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

WWW.SOMERSET.GOV.UK
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.
- 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 negotiate a formal role in agreeing detailed designs where road interfaces with local network – this may well continue beyond the examination.
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.
Options development

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Opt 1 + NFB</th>
<th>Opt 8 + NFS</th>
<th>Opt 8 + J25</th>
<th>Opt 2A/2B</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Accidents (not assessed by TUBA)</td>
<td>6,977</td>
<td>-314</td>
<td>9,066</td>
<td>10,114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Road accidents (not assessed by TUBA)</td>
<td>-28,102</td>
<td>-54,916</td>
<td>-54,091</td>
<td>-58,676</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greenhouse Gases (not assessed by TUBA)</td>
<td>-22,336</td>
<td>-21,791</td>
<td>-16,589</td>
<td>-18,969</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Noise (not assessed by TUBA)</td>
<td>315</td>
<td>-837</td>
<td>2204</td>
<td>403</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Air Quality (not assessed by TUBA)</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>-136</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic Efficiency: Consumer Users</td>
<td>103,727</td>
<td>95,826</td>
<td>108,597</td>
<td>122,943</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Commuting)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic Efficiency: Consumer Users (Other)</td>
<td>111,111</td>
<td>98,761</td>
<td>127,910</td>
<td>159,920</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic Efficiency: Business Users and Providers</td>
<td>218,925</td>
<td>200,801</td>
<td>239,080</td>
<td>263,355</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wider Public Finances (Indirect Taxation Revenues)</td>
<td>36,406</td>
<td>33,633</td>
<td>28,412</td>
<td>30,474</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Present Value of Benefits (PVB)</td>
<td>427,135</td>
<td>351,158</td>
<td>444,745</td>
<td>529,406</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broad Transport Budget / Present Value of Costs (PVC)</td>
<td>256,945</td>
<td>243,851</td>
<td>266,270</td>
<td>264,094</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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.

WWW.SOMERSET.GOV.UK
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.

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

### Range for all four options

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Route</th>
<th>Journey time reduction range for all options – neutral period</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>AM period</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A303 east of the Southfields junction to the north of Taunton (Bishops Lydeard) via the A358</td>
<td>11%-15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A303 east of the Southfields junction to the M5 north of Bridgwater via the A358</td>
<td>17%-18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A303 east of the Southfields junction to the M5 at Junction 29 (Wincanton-Exeter) along the A303 and A30</td>
<td>-3%to -4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Proposed option

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Route</th>
<th>Journey time reduction for proposed option – neutral period</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>AM period</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A303 east of the Southfields junction to the north of Taunton (Bishops Lydeard) via the A358</td>
<td>4 mins (12%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A303 east of the Southfields junction to the M5 north of Bridgwater via the A358</td>
<td>8 mins (17%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A303 east of the Southfields junction to the M5 at Junction 29 (Wincanton-Exeter) along the A303 and A30</td>
<td>-2 mins (-3%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

[Source: SOMERSET.GOV.UK]