

# M54 to M6

Link road scheme

Statutory consultation brochure

From 24 May to 5 July 2019





# Investing in your roads

At Highways England we 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 £15 billion of investment on our network – the largest investment in a generation. The M54 to M6 link road is a critical part of this investment and will improve local and long-distance journeys between the M54 and the north (via the M6), which is great news for the local and regional economy.

This scheme is categorised as a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP) under the Planning Act 2008. As such, we're required to make an application for a Development Consent Order (DCO) to obtain consent to construct the scheme. For more information on this process, please visit the Planning Inspectorate website:  
<https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/>

In this brochure, we explain our proposals for the scheme and also give details of how you can give us your feedback during our statutory public consultation - **your feedback is important and will help us shape the scheme before we submit our application.**

A separate statutory consultation response form is available for providing us with your feedback.



## How to respond

We're now holding a statutory consultation on our proposals. We'd like to hear what you think, so please share any concerns, ideas or local knowledge that you may have. **The consultation will run for 6 weeks, from 24 May 2019 to 5 July 2019** and there's lots of ways you can tell us what you think. Why not come along to one of our public consultation events? Alternatively, you can view all the consultation materials on our webpage [www.highwaysengland.co.uk/M54-M6linkroad](http://www.highwaysengland.co.uk/M54-M6linkroad). Please remember to submit the response form accompanying this brochure using the instructions provided or complete the form online.

**Please respond by 23:59 on 5 July 2019 using one of the following methods:**

- complete the response form online at [www.highwaysengland.co.uk/M54-M6linkroad](http://www.highwaysengland.co.uk/M54-M6linkroad)
- complete the consultation response form accompanying this brochure and return it to **Freepost M54 to M6 link road**
- put a completed copy of the form into a response box at one of our consultation events

## Public consultation events

One of the best ways to find out more about our proposals and have your say is to come to one of our public consultation events. Here you'll be able to find out more about the scheme and speak to members of the project team who will be happy to answer any questions you may have.



Date	Time	Location
Friday 31 May	1pm to 8pm	Featherstone and Hilton Community Centre, Baneberry Drive, WV10 7TR
Saturday 1 June	11am to 6pm	Featherstone and Hilton Community Centre, Baneberry Drive, WV10 7TR
Wednesday 5 June	1pm to 8pm	Shareshill Village Hall, 1 Elms Lane, WV10 7JS
Saturday 8 June	11am to 6pm	Shareshill Village Hall, 1 Elms Lane, WV10 7JS
Tuesday 11 June	3pm to 8pm	Wedges Mills Village Hall, Wolverhampton Road, WS11 1ST
Thursday 13 June	3pm to 8pm	Cheslyn Hay Village Hall, Pinfold Lane, WS6 7HP
Saturday 15 June	1pm to 8pm	Essington Community Centre, Hobnock Road, WV11 2RF



# Where to get consultation documents

Paper copies of the statutory consultation brochure, response form, preliminary environmental information report (PEIR) and non-technical summary of the PEIR will also be available at the following locations from 24 May 2019 during normal opening times:

- South Staffordshire District Council Offices - Wolverhampton Road, WZ8 1PX
- Staffordshire County Council - No.1 Staffordshire Place, Tipping Street, ST16 2LP
- Codsall Library - Wolverhampton Road, WV8 1PX
- Cannock Library - Manor Avenue, WS11 1AA
- Bilbrook Parish Council - Joeys Lane, WV8 1JL
- Collingwood Library - Northwood Park Road, WV10 8EA
- Brewood and Coven Parish Council - 35 Stafford Street, T19 9DX
- Cheslyn Hay Library and Village Hall - Pinfold Lane, WS6 7HP
- Pendeford Library - Whitburn Close, WV9 5NJ
- Sainsburys - Cannock Orbital Retail Centre, Voyager Drive, WS11 8XP
- Featherstone and Hilton Community Centre - Baneberry Drive, WV10 7TR
- Essington Community Centre - Hobnock Road, WV11 2RF



# Why is the scheme needed?

This scheme will provide an improved link between the M54 and the M6.

