

A358

**Taunton to Southfields  
Dualling Scheme**

Public consultation booklet  
12 October to 22 November 2021





## About this booklet

Thank you for taking an interest in this consultation on the A358 Taunton to Southfields Dualling Scheme. We're looking to improve this approximately 8.5 mile section of road to two lanes in each direction. This would make journeys safer, quicker and more reliable for the wide variety of people who use the road.

We need your help to shape our plans before we submit our planning application to build the new road. This booklet explains what we are proposing to build and where. It also explains how our plans would improve journeys, how the local environment may be affected and how we propose to lessen any impacts.


We'd like to hear what you think, so please share any ideas, local knowledge or concerns that you may have. This will help us work out what could change to make our plans better.


The consultation is taking place between **Tuesday 12 October and Monday 22 November 2021**. It's important that you respond by **23:59 on Monday 22 November 2021**. Responses received after this time may not be considered.


## Get involved


There are lots of ways you can tell us what you think.

You can:

 visit our website where you can find our virtual exhibition room, register to join a webinar, view all the consultation documents and provide feedback online at: [www.highwaysengland.co.uk/a358-taunton-to-southfields](http://www.highwaysengland.co.uk/a358-taunton-to-southfields)

 email us at: [A358TauntontoSouthfields@highwaysengland.co.uk](mailto:A358TauntontoSouthfields@highwaysengland.co.uk) to request hard copies of the consultation materials, book an appointment at one of our COVID-19 safe venues or to speak to a specialist, and to send us your feedback.

 phone us on 0300 123 5000 to request hard copies of the consultation documents or book an appointment to speak to a specialist.

 send us your feedback by post.

## National Highways - investing in your roads

National Highways (formerly Highways England) believe in a connected country and our network makes these connections happen. We strive to improve our major roads and motorways - engineering the future to keep people moving today and moving better tomorrow.

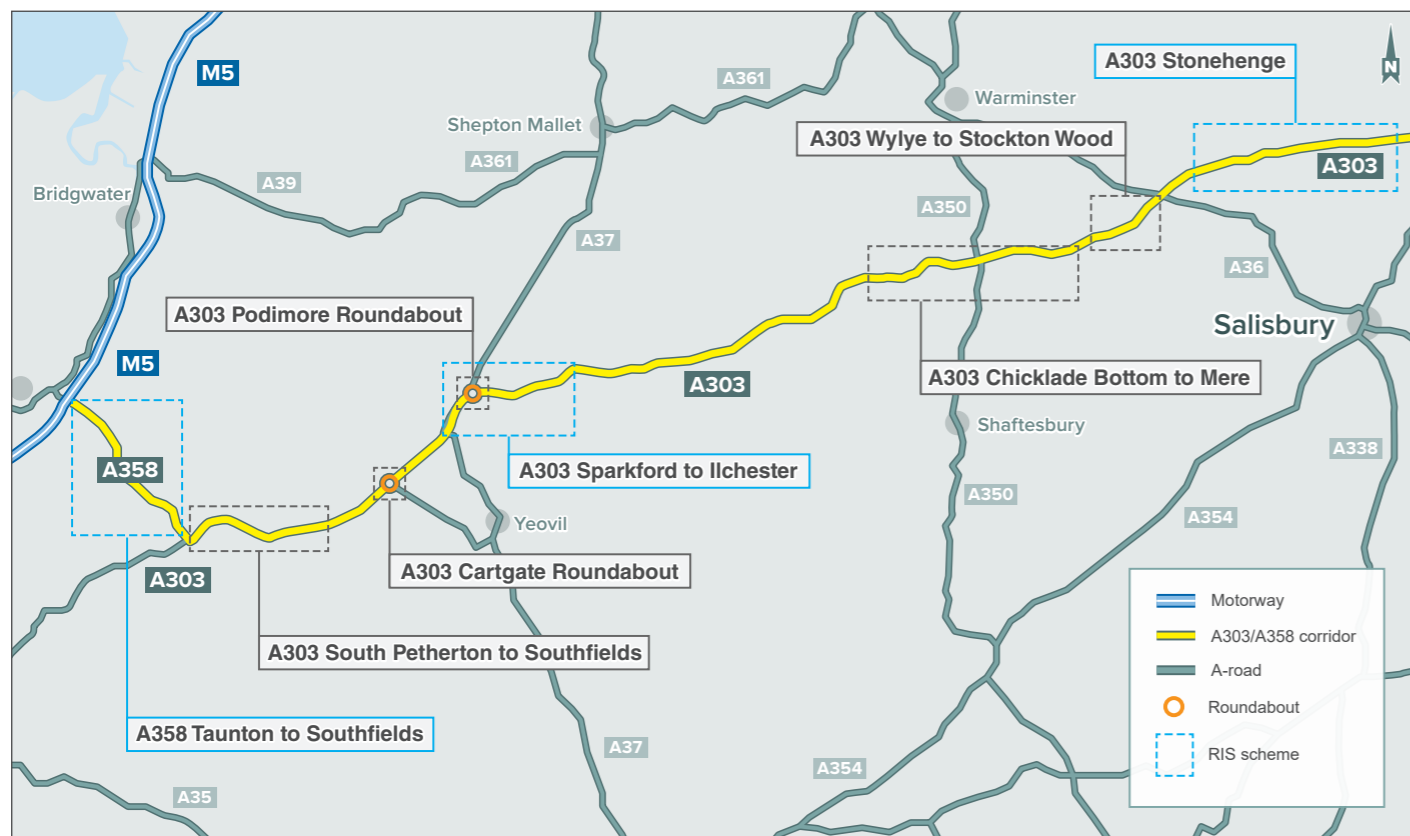
We want to make sure all our major roads are more dependable, durable and, most importantly, safe. That's why we're delivering £27.4 billion of government investment on our network – the largest investment in a generation.

The A358 Taunton to Southfields Dualling Scheme is a critical part of this investment. It is one of several improvements on the A303 and A358 designed to make it easier to travel across the south of England from the M3 to the M5 and beyond.

The South West's economy is under-performing compared to the rest of the UK. Local councils and business leaders agree that upgrading the rest of the A303/A358 corridor to dual carriageway would help connect the South West better to neighbouring regions, unlocking its potential for growth and supporting plans for more homes and jobs. The map below shows a programme of 8 improvement schemes that have been identified to make this vision a reality. We currently have funding to take forward the following schemes:

- A358 Taunton to Southfields
- A303 Sparkford to Ilchester
- A303 Stonehenge (Amesbury to Berwick Down)

Further details on the A303/A358 corridor can be found at: [www.highwaysengland.co.uk/our-work/a303-a358-a30-corridor-improvements/](http://www.highwaysengland.co.uk/our-work/a303-a358-a30-corridor-improvements/)



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In 2014, the government announced plans to start transforming the A303/A358 corridor into a continuous high-quality dual carriageway for the whole route to the South West. The aim is to create a road where 'mile-a-minute' travel is the norm.

## The project

### Improving safety, delivering reliable journeys and keeping communities connected.

The A358 road between Taunton and Southfields roundabout, near Ilminster, is essential for people who live and work in the area. Communities use the road to access services like schools, hospitals and shops. Farmers use it to access their land and businesses use it to get to their customers. It also connects people to local centres and towns such as Taunton, Ilminster and the wider region using the M5 north to Bristol and south to Devon, and the A303 east towards London and south-west towards Exeter. It therefore serves a double purpose – keeping communities connected and linking the South West region to the South East of England.

Despite the route being such an important connection, the existing A358 is predominantly single carriageway. At busy times like rush hour, weekends and bank holidays it carries many more vehicles than it was designed for.

This means drivers often experience traffic jams and long delays, which is frustrating for people travelling to school and work, and creates uncertainty for businesses who rely on the road for deliveries and getting around. This has the knock-on effect of rat running, which increases the level of traffic in surrounding villages.

The existing A358 also has many local roads and private accesses joining directly with it, which interrupt the flow of traffic and have the potential to create incidents, either by queueing traffic or turning movements, or by drivers trying to cross a junction to get to a village on the other side of the A358. By removing these the potential for incidents is reduced.

Recognising that the route has the potential to boost the South West's economy, the government has committed to improving the road.



