

M3 Junction 9 Improvements Public Consultation Summary Report



Introduction

M3 junction 9 is a key transport interchange. It facilitates an intensive freight generating industry and connects south Hampshire and the wider sub-region, with London via the M3 and the Midlands and the north via the A34.

A significant volume of traffic currently uses the grade separated, partially signalised gyratory - approximately 6,000 vehicles per hour during the peak periods. This acts as a bottleneck on the local highway network and causes significant delays for road users throughout the day. Northbound and southbound movements between the M3 and the A34 are particularly intensive, with downstream queues on the northbound off-slip of the M3 often resulting in safety concerns during peak periods.

Proposed improvements were presented at public consultation in July and August 2019. These improvements included free-flowing road links between the M3 and the A34 both northbound and southbound, with no need to enter the junction 9 roundabout to travel between the A34 and M3. The A34 southbound link will pass under the M3 with a 50mph speed limit.

The proposed changes were designed to reduce congestion on a newly designed dumbbell road layout and make journey times more reliable, improve road safety and reduce air pollution. The scheme also proposed a continuous, segregated route for pedestrians and cyclists crossing the junction.

Our Statutory Consultation

We held our statutory consultation on the proposed improvements to junction 9 over a period of eight weeks, from 2 July to 27 August 2019.

During the consultation period we held six public exhibitions in venues across Winchester, Winnall and Kings Worthy.

Saturday 06 July 2019	10.30am to 8pm	Winchester Guildhall
Wednesday 10 July 2019	10.30am to 8pm	
Friday 12 July 2019	2pm to 8pm	Kings Worthy Community Centre
Saturday 13 July 2019	10.30am to 4.30pm	
Saturday 20 July 2019	10.30am to 4.30pm	Tesco Extra Easton Lane
Saturday 03 August 2019	10.30am to 4.30pm	

The local community and other stakeholders were informed of the consultation by letter and local press. Consultation materials were available online and paper copies could be collected from eight local deposit points.

As the M3 Junction 9 Improvements Scheme is a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP) as defined under the Planning Act 2008 (as amended), the consultation was carried out in line with the requirements of the Act and publicised as a Statutory Consultation.

The Statement of Community Consultation (SoCC) also sets out the approach to consultation and engagement on the scheme. All consultation materials, including the SoCC and the consultation brochure, are available from the statutory consultation website at: www.highwaysengland.citizenspace.com/he/m3-junction-9-improvements-statutory-consultation/

Responses / feedback

We received a total of 526 responses to our statutory consultation.

As with our previous options consultation, the overwhelming majority of respondents who completed the questionnaire (392 in total) agreed with the case for making improvements to the M3 junction 9.

Most agreed the scheme addressed the issues they currently experienced. In particular, 309 respondents agreed the scheme would help to address frequent delays, and 301 respondents agreed it would address unpredictable journey times.

350 respondents believed the changes will improve congestion and over 200 respondents felt that air quality would be improved. Close to 250 agreed the proposed changes will also improve road safety.

Respondents raised a number of issues and concerns in response to the open text questions on the consultation questionnaire, as well as in submissions that did not follow the questionnaire structure (letters and emails).

The key issues raised in feedback included:

- Disruption during the construction period and how this will be managed:
 - Respondents expressed concerns about the length of the construction period and the potential disruption to the local community, public rights of way and increased journey times while the scheme is being built.
 - Some also requested further information on the potential impacts and mitigation proposed during the construction period – for example working times, construction depots, and the potential for noise, light and dust pollution.
 - Some respondents also expressed concern about diverted traffic creating congestion and safety issues on local roads while the scheme is being built.
- The design (alignment) of the scheme
 - While there was strong support for the free-flowing links between the M3 and A34, respondents also expressed concern about the safety of the proposed alignment in terms of the merging of the A34 and A33.
 - Some also had concerns about the speed of traffic at

and through the junction, suggesting measures such as speed limits and enforcement measures, as well as temporary traffic lights on the dumbbell roundabout.

- The potential environmental impact of the scheme
 - Some respondents are supportive of the scheme on the grounds that improvements to the junction will reduce congestion, thereby helping to address existing environmental issues at the junction, especially air pollution, noise and carbon emissions. Others express concern that increasing the capacity of the junction and the M3 will increase the speed and volume of traffic through the junction, which will worsen these impacts.
 - In relation to these and other potential impacts, some felt that insufficient information had been presented on the environmental impacts of the scheme, as well as mitigation measures proposed.
 - Other areas of concern included the potential impact of the scheme on biodiversity, cultural heritage and the visual character of the surrounding landscape.
- Walking, cycling and horse riding facilities

- We received supportive comments on all of the WCH routes proposed in the scheme.
- Some respondents felt the shared cycle and footpath crossing the junction should be widened to allow for future demand. They also called for clearer separation of this path and the carriageway with a safety barrier.
- A range of other suggestions were made relating to WCH facilities, including signage and other safety measures where these routes interface with the road network.

A more detailed explanation and analysis of the issues raised in responses to the consultation will be presented in the full Consultation Report which will form part of our application for development consent.

Conclusions and next steps

We are currently considering a number of alternative design solutions for the M3 Junction 9 Improvements Scheme before progressing an application for development consent. Feedback from the public consultation is being considered as part of the appraisal of these solutions.

If we judge the changes to the scheme to be significant, or if we identify new stakeholders that may be affected, we will consult on the scheme again to ensure that all stakeholders are given the opportunity to comment.

The updated design solution adopted for the scheme will be taken forward in our application for development consent.

You can sign up for updates on the scheme on the project web page at: <https://highwaysengland.co.uk/projects/m3-junction-9-improvements/>

Website:

<https://highwaysengland.co.uk/projects/m3-junction-9-improvements/>

Keep in touch

If you want further information on this scheme please contact a member of the Highways England Project Team using any of the following methods:

In writing: M3 Junction 9 Improvements Project Team, Highways England, Bridge House, 1 Walnut Tree Close, Guildford GU1 4LZ

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