Currently, there's no direct motorway link from the M54 to the M6 north. Road users wanting to access the M6 north or M6 Toll must use local roads such as the A460, A449 and A5. This means high volumes of both long-distance and local traffic use the local roads to travel this route.

A large volume of local and long-distance traffic uses the A460, which passes through the villages of Featherstone, Hilton and Shareshill.

The A460 has just one lane in each direction with numerous junctions and stretches of road with a 30mph speed limit. It was not designed for the amount and type of traffic currently using it. This results in delays, congestion and high accident rates. There are also air quality issues in the villages along the A460 due to the high volume of traffic.

## The objectives of the scheme include:

**Connectivity** – An enhanced connection between the M54 and M6 would significantly improve customer journeys from east to west and north to south. This will support local growth for Telford, Shrewsbury, Wolverhampton, Cannock and Tamworth.

**Environmental** – We're designing the scheme to limit impacts on the natural environment and landscape wherever possible.

**Capacity** – The A460 currently carries about 26,500 vehicles each day with heavy goods vehicles making up about 10% of this figure. When the proposed link road is open, it could reduce traffic on the A460 to around 4,000 vehicles each day. This will create a safer and less congested environment for local road users, including pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders.

**Reliability** – Journey times will be more reliable as the scheme will increase capacity and provide a higher quality connection between the M54 and M6.

**Safety** – The scheme will improve safety by keeping the right traffic on the right roads, separating local traffic from long-distance and commuter traffic. This should reduce the number of accidents along the route due to fewer vehicles using the A460.



# The scheme

During the 2017 consultation, we presented three modified options for the scheme, Option B West, Option C West and Option C East. We've selected Option B West, which bypasses the A460 to the east, as the preferred route for the scheme. We selected this option as it:

- provides the highest economic benefits
- will provide the greatest journey time savings
- has the least impact on ancient woodland
- provides the best value for money to taxpayers
- is preferred by most of the respondents to the options consultation

## Evolution of the scheme





# Rejected options

## Option C West

Our assessment showed that this option provided lower value for money than Option B West due to longer journey times and not removing as much traffic from the A460, A449 and A5. It was supported by 16% of respondents to options consultation compared to 71% for Option B West. It had a negative impact on local business and social amenities. Option C West had a slightly lower impact on the environment compared to Option B West.

## Option C East

This option provided fewer benefits than Option B West in terms of journey times, safety and congestion. It was the least preferred option in the consultation and it had significant impact on the environment, directly impacting on scheduled ancient woodland. Option C East offered the lowest value for money.

For more information on the previous consultation results and the preferred route announcement, please visit our webpage: [www.highwaysengland.co.uk/M54-M6linkroad](http://www.highwaysengland.co.uk/M54-M6linkroad)

## Our proposed design

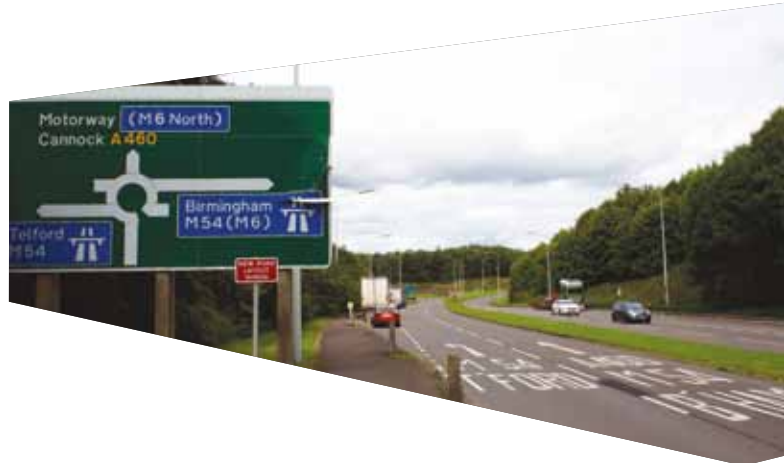
Since we chose the preferred route, we've worked to design the scheme further and address concerns raised about the alignment and environmental impact.