The A358 is not currently part of the Strategic Road Network (SRN). Instead, it is owned and maintained by Somerset County Council and is part of the Major Road Network. If the upgrade goes ahead, this improved section would become part of the SRN and the responsibility of National Highways.

## What the project would deliver

By improving this route we would:

### create opportunities by:

- building a direct and convenient connection between local towns and the wider region, and areas of business such as Taunton and the new Nexus 25 employment site, paving the way for more job opportunities
- making faster connections with more reliable journey times, encouraging tourism and helping local businesses to operate more efficiently and with lower costs
- generating an estimated £37.7m per year for South Somerset and Somerset West and Taunton, as well as creating approximately 630 jobs

### keep people connected to places by:

- improving connectivity between towns whilst maintaining connectivity between villages
- reducing congestion during peak travel times, weekends and the summer
- allowing traffic to join or leave at new junctions on the A358 without queuing to access local roads from the main carriageway

### future-proof the route by:

- reducing congestion and journey times
- reducing traffic through local towns and villages quickly and effectively. In Henlade, for example, we hope to see average daily traffic levels reducing from 33,500 vehicles to 4,000 by 2038
- providing clear improvements to air quality in the area – we expect the project would enable the Air Quality Management Area in Henlade to be improved because fewer vehicles would travel through the village

### facilitate a growth in jobs, investment and housing by:

- providing a free-flowing and reliable connection between the area and other parts of the UK



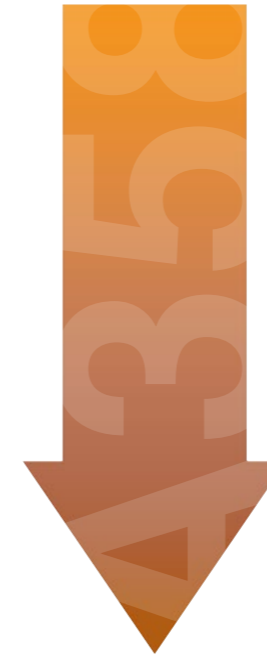
### Impacts of COVID-19

Whilst traffic levels dipped during the first lockdown in 2020, they have steadily increased, particularly due to demand for home delivery and online shopping. As of July 2021, traffic levels were back up to 97% of pre-COVID-19 levels (with goods vehicles at 107%). The long-term future impacts of COVID-19 on traffic levels are likely to be closer to, if not more than, pre-pandemic levels.

## The story so far

Since the project was first announced in December 2014, we've been developing plans that would have benefits to Taunton, Somerset and the wider region.

We have sought and used your feedback to help progress our design. The key milestones to date are shown below.



**December 2014** – Project announced

**2015 to 2017** – Options identified

**March – July 2017** – First options consultation

**January – February 2018** – Second options consultation

**June 2019** – Preferred route announced

**January 2021** – Started to design the preferred route for consultation

**October – November 2021** – Statutory consultation



For more information on our previous consultations and preferred route announcement visit our website at [www.highwaysengland.co.uk/a358-taunton-to-southfields](http://www.highwaysengland.co.uk/a358-taunton-to-southfields)

## Key features of the project

Approximately 8.5 miles (13.6 km) of new dual carriageway connecting junction 25 of the M5 at Taunton with the existing A303 at Southfields roundabout near Ilminster.

## What we're consulting on

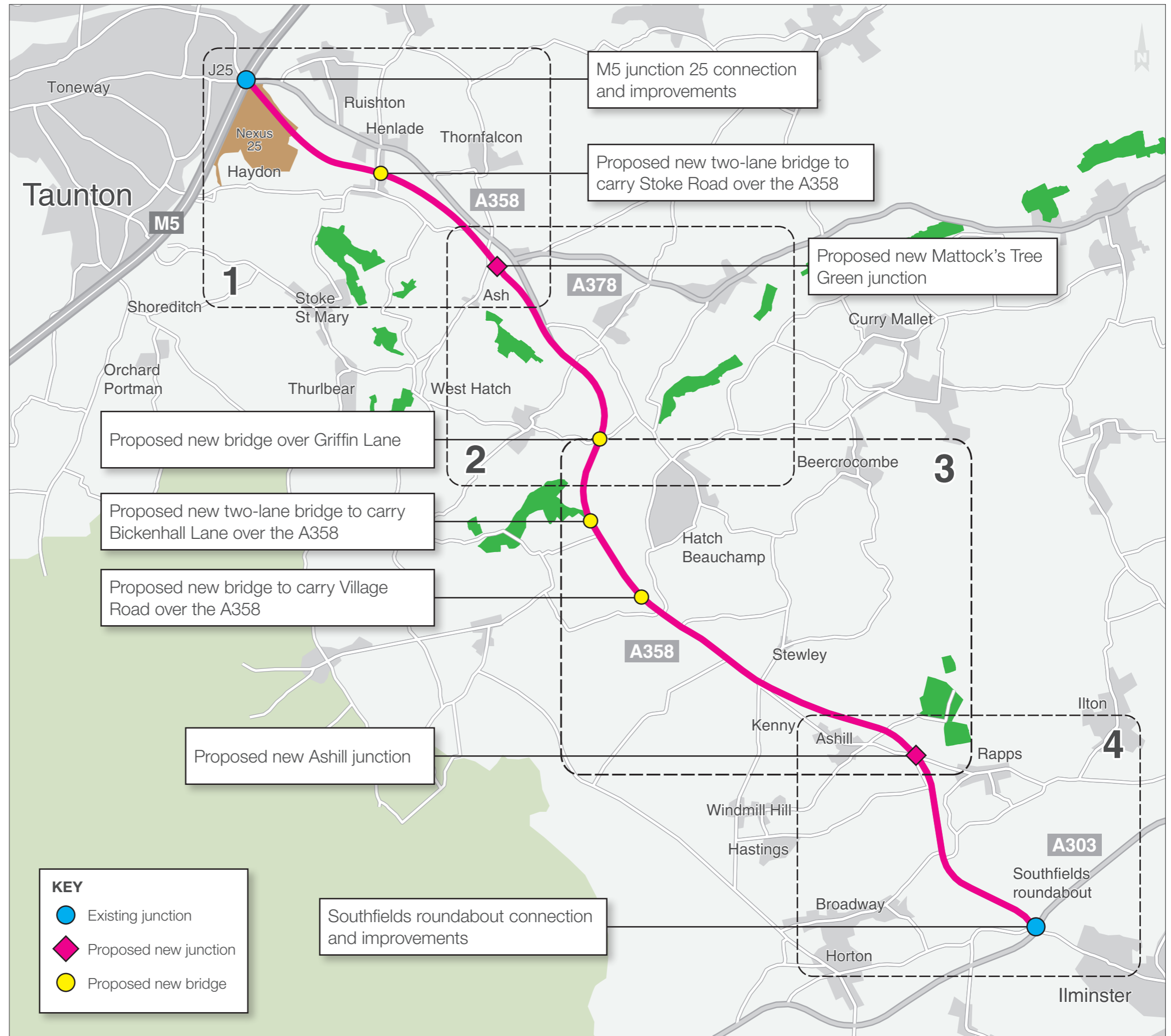
Since announcing our preferred route for the project in 2019 we have been working to refine the design for the new road.

We now want to know what you think about these more detailed proposals and we have divided the route into four sections:

- **Section 1:** M5 junction 25 to Mattock's Tree Green junction
- **Section 2:** Mattock's Tree Green junction to Griffin Lane
- **Section 3:** Griffin Lane to Ashill junction
- **Section 4:** Ashill junction to Southfields roundabout

We have designed the road to the latest standards for a high-quality dual carriageway. For more information on the road standards please visit: [www.standardsforhighways.co.uk/dmrb](http://www.standardsforhighways.co.uk/dmrb)

As part of the development of our design we considered a number of options to connect into the local road network at various points along the route. This included, for example, at Bickenhall Lane, Village Lane crossing and links into Ashill junction. You can find an assessment of the other options we considered in Chapter 3 of the Preliminary Environmental Information (PEI) Report, which can be accessed via [www.highwaysengland.co.uk/a358-taunton-to-southfields](http://www.highwaysengland.co.uk/a358-taunton-to-southfields)



## Section 1: M5 junction 25 to Mattock's Tree Green junction



### Legend

- 1** M5 junction 25 connection and improvements
- 2** Nexus 25 roundabout connection and improvements
- 3** The route moves south of the existing A358 and continues through to Stoke Road
- 4** The existing A358 road would be retained
- 5** A new two-lane bridge would carry Stoke Road over the A358
- 6** Traffic would be moved away from Henlade
- 7** The junction between Greenway Lane and the existing A358 would be closed
- Scheme boundary

## What we propose

**1** The route connects to junction 25 of the M5 motorway, a key link to the wider road network in the region. Improvements to the junction include a new left-turn lane from Toneway (which is the access road to Taunton) onto the northbound slip road of junction 25 and widening the southbound exit slip on the M5 road from three to four lanes on the approach to the roundabout. We also propose to upgrade signage and road markings.



