published for traffic predictions in 2038.
- All options improve journey times to Taunton.

Option	New A358: Annual Average Daily Traffic Flow (2 way in 2038)
Option 1 + NFS	31,700
Option 8/8B + J25	45,900
Option 8/8B + NFS	26,000
Option 2A/2B	54,600 (73% accessing the M5 and Taunton via new link to J25.)



Environmental and social impacts

- Early work undertaken with much more detail required as scheme develops:
- Flood Risk and Drainage
- Rights of Way
- Landscape and Visual Impact
- Air Quality & Emissions
- Archaeology and Cultural Heritage
- Biodiversity and Ecology
- Noise and Vibration

- TAR concludes variable results across the different route options at this stage:
- Option 1 NFS substantially worse in its effect on the landscape and biodiversity.
- Option 8 NFS has the potential to increase noise in local residential areas.
- Option 2A/2B has small dis-benefit in Air Quality.

Key Issues

- Information.
- Link road between the new expressway and Junction 25.
- The principle of a new ‘all-movement’ junction on the M5.
- Strong community concern about the potential impact of J25a at proposed location.
- Concern about any connection between J25a and the local road network.
- How to attract a greater proportion of traffic to use ‘Section 1’.
- Limited junctions on ‘Section 2’.

Adequacy of consultation

- Concerns about the single option.
- Consultation still underway.
- This is an early ‘non-statutory’ stage in the process .
- There will be further consultation ‘pre-DCO’ once the preferred route is finalised.
- Information about the four shortlisted options is set out in the Technical Report.
- Key concerns raised appear to be about a limited number of important issues rather than HE’s choice of route as a whole.
- SCC will seek assurances that HE will further consider the matters raised before finalising the preferred route; rather than discounting design solutions at this stage.

Process going forward

- 9 June: Draft response and Cabinet Member non-key decision published for comment.
- 13 June: Scrutiny consideration of response and formulation of any recommendations arising.
- 22 June: Current date for Cabinet Member non-key decision to agree SCC's response.

- Community views communicated to SCC to date have informed the draft decision (see decision paper Appendix B).
- Proposed response will be reviewed in the light of any recommendation from Scrutiny.
- Any further views on the proposed response in addition to those already submitted can still inform the decision on the response up until 21 June.
- Re-iteration of the same points already made will not change the SCC response.
- It is important to note that Highways England is consulting on this scheme, not SCC so consultation responses should go to HE at https://highwaysengland.citizenspace.com/he/a358-taunton-to-southfields/

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Journey times

Range for all four options

Route	Journey time reduction range **for all options** - neutral period	
	AM period	PM Period
A303 east of the Southfields junction to the north of Taunton (Bishops Lydeard) via the A358	11%-15%	14%-20%
A303 east of the Southfields junction to the M5 north of Bridgwater via the A358	17%-18%	19%-21%
A303 east of the Southfields junction to the M5 at Junction 29 (Wincanton-Exeter) along the A303 and A30	-3%to -4%	-1% to -3%

Proposed option

Route	Journey time reduction for **proposed option** – neutral period	
	AM period	PM Period
A303 east of the Southfields junction to the north of Taunton (Bishops Lydeard) via the A358	4 mins (12%)	6 mins (15%)
A303 east of the Southfields junction to the M5 north of Bridgwater via the A358	8 mins (17%)	7 mins (19%)
A303 east of the Southfields junction to the M5 at Junction 29 (Wincanton-Exeter) along the A303 and A30	-2 mins (-3%)	-1 min to (-1%)

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N.B '–' figures are slight increases in journey times due to congestion at Southfields

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