This includes holding meetings with the local parish councils and local authorities to provide further information on route selection and to allow stakeholders to input to the design. We have also been carrying out environmental

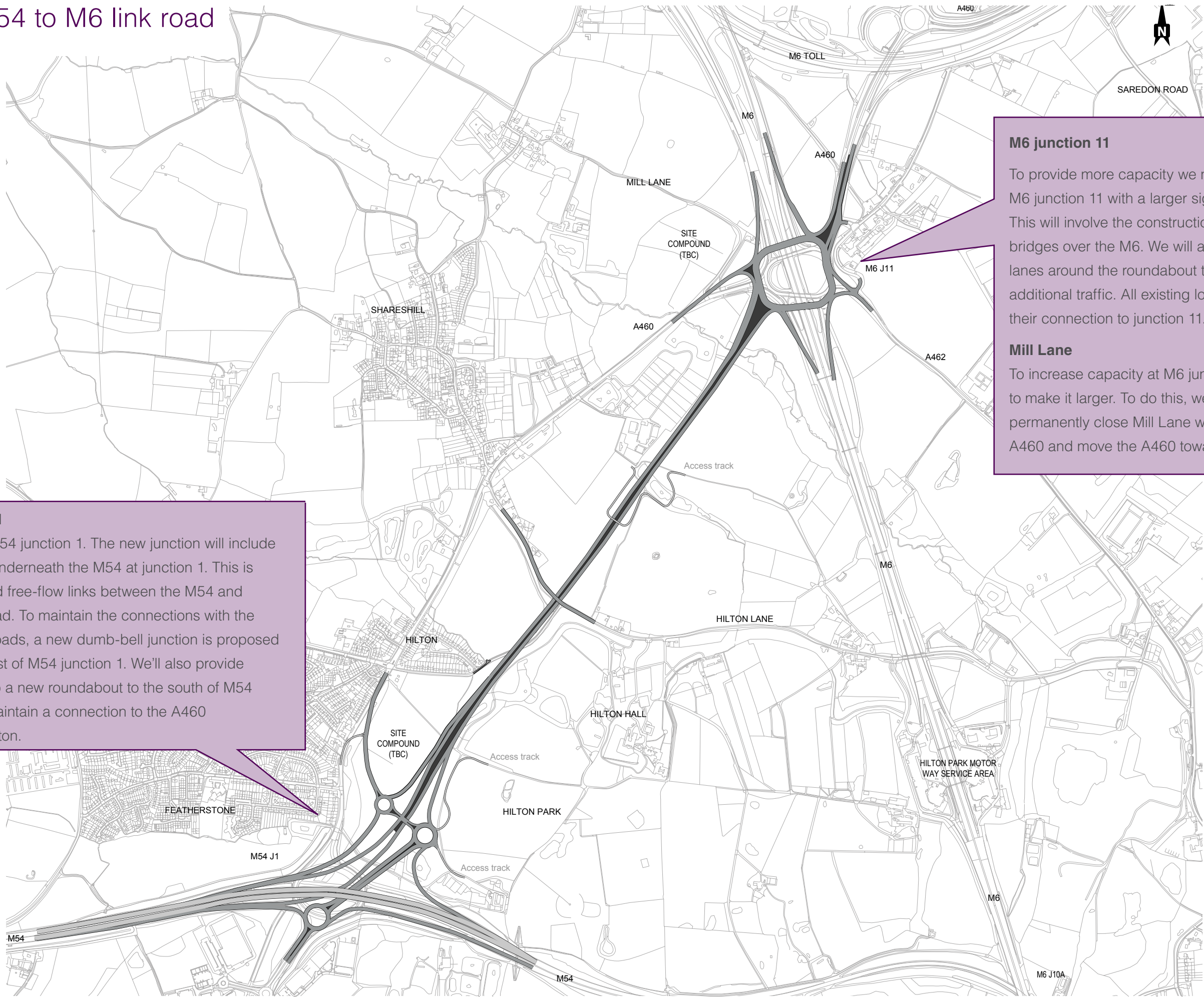
surveys to help us to fully understand the environmental considerations and possible mitigation.