**2** From here the route meets an existing roundabout junction that will connect to the future Nexus 25 employment site, located just south of the Taunton Gateway Park and Ride. We are not proposing any changes to the current access and exit from the Park and Ride. Improvements would include:

- increasing the size of the roundabout and four lanes on the northern part of the roundabout
- four lanes from the A358 (north-west) approach from the M5 junction 25
- new A358 (south-east) approach with three lanes
- two-lane exit to the Nexus 25 site
- segregated left-turn lane from Nexus 25 removed to accommodate three-lane exit to M5 junction 25

These improvements would make it easier to get on to the A358, from which mile-a-minute travel would become the norm, making journeys quicker and more reliable.

**3** The route moves away from the Nexus 25 roundabout to the south of the existing A358. We would build the road on a low embankment to make sure it is above the local flood levels until it crosses Broughton Brook. It then continues through to Stoke Road in a cutting to avoid impact on the landscape and minimise views from the Blackdown Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

**4** We would retain the existing A358 road in this section to maintain connections to local villages such as Henlade and Thornfalcon. It can be accessed by the Nexus 25 junction and from junction 25 of the M5. We would agree with Somerset County Council about how the existing A358 would be retained as a local road.



**5** We would provide a new two-lane bridge that would carry Stoke Road over the A358 so that this local road can remain open and retain connectivity across the new route between Henlade and Lower Henlade. The bridge would cross the new route but would not connect to it. The existing junction between Stoke Road and the existing A358 at Henlade would remain.

**6** We have designed the project to move traffic away from Henlade, with the average daily traffic reducing from 33,500 vehicles to 4,000 by 2038. This would significantly reduce vehicle emissions in the village and should improve the existing Henlade Air Quality Management Area.

**7** We would close the junction between Greenway Lane and the existing A358 at Henlade and there would be no direct access to the new route from Greenway Lane. Traffic travelling along an existing rat run between the A358 and Taunton via Greenway Lane would therefore be reduced.

**Cutting:** when a road is to go below the existing ground; the soil or rock is removed, either altogether or to form landscape embankments on each side.

### Feedback

We would like your feedback on our plans for the M5 junction 25 to Mattock's Tree Green junction section. Please see questions 1a to 1c in the feedback questionnaire.

To find out more on alternative traffic routes please see the A358 Technical Traffic Note on [www.highwaysengland.co.uk/a358-taunton-to-southfields](http://www.highwaysengland.co.uk/a358-taunton-to-southfields)

Visualisation of the proposed Stoke Road bridge looking south-east towards Lower Henlade



## Section 2: Mattock's Tree Green junction to Griffin Lane





## What we propose

**1** As the route moves east from Henlade it runs alongside the existing A358 before entering a cutting through Mattock's Tree Hill, which keeps the junction below ground level, minimising the impact on the landscape.

**2** At Mattock's Tree Hill we propose a new junction connecting the A358 to all local roads. The slip roads connect the route with:

- Ash Road that runs through Ash to Thurlbear and Slough Green
- the A378 leading to Wrantage and Langport
- the existing A358 leading to Henlade and to Hatch Beauchamp. We would remove the existing signal-controlled junction and replace it with a new priority junction to provide access to Hatch Beauchamp

**3** We propose a connection linking Mattock's Tree Green junction to provide access for the Somerset Progressive School, the Huish Woods Scout Campsite and local businesses at Nightingale Farm Units.

**4** We propose linking Village Road to the Mattock's Tree Green junction to provide access to Hatch Beauchamp for residents and local businesses. This uses a section of the existing A358 and forms a junction with the A378, which will be controlled by a give-way or stop sign. It means residents would avoid needing to use other narrower roads to access the new A358.

**5** The existing junction between Ash Road and the existing A358 would remain open for access to properties; however, Ash Road would be closed beyond the residential properties.

**6** After the new junction, the route continues back at ground level to West Hatch Lane. We would close the existing junction between West Hatch Lane and the existing A358 and there would be no direct access to the new route from West Hatch Lane.

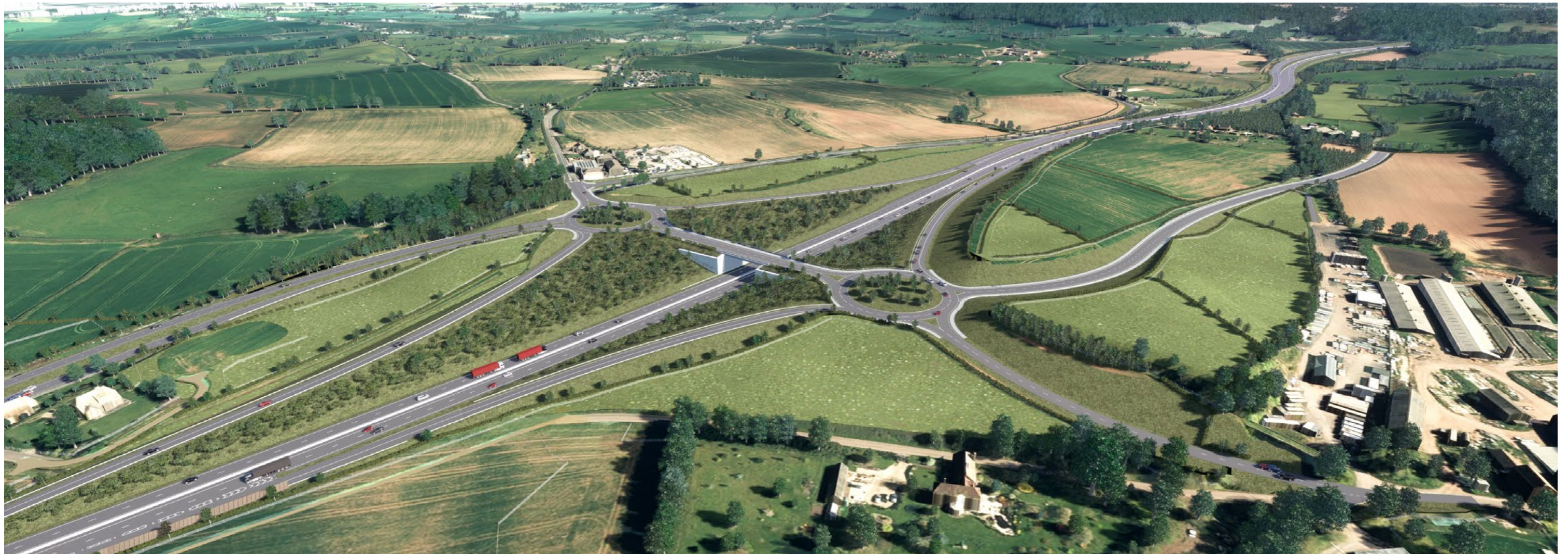
**7** Between West Hatch Lane and the existing bridge that goes over Griffin Lane, the route continues on the path of the existing A358 and would be widened on the eastern side of the existing A358.

**8** We would keep Griffin Lane bridge, which currently carries the A358 over the top of Griffin Lane, to carry the westbound carriageway of the new route. We would build another bridge alongside it for the eastbound carriageway. Griffin Lane would remain as a local road to provide access for nearby farms and as a walking, cycling and horse-riding route.

