

# **SWINDON PARISH COUNCIL**

## **M5 Junction 10 Consultation**

Swindon Parish Council welcomes the opportunity to provide feedback on the proposed M5 Junction 10 Improvement Scheme. While we welcome the scheme's objectives and the improvements that the scheme will bring, we do not believe it currently meets all of the stated objectives as listed in the consultation documents, most notably "to provide a more integrated transport network by enabling opportunities to switch to more sustainable transport modes". We would encourage the project team to consider the following points:

### **Scheme Layout**

1. The Parish Council favour Option 2A due to: the reduced impact on residents who live within the proximity of Junction 10, and featuring the highest Benefit Cost Ratio, and lowest total cost of all the options considered.
2. The scheme does not align with the proposed access to the outlined Elms Park development (16/02000/OUT). The introduction of new junctions for access to Elms Park will have a significant impact on the capacity of the A4019, and the journey time and reliability for traffic. We expect acknowledgment of this within the scheme, and appropriate demonstration of sufficient capacity at these junctions to mitigate the anticipated congestion.
3. The Parish Council believes that the scheme can be enhanced by connecting the proposed dual carriageway Cyber Park link road directly with Junction 10, rather than the proposed arrangement that introduces a new junction on the A4019. This would increase the capacity of the scheme, while only requiring minor alternations.
4. The Parish Council would like to understand the project team's rationale for utilizing a new corridor through the green belt land for the proposed Cyber Park link road as opposed the existing corridor following Withybridge Lane.
5. The Parish Council believes that there would be significant value in extending the dual carriageway west of Junction 10 to the junction with Stoke Road / Main Road (adjacent to the Gloucester Old Spot). This junction should include traffic light control at peak times, improved visibility, and relocation of the bus stop.
6. The Joint Core Strategy (JCS) Transport Strategy 2016, identified the upgrade of the Stoke Road / Main Road corridor as a requirement to provide relief to the existing M5 Junction 10 to Bishops Cleeve corridor via Swindon Parish. The current corridor, via Swindon Parish, experiences significant congestion during peak times due to several pinch points that include:
  - Swindon Lane (automatic railway level crossing of the Birmingham-Bristol railway line),
  - Swindon Road (a narrow bridge across the Birmingham-Bristol railway line),
  - Hyde Lane (height restricted bridge).With the increased level of traffic the new scheme would generate from Bishops Cleeve and Northern Cheltenham we would expect this existing corridor to become much busier and even more heavily congested. As such, we would expect a proposal to be brought forward for the upgrade of the M5 Junction 10 to Bishops Cleeve corridor via Swindon Parish via Stoke Road / Main Road as part of this proposal, or in parallel with it.
7. The proposed scheme would see the removal of the layby on the southern edge of the A4019 adjacent to the houses on east of Homecroft drive. This layby is used by residents, visitors and walkers for parking. The Parish Council believes that this layby should be retained and even enhanced, being segregated from the new dual carriageway (aligned with other local examples such as Escort Road in Gloucester).

## **SWINDON PARISH COUNCIL**

### **Scheme Substantiation**

8. The JCS outlines the required supply of housing until 2031. This includes land which has been safeguarded for future development parallel to the A4019 corridor. Additionally, we are likely to see significant development beyond 2031 to the west of Cheltenham. We would like confirmation from the project team that the modelling Scenario Q incorporates the future demand from these potential developments. This modelling should include sensitivity analysis in terms of future potential developments to assist with long term planning of future required improvements.
9. While we welcome the proposed scheme, we are concerned that the already busy existing residential roads and trunk Tewkesbury Road will not be able to support the increased traffic generated by the new junction. While the link road is expected to provide relief to Princess Elizabeth Way, we expect to see a significant shift in traffic patterns with residents living in the centre and east Cheltenham utilizing the new Junction 10 as opposed to Junction 11. We are also concerned that the new junction will attract significant amounts of traffic during major events (e.g. the Cheltenham Festival). We expect that the increased traffic will also have a detrimental effect on pedestrians and cyclist throughout the Parish and beyond. We urge that this impact is assessed, and appropriate mitigations are developed. The Parish Council would like to be involved in this process.

### **Sustainable Transport**

10. The Joint Core Strategy (JCS) Transport Strategy 2016<sup>i</sup>, and the Elms Park outline planning application (16/02000/OUT) clearly stated that a 600 space Park and Ride located adjacent to Junction 10, was required to minimise the traffic impacts of the Elms Park development on the local area by encouraging sustainable transport and modal shift, for journeys into / out of Cheltenham from Junction 10. We are concerned that the Park and Ride is not included in the proposed scheme. Without the Park and Ride, the proposed scheme will not be able to support the future growth of West and North Cheltenham. A Park and Ride must be included in the wider strategy for the area, and the proposed junction 10 scheme must factor its development into the proposal. The inclusion of a Park and Ride is ideally suited to help reduce traffic around and within the Cyber Park development area due to the large number of expected commuters.
11. The Parish Council supports the inclusion of an uninterrupted and segregated cycle and footpath running on the northern edge of the upgraded A4019. However, we believe that this on its own will lead to a disconnected network that will not properly serve the community of West Cheltenham. An integrated network is required to deliver a shift to true sustainable transport for all the proposed new developments in the area. We believe the scheme should also include:
  - A dedicated and segregated cycle path from the West Cheltenham Cyber Park, along the new link road, to the proposed cycle path north of the A4019, allowing pedestrian and cyclist direct access between these two major developments.
  - Continuation of the cycle path across Junction 10 to Coombe Hill (defined in the JCS as a service village) providing access to:
    - o Tewkesbury (via the A38),
    - o Stoke Orchard and Bishops Cleeve via Stoke Road,
    - o Twigworth & Naunton via the A38 (that include significant new housing developments).
  - Road improvements to enable a safe cycling route along Stoke Road to Bishops Cleeve.
12. The proposed scheme does not provide sufficient pedestrian access north / south across the new dual carriageway. The local area includes several footpaths that cross the A4019 at various locations. These are very well frequented by residents of West Cheltenham. The A4019 current incorporates

## **SWINDON PARISH COUNCIL**

several pedestrian islands to assist with crossing the busy road. Appropriate, safe crossing must be included in the proposed scheme. Ideally these should be grade separated.

### **Future Engagement**

13. The Parish Council requests that the project team engages with the Parish Council before the next statutory consultation with regards to air, noise, environmental, and flooding issues.
14. We are concerned that the project team has not engaged at all with the Parish Council, prior to the public consultation. The proposed scheme will have a significant impact upon the Parish, and we would very much encourage the project team to engage with us directly on a regular basis.
15. The Parish Council would like to encourage the project team to engage with us ahead of any future consultation, as we can assist in advertising the consultation to residents.