We've listed below the areas that have developed or changed since the previous consultation, which **we would like your views on**. This will enable us to take into consideration the views of all affected stakeholders as we develop the design.

- **Junctions** – size and visibility of the new junctions at M6 junction 11 and M54 junction 1.
- **Dark Lane and Hilton** – position of the new link road to Dark Lane and Hilton.
- **Hilton Lane** – alignment of new link under Hilton Lane.
- **Environmental mitigation** – proposals to reduce impact on environment.
- **Mill Lane** – closure of Mill Lane where it meets the A460.



Plan of M54 to M6 link road



**M6 junction 11**

To provide more capacity we need to replace M6 junction 11 with a larger signalled junction. This will involve the construction of two new bridges over the M6. We will also put additional lanes around the roundabout to accommodate additional traffic. All existing local roads will keep their connection to junction 11.

**Mill Lane**

To increase capacity at M6 junction 11, we need to make it larger. To do this, we're proposing to permanently close Mill Lane where it meets the A460 and move the A460 towards junction 11.

**M54 junction 1**

We'll replace M54 junction 1. The new junction will include a new bridge underneath the M54 at junction 1. This is so we can build free-flow links between the M54 and the new link road. To maintain the connections with the existing local roads, a new dumb-bell junction is proposed to the north-east of M54 junction 1. We'll also provide a connection to a new roundabout to the south of M54 junction 1 to maintain a connection to the A460 to Wolverhampton.



## Dark Lane and Hilton

The new link passes to the east of Hilton Village, near to properties on Dark Lane. Following concerns raised by local residents, we've moved the new route a further 25 metres away from properties on Dark Lane.

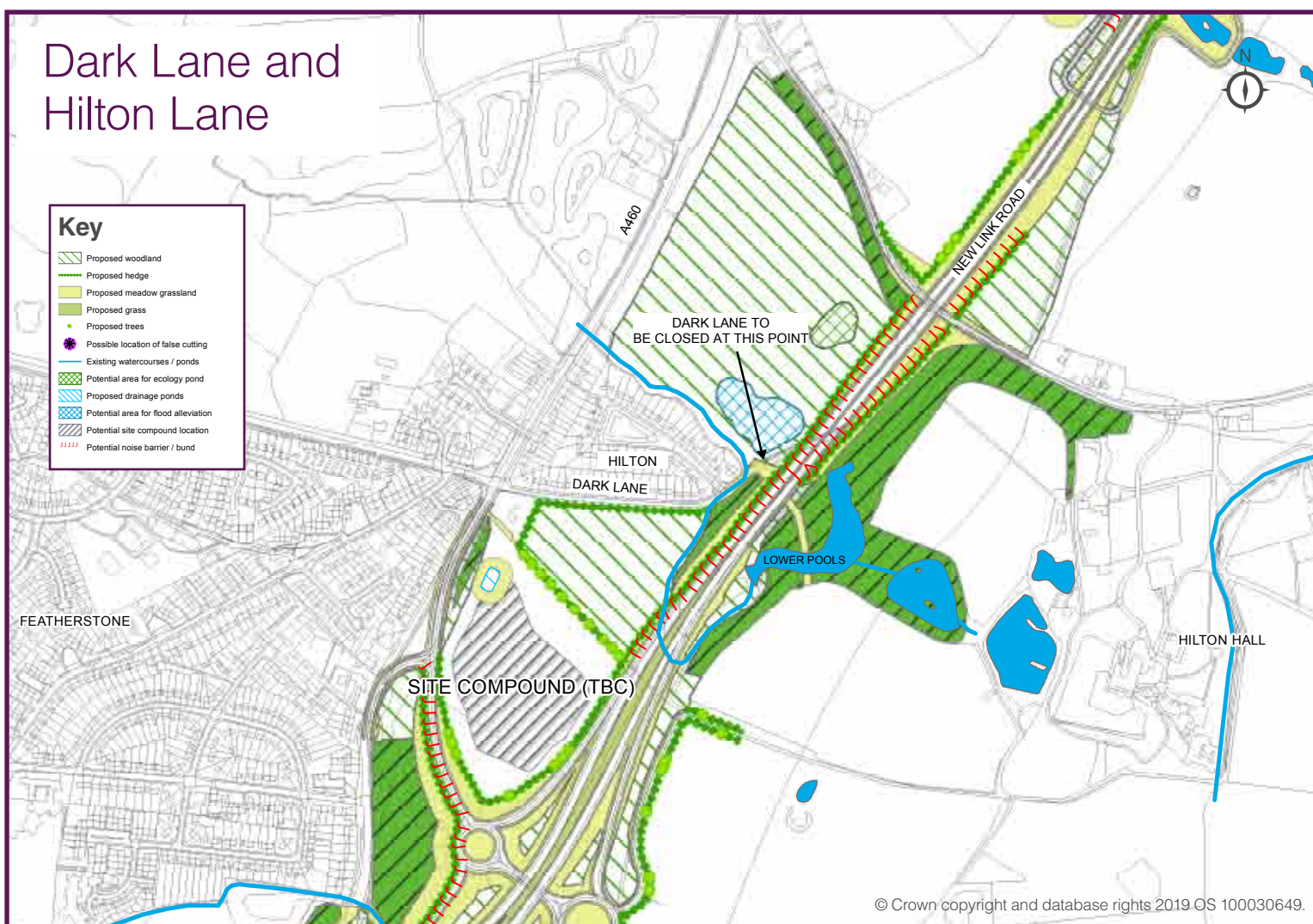
This will reduce the impact on local residents in Hilton who may be potentially affected by increased noise, air quality and visual impacts. In moving the alignment at this location, we've also considered the impact on:

- existing woodland and ponds at Lower Pools Site of Biological Importance
- historic parkland of Hilton Hall

## Hilton Lane

The new link road near Hilton Lane will be approximately 6 to 8 metres below the existing ground level. We're developing an environmental design that includes new planting to screen the road as much as possible.

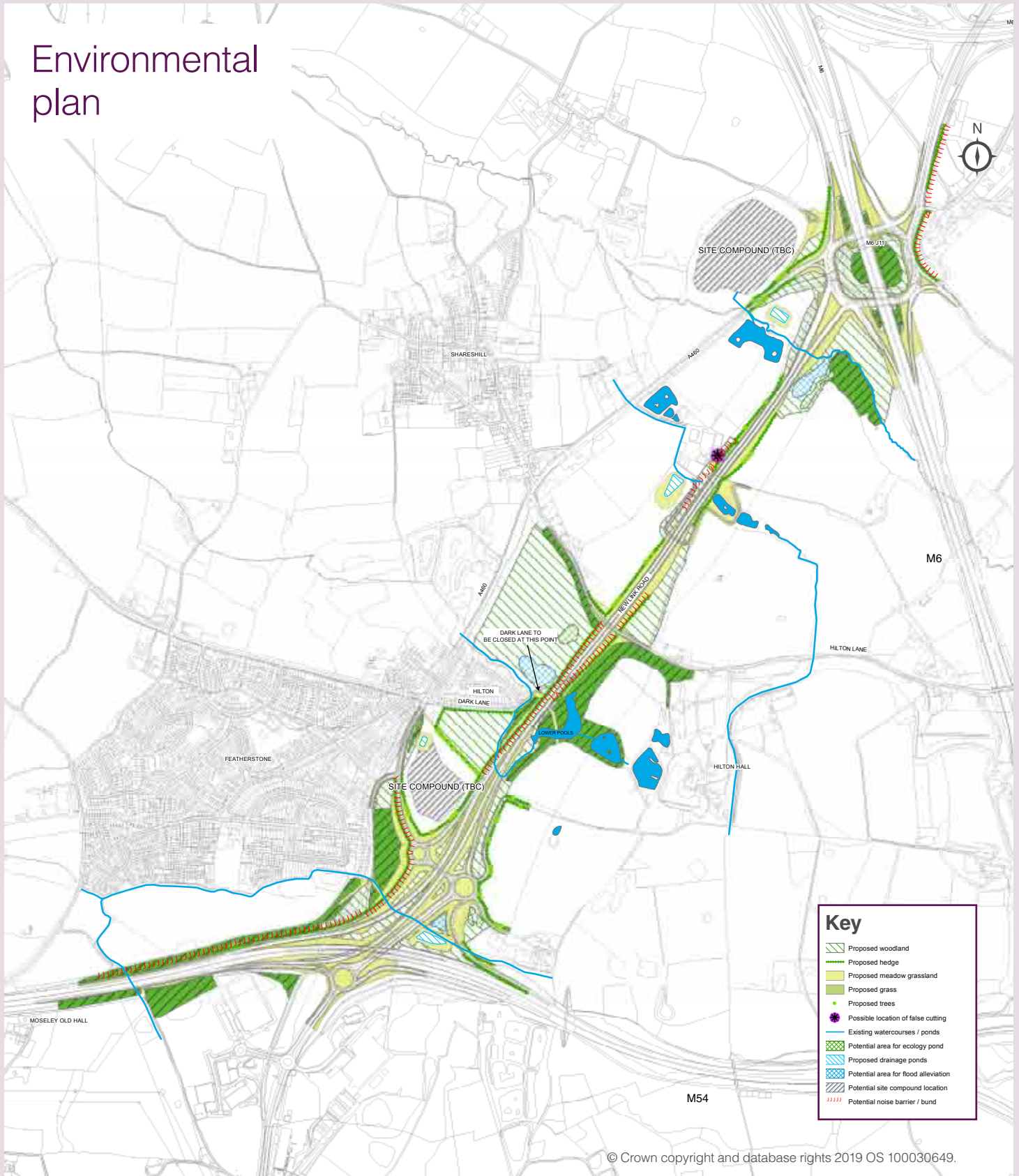
### Dark Lane and Hilton Lane



# Environmental impacts

We're assessing the impact on any existing features and identifying opportunities to reduce these impacts. As part of our environmental design, we'll be planting new trees and shrubs, providing replacement ponds and reducing noise impacts.

## Environmental plan





# Potential barrier types

Barriers, screening against noise and the view of the new road, can be used to help reduce the impact of the scheme. We're still considering the different options and have included some indication of where barriers might be used on the plans and visualisation video, which has been put together for this scheme. This has been done for illustrative purposes only. The video is available on our webpage: [www.highwaysengland.co.uk/M54-M6linkroad](http://www.highwaysengland.co.uk/M54-M6linkroad)