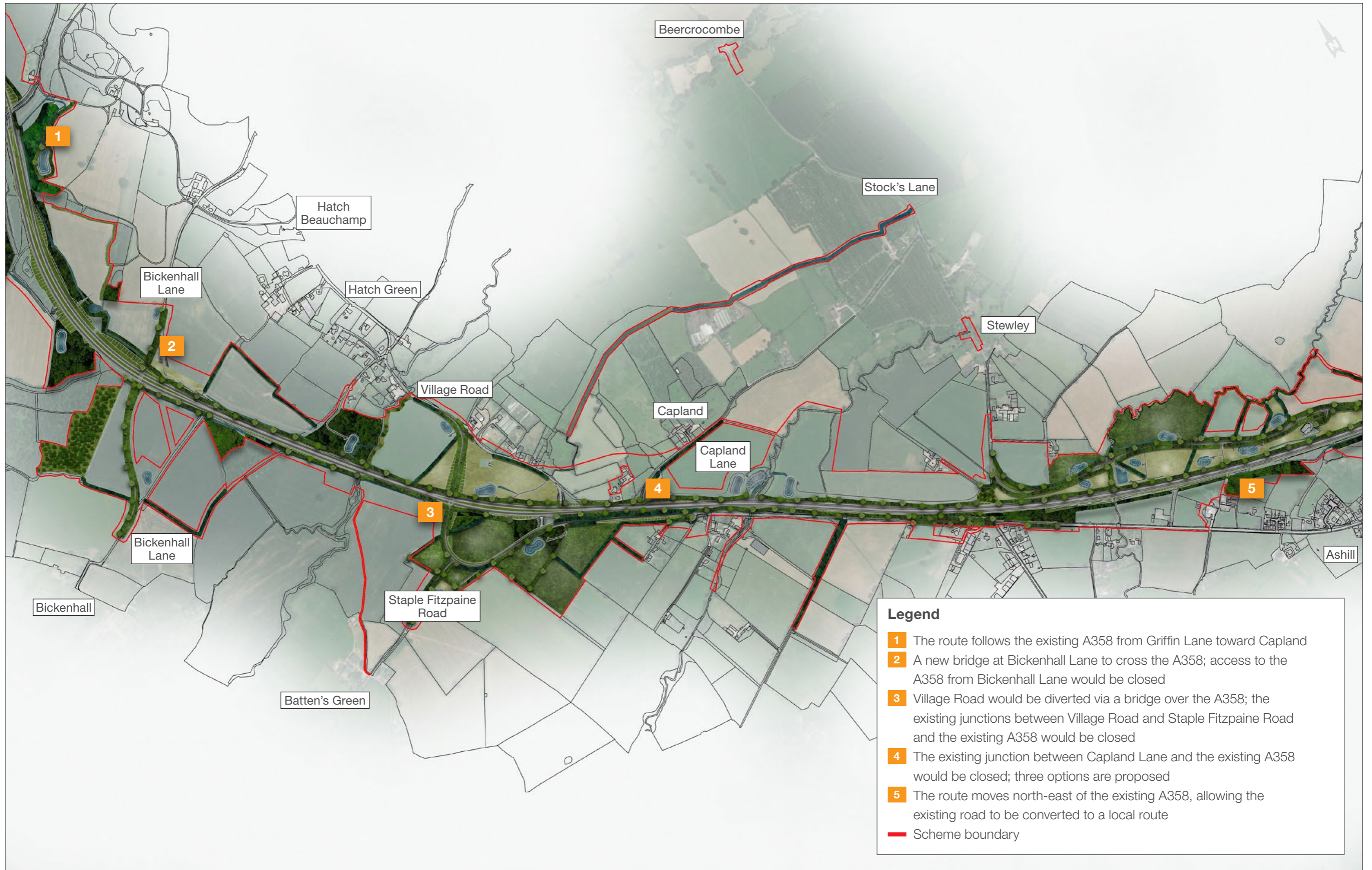
### Feedback

We would like your feedback on our plans for the Mattock's Tree Green junction to Griffin Lane section. Please see questions 2a to 2d in the feedback questionnaire.

Visualisation of the proposed Mattock's Tree Green junction looking east towards the A378 and Wrantage



## Section 3: Griffin Lane to Ashill junction



## What we propose

- 1** The route follows the existing A358 from Griffin Lane toward Capland.
- 2** At Bickenhall Lane we are proposing a new bridge to cross the A358, providing access for vehicles, walkers, cyclists and horse riders. This would maintain Bickenhall Lane as a local road but access to the A358 would be closed.
- 3** At the southern side of Hatch Beauchamp, Village Road would be diverted via a bridge over the A358 to provide connectivity with Staple Fitzpaine Road on the western side of the A358 and Ashill. The location for the bridge has been chosen to minimise its impact in the landscape and potential views from local properties. We would close the existing junctions between Village Road and Staple Fitzpaine Road and the existing A358 and there would be no direct access to the new route.

- 4** We would close the existing junction between Capland Lane and the existing A358 and there would be no direct access to the new route from this lane. We are proposing three options in this area, which we'd like your feedback on. These are outlined below.

### Option 1 - Provide a connecting link road between Capland Lane and Village Road

The link road would provide a more direct link from Hatch Beauchamp to Stewley. It would also provide access to local villages during incidences of flooding, which have temporarily closed Stock's Lane in two locations in the past. The link road would be seen from nearby properties and may affect access. It would also require additional land to be purchased and would divide farmland. Capland Lane and Stewley would be accessed from the A358 via Ashill Junction and Stewley Link; however, the link road would also enable access from the A358 via Mattock's Tree Green junction and Village Road.

### Option 2 - Retain the existing route via Stewley Lane and Stock's Lane and provide localised flood improvements

Localised flood improvements would seek to reduce flooding on these roads and would need to be agreed with the Lead Local Flood Authority. There would be less impact on nearby properties and farmland, but some journeys using these local lanes are longer than the current arrangement. Capland Lane and Stewley would be accessed from the A358 via Ashill Junction and Stewley Link. It would also be possible to access from the A358 via Mattock's Tree Green junction, Village Road and Station Road.

**Option 3 - Retain the existing route via Stewley Lane and Stock's Lane without providing localised flood improvements**  
Road users would have to use Stewley Lane and Stock's Lane as an alternative route, but no localised flood improvements would be made.

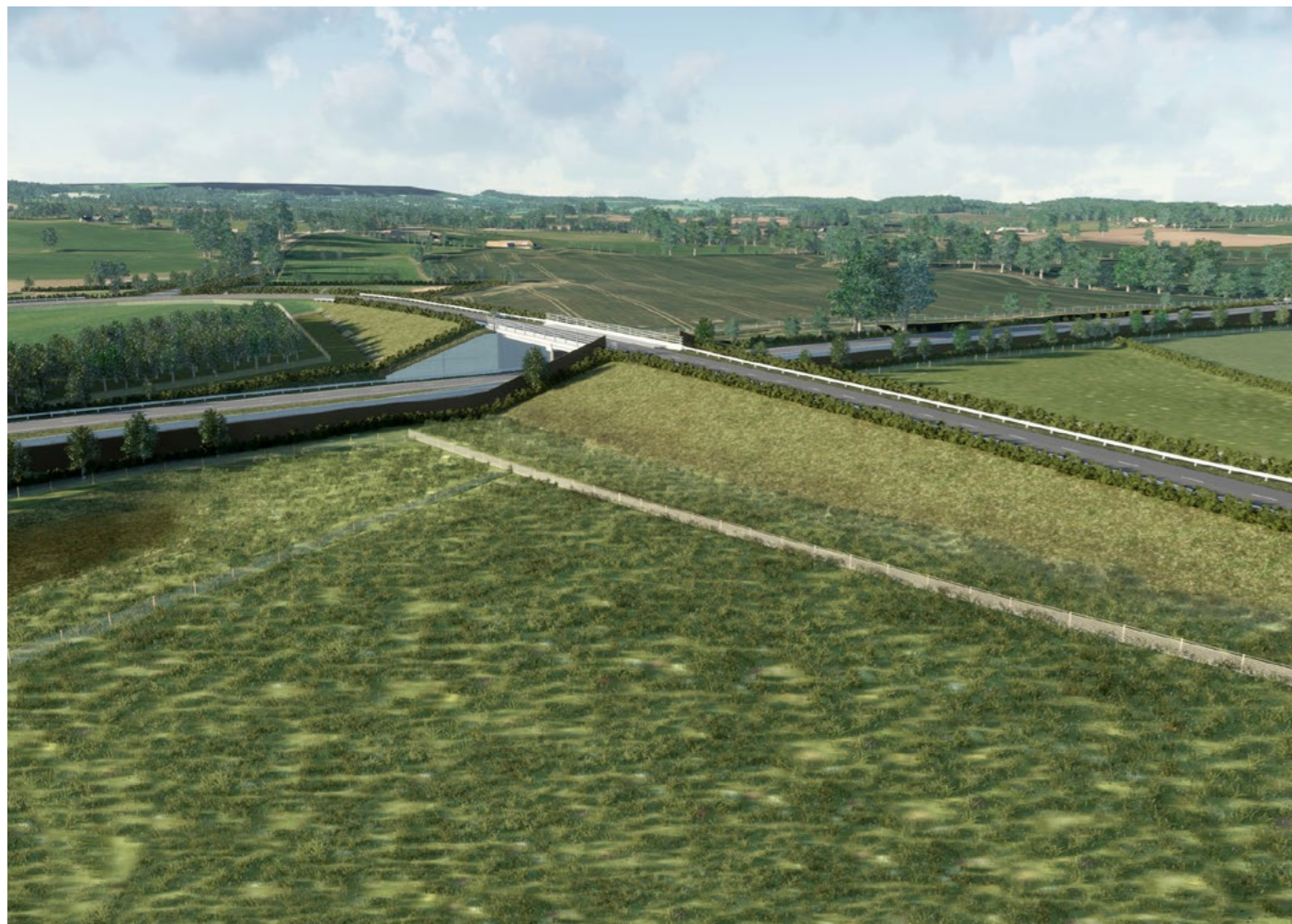
There would be less impact on nearby properties and farmland. Journeys using these local lanes would be longer than the current arrangement, and without the improvements outlined in Option 2 these roads are susceptible to flooding.

- 5** Between Capland and Stewley, the route moves north-east of the existing A358, this is to allow the existing road to be converted to a local route. This local route connects to the new Village Road bridge and provides connectivity between Ashill and Hatch Beauchamp and keeps access to properties along this route.

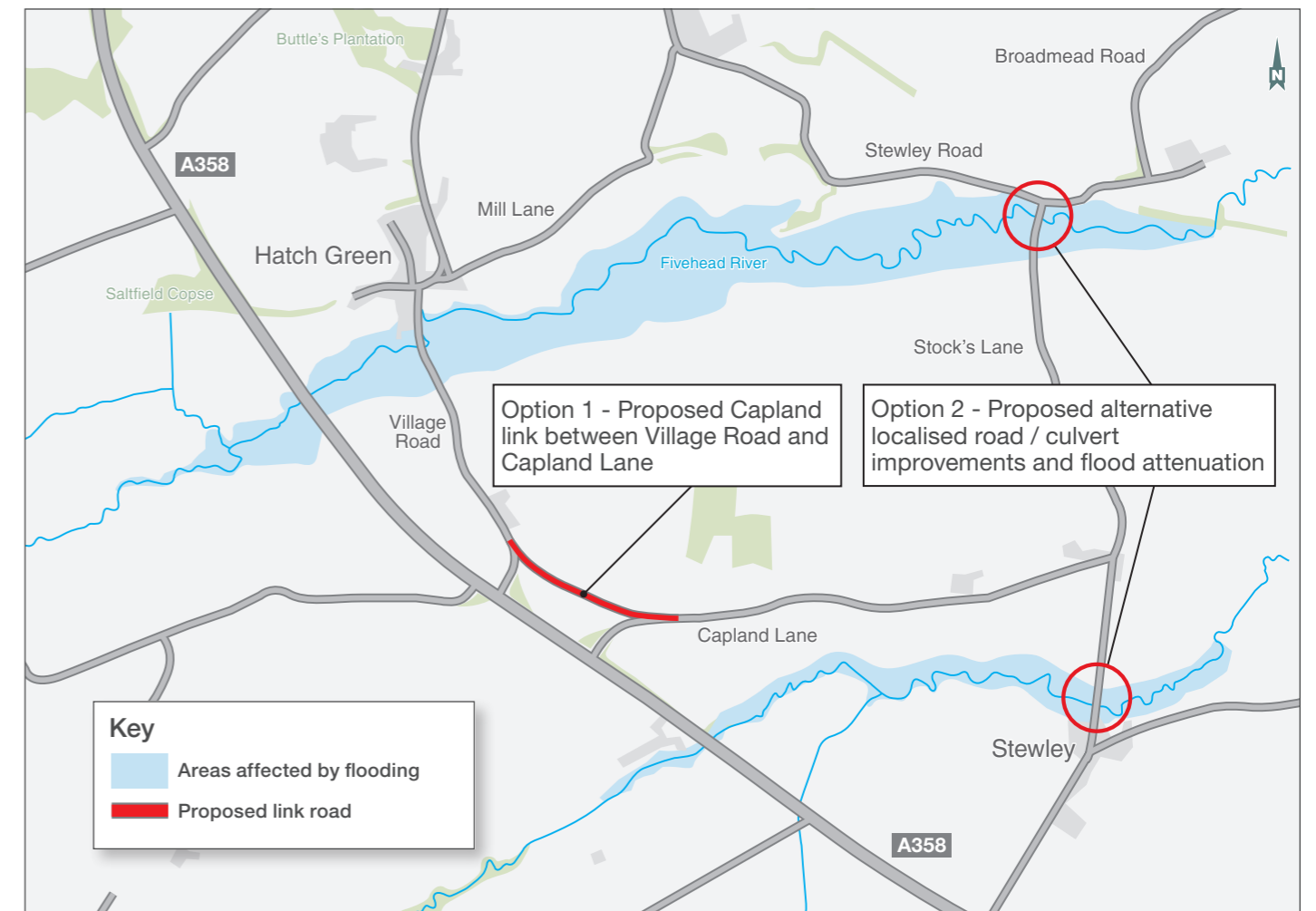
### Feedback

We would like your feedback on our plans for the Griffin Lane to Ashill junction section. Please see questions 3a to 3e in the feedback questionnaire.

Visualisation of the proposed Village Road bridge from the east

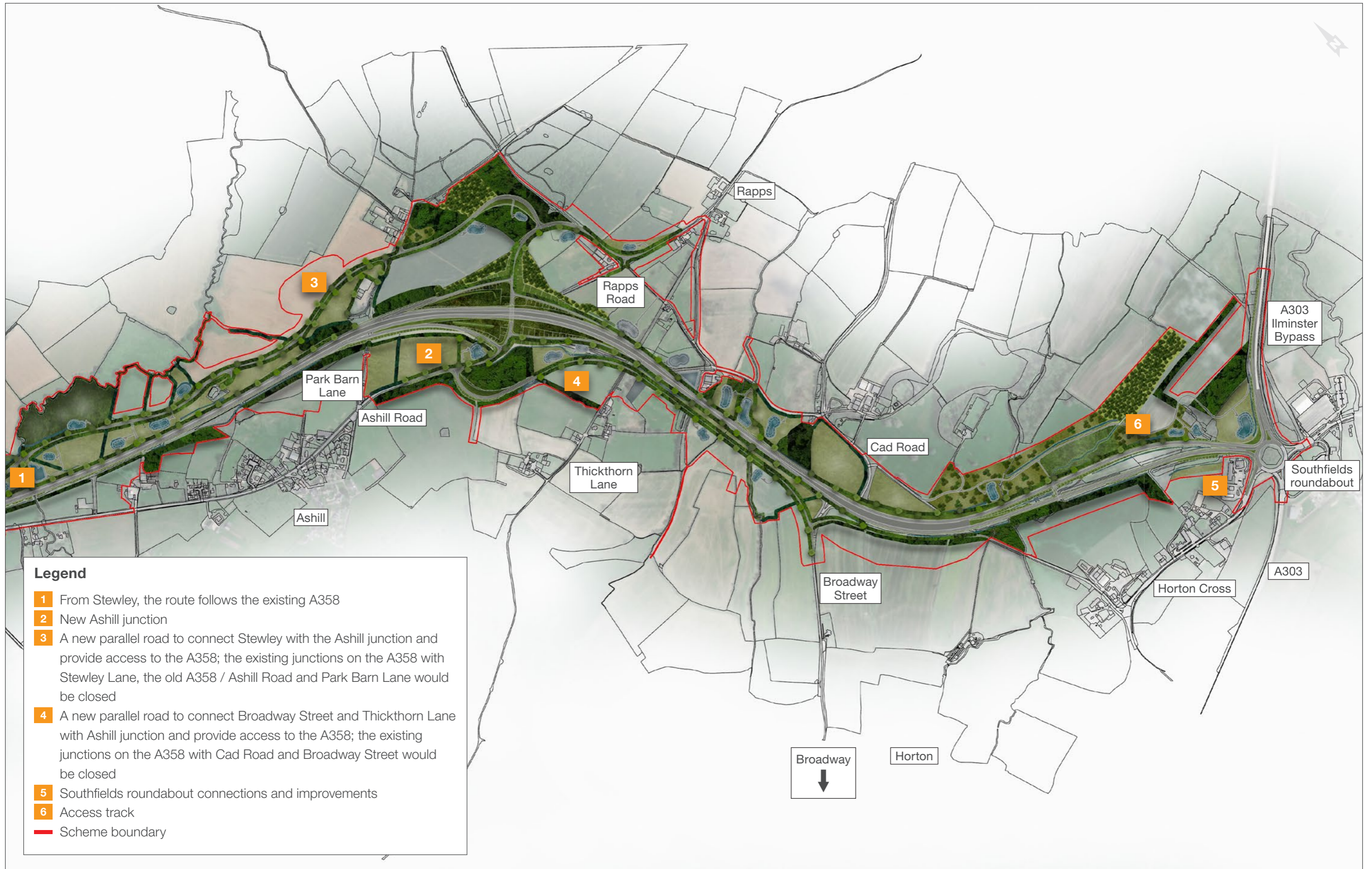


Plan showing options in the Capland area



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## Section 4: Ashill junction to Southfields roundabout



## What we propose

**1** From Stewley, the route follows the existing A358, through to Southfields roundabout.

**2** At Ashill, we would create a new junction between the proposed route and the local road network. The slip roads would connect the route with:

- the old A358, or Ashill Road, leading into Ashill and subsequently Hatch Beauchamp via the Village Road bridge
- Rapps Road, which leads to Ilton

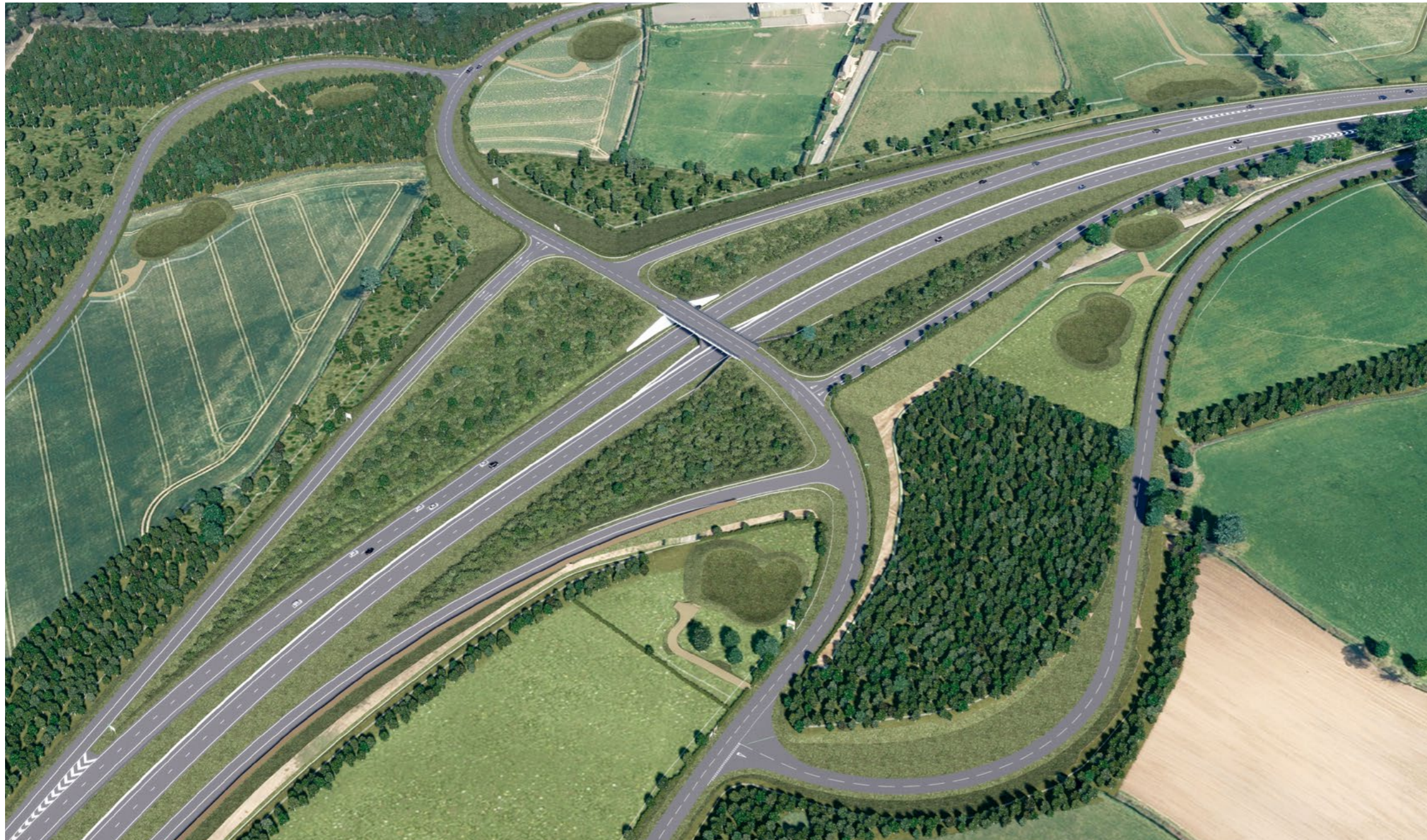
**3** We propose to build a new parallel road on the eastern side of the A358 to connect Stewley with the Ashill junction and provide access to the A358. We would close existing junctions on the A358 with Stewley Lane, the old A358 / Ashill Road and Park Barn Lane.

**4** We propose to build a new parallel road on the western side of the A358 to connect Broadway Street and Thickthorn Lane with Ashill junction and provide access to the A358. We would close existing junctions on the A358 with Cad Road and Broadway Street.

**5** The proposed route would then connect to the Southfields roundabout. We would make improvements to increase capacity and adapt to the new proposed route, making it easier and safer for road users. We propose a dedicated left turn lane between the A358 and the A303 eastbound, along with widening of the A303 eastbound exit onto the Ilminster Bypass. Further proposed improvements include widening the A303 westbound entry, widening the A358 entry from Horton Cross and improving the signage and road markings.

**6** An access track would be provided as a National Highways maintenance track and to enable local landholders to access their fields.

### Visualisation of the proposed Ashill junction looking east towards Ilton



Part of the A358 Taunton to Southfields Dualling Scheme includes upgrades to the Southfields roundabout so that we can safely adapt it to the new dual carriageway. Although a full upgrade of the roundabout is not included in these plans, this area of the route is due to be reviewed as part of the A303 Phase 2 upgrade, which is part of the government's Road Investment Strategy 3 pipeline. Further details on the A303 / A358 / A30 corridor improvements can be found here: [www.highwaysengland.co.uk/our-work/a303-a358-a30-corridor-improvements](http://www.highwaysengland.co.uk/our-work/a303-a358-a30-corridor-improvements)

### Feedback

We would like your feedback on our plans for the Ashill junction to Southfields roundabout section. Please see questions 4a to 4e in the feedback questionnaire.



## Improvements for walkers, cyclists and horse riders including disabled users

### Keeping the countryside open for all

We want to make sure that our planned improvements leave a positive legacy for people walking, wheeling, cycling or riding. We also want to ensure that disabled users can continue to get around the area easily and safely.

Existing footpaths, bridleways and cycle routes currently cross the busy A358. Problems crossing the road affect visitors' and locals' experience of the area. In designing our plans, we're:

- working closely with transport and rights of way officers from the local authorities to come up with the best solutions for impacted routes
- speaking to local walking, cycling and horse-riding groups to make sure that their views feed directly into our proposals

The needs of disabled users are integral to the scheme design and we aim for inclusivity as much as possible. At this stage we're looking to ensure routes are in the right places, and we will then progress the detailed design work if the project gains planning consent.

### Our plans

Where the proposed route cuts across a walking, cycling or horse-riding route, we will make sure that the majority will be kept in place by offering safe and well planned diversions. In total, there would be nine crossings of the new road, most of which would be solely for walkers, cyclists, horse riders and disabled users, or on lightly trafficked routes shared with access to farmland.

As part of our proposals, we plan to make use of the local road network and new off-road routes to create a cycle route that would run from Henlade to the Southfields roundabout. Alternative routes would be available in locations where the off-road routes would be too steep for wheelchair users.

Local walking, cycling and horse-riding groups have requested a cycle route to run parallel to the proposed A358 route. Whilst this could provide

good connectivity for cyclists between Taunton and Ilminster, connectivity to the national cycle network, local road network and nearby villages would be reduced, so this has not been included in our proposals.

For more information about the improvements we're proposing for walking, cycling, horse riding and disabled users, see Chapter 12 of our PEI Report and our Walking, Cycling and Horse-Riding Plans.

### Feedback

It is important for us to hear your views on our proposals for walkers, cyclists, horse riders and disabled users. Please see question 5 in the feedback questionnaire.



## Planning ahead to construction

During construction of the new route, we want to make sure that our impact on the local area and communities is kept to a minimum.

### The construction programme

Our plan is to start construction of the new road in 2024/25 and complete it in 2028. Construction would be separated into two main phases:

- **Phase 1** would be works next to the existing A358 between junction 25 of the M5 to the Southfields roundabout. During phase 1 we would maintain one lane open in each direction while we construct the new road alongside. To safely install the new bridges at Ashill, Village Road south and Bickenhall Lane overnight road closures would be required.
- **Phase 2** would be the upgrade and construction of the new carriageway that would be built over the existing A358 road.

### Planning for construction

Once we have finalised our proposals, we will prepare a Traffic Management Plan along with a Construction Phase Plan, which will explain exactly how we would seek to minimise disruptions during the construction period. We would seek to coordinate with other schemes in order to keep disruption to a minimum.

We would also keep the local community up to date on any construction works that affect them through road signs, webpage updates, newsletters and letters. As part of our application to build the improvements we will also be preparing an Environmental Management Plan. This will explain how we would manage the temporary impact of construction on local communities, the environment and the local landscape, as well as any ways we can lessen the impact of construction.

In the meantime, we have continued to look at how we would build the road, and to minimise disruption during construction we would:

- reuse excavated materials from the existing landscape wherever possible

- sequence the construction works to utilise the new road to transport materials to minimise traffic on the existing road
- carefully plan and manage our roadworks to ensure we maintain the safety of our workforce and drivers at all times
- reduce construction noise for nearby properties
- look at ways to reduce rat running during construction
- appoint a Public Liaison Officer to help address any concerns raised during construction

### Site compounds and the use of public roads

We would need to use areas close to the project as site compounds for the storage of equipment and materials. We carefully locate sites that have minimal impact on the local area and are placed close to major junctions along the proposed route. See Chapter 2 of the PEI Report for the location of the proposed site compounds. We would need to use public roads to gain access to construction areas. We would work closely with Somerset County Council to identify routes that are appropriate and any restrictions that may apply.

### Managing traffic on the existing route

It is a requirement for us to keep the existing A358 open in both directions for as much as possible during construction. There may be activities, such as the construction or removal of road bridges, where it would not be safe for traffic to use the road. Where this happens and temporary road closures are needed, we would ensure that these take place at times that would keep disruption to a minimum.

### Feedback

It is important for us to hear your views on our construction proposals. Please see question 6 in the feedback questionnaire.

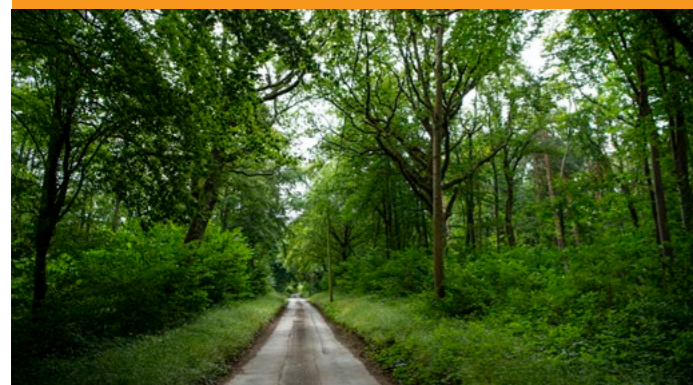
## The environment

We are continuing to gather environmental information that allows us to identify the potential impacts of the proposed project and develop measures to avoid or reduce them. This process is known as an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA). While this process is ongoing, we have prepared a PEI Report, which sets out:

- how each environmental topic area is being assessed
- our initial thoughts on the environmental effects of our proposals
- the measures we'll take to avoid or reduce any impact

The information contained within the PEI Report are our early findings, which will be developed further in the production of an Environmental Statement (ES). The ES will reflect the evolution of the design of the project, informed by the feedback from the consultation, results of surveys and the ongoing EIA process. The ES will be submitted as part of our Development Consent Order (DCO) application. The table on the next page illustrates the topic areas covered in our PEI Report. In addition to the PEI Report, we have produced a shortened Non-Technical Summary (NTS) of the PEI Report. Both the full PEI Report and the NTS are available via our website: [www.highwaysengland.co.uk/a358-taunton-to-southfields](http://www.highwaysengland.co.uk/a358-taunton-to-southfields). They are also available to view at the deposit locations until Monday 22 November 2021 and at our consultation events.

Please see our NTS of the PEI Report for more information on the environmental effects of our proposals and measures we'll take to avoid or reduce any impact



Topic area	What we are assessing
Air quality	<p>We are evaluating the potential effect of our proposals on local and regional air quality. This includes when we are building the road and once the road is in use.</p> <p>We have designed the project to reduce congestion. In some locations we would move traffic away from local sensitive areas, which would have a beneficial effect on air quality, in particular at the existing Henlade Air Quality Management Area.</p>
Climate change	<p>We are assessing the carbon footprint of the scheme. We are also assessing the impacts of potential climate-related changes that might affect the project to ensure that the design takes into consideration any climate-related risks projected to occur in the future.</p>
Cultural heritage	<p>We are considering the impacts of the proposed project on the diverse heritage of the area, including a scheduled monument, three conservation areas and over 140 listed buildings. We are also undertaking surveys to identify areas where undiscovered archaeological artefacts may exist.</p> <p>We have consulted with Historic England, South West Heritage Trust and advisors representing South Somerset and Somerset West and Taunton councils to inform the proposed project design.</p>
Landscape	<p>We are considering how the project fits within the landscape, which is close to the Blackdown Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, and we're assessing the potential effects on the area's special qualities and characteristics.</p> <p>In addition, we are considering the visual impacts on communities and walking, cycling and horse-riding routes next to the proposed project.</p>
Biodiversity	<p>As part of our assessments, we are considering the potential impact of the scheme on designated sites, and protected habitats and species.</p> <p>Working with Natural England and Somerset Wildlife Trust amongst others, we are considering the potential effects on Special Areas of Conservation and Sites of Special Scientific Interest.</p>
Geology and soils	<p>We are assessing the potential effects on geology and soils from the construction and operation of the proposed project.</p>
Materials and waste	<p>We are assessing the environmental effects from the use of materials and the generation, disposal and recovery of waste resulting from the proposed project.</p>
Noise and vibration	<p>We are assessing the potential noise and vibration effects of our proposals both during construction and once the road is operational.</p> <p>These assessments include exploring the potential impact on residential areas and other important areas close to the new road. These include local amenities, designated nature sites, footpaths and cultural heritage sites.</p>
Population and health	<p>We are assessing the potential effects of the project on all road users, communities, land and property, as well as on the overall health of the affected communities.</p>
Road drainage and water	<p>We are assessing the potential effects of the project on surface and groundwater quality and we have assessed the risk of flooding.</p>
Cumulative effects	<p>We are assessing the potential cumulative effects of our proposals on all of the topics outlined in the PEI Report. We are also undertaking an assessment of cumulative effects arising from our proposals with other developments in the local area.</p>

### Feedback

To provide feedback on our PEI Report, please see question 7 in the feedback questionnaire.

## Find out more

We are seeking your views on the proposed improvements to the A358 Taunton to Southfields Dualling Scheme. Your feedback will help us to shape our proposals before we submit our application for a Development Consent Order.

### Find out more

These are unprecedented times in terms of public health and COVID-19. In order to keep everyone as safe as possible, we are making the information about the project available in a number of ways:

### An online virtual exhibition

- You can view the proposals, and speak to the project team through live question and answer webinars and web chats. For more details visit our website at [www.highwaysengland.co.uk/taunton-to-southfields](http://www.highwaysengland.co.uk/taunton-to-southfields)

### Video call / telephone surgery

- You can book a call to speak to the project team (subject to availability), who will answer your questions on the project. You can book an appointment between **12 October and Monday 22 November 2021** by visiting our website, emailing [A358TauntontoSouthfields@highwaysengland.co.uk](mailto:A358TauntontoSouthfields@highwaysengland.co.uk) or calling **0300 123 5000** (lines are open 24 hours a day).

### Public consultation events

- We have planned the following carefully managed events in line with government guidance. We have tried to ensure that information is accessible to all, and that people can easily respond and give feedback. As government guidance may change, please check our website or call **0300 123 5000** for the latest event information.

Location	Date	Time
Taunton Racecourse, Orchard Portman, Taunton TA3 7BL	Tuesday 19 October 2021	2pm – 8pm
Monks Yard (Conference Room), Horton Cross Farm, Horton Cross, Ilminster, Somerset TA19 9PT	Saturday 23 October 2021	11am – 6pm
Holiday Inn Taunton, Deane Gate Avenue, Taunton, Somerset TA1 2UA	Wednesday 3 November 2021	11am – 6pm

### Deposit locations and public information points

- Details of where copies of all of the consultation documents are available can be found on our website or by calling **0300 123 5000**; these are subject to COVID-19 restrictions at the time.

### Consultation documents

- All the consultation documents are available on our consultation website, which can be accessed via [www.highwaysengland.co.uk/a358-taunton-to-southfields](http://www.highwaysengland.co.uk/a358-taunton-to-southfields), including:
  - this consultation booklet
  - feedback questionnaire
  - PEI Report, with an accompanying Non-Technical Summary

## Giving us your feedback

You can either complete a feedback questionnaire online, or download, print and return it to: **FREEPOST A358 TAUNTON TO SOUTHFIELDS**  
Note: the address must be written in capital letters and you do not need a stamp.

You can also pick up a feedback questionnaire from a public consultation event, deposit location or at an information point, the details of which are available on our webpage at: [www.highwaysengland.co.uk/a358-taunton-to-southfields](http://www.highwaysengland.co.uk/a358-taunton-to-southfields)

You can also request a hard copy of the feedback questionnaire via the phone number or email address below.

Please send all feedback to us by **23:59 on Monday 22 November 2021**. Responses received after this time may not be considered.

If you have any further questions or would like to find out more, please contact us by:

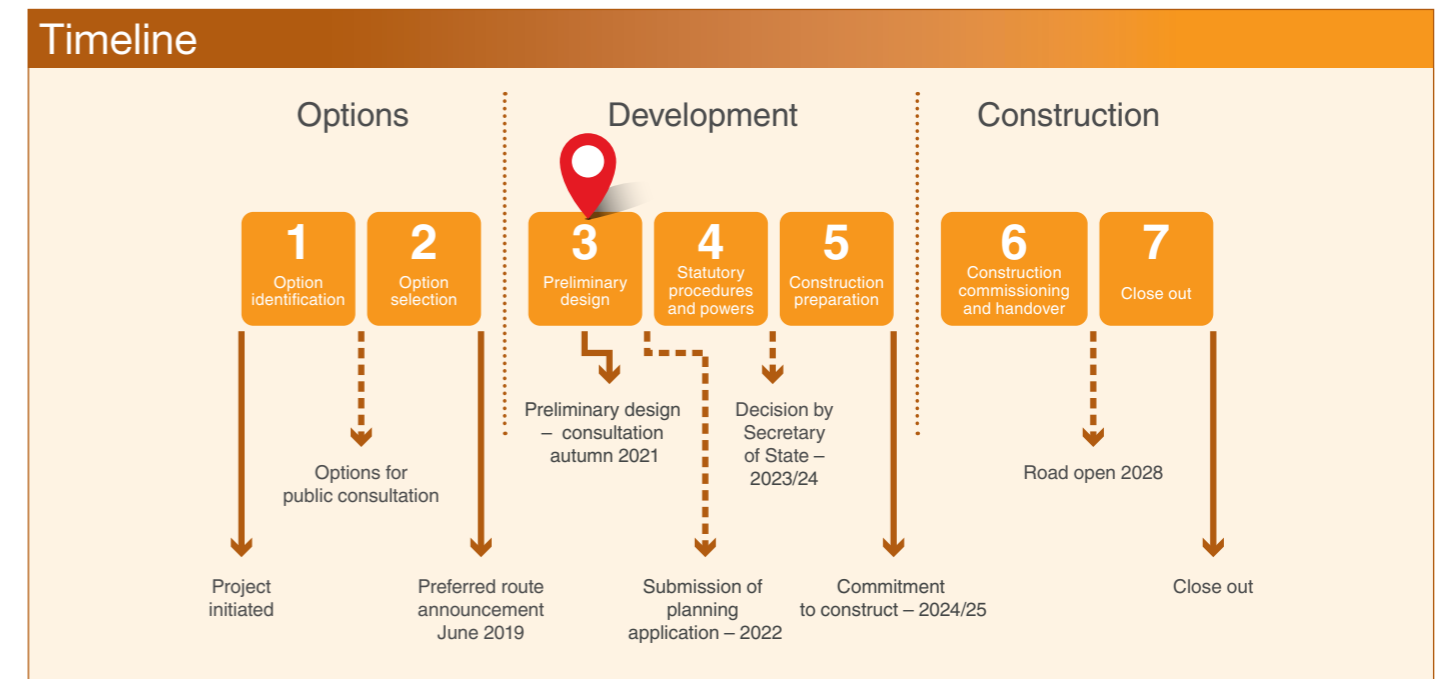
- Telephone: **0300 123 5000**
- Email: [A358TauntontoSouthfields@highwaysengland.co.uk](mailto:A358TauntontoSouthfields@highwaysengland.co.uk)

## Next steps

Once the consultation has closed at **23:59 on Monday 22 November 2021**, we will review all comments and suggestions that have been received during the consultation period.

We will take time to consider your feedback when making further refinements to our proposed design and developing our planned mitigation measures. We will set out a summary of the responses that you have given us in a consultation report, with details on how your feedback has shaped and influenced the proposals. This report will form part of our Development Consent Order (DCO) application and will be published following submission of our application. We expect to submit our DCO application in 2022 and, if it is granted, start work on the A358 improvements in 2024/25.

Once our application has been accepted, the Planning Inspectorate (acting on behalf of the Secretary of State) may examine the application through written representations and public hearings. They will then make a recommendation to the Secretary of State for Transport, who will decide on whether or not the project will go ahead. This process is explained in the table below. More information about the DCO process can be found on the Planning Inspectorate's website: <https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk>





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For an accessible version of this publication please call **0300 123 5000** and we will help you.

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National Highways creative job number BRS21\_0051

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Registered office Bridge House, 1 Walnut Tree Close, Guildford GU1 4LZ

National Highways Company Limited registered in England and Wales number 09346363