## Timber barrier

These would provide visual screening and would be effective in mitigating noise.



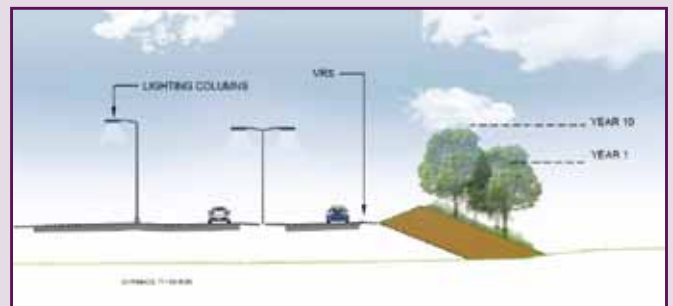
## Timber barrier with climbing vegetation

These are similar to the solid barrier above, but supplemented with appropriate landscape planting. This will grow up the fence to give a more natural looking appearance over time.



## Earth bunds

These can provide visual screening and reduce noise levels. Bunds are not as effective at reducing noise as the timber barriers and they require more land and removal of vegetation.



# Benefits and effects of the proposed design

In assessing the benefits and effects of the proposed design, we have considered a variety of features including those summarised below.

This information is based on our findings from detailed surveys and assessments that we've carried out. Environmental impacts are assessed based on national guidance. For more detailed information, please visit our webpage, where you will find our Preliminary Environmental Impact Report.

Feature	Benefits and effects of the proposed design
<b>Air quality</b>	The scheme will change traffic patterns, including a significant reduction of traffic on the existing A460. Many properties next to the A460 will see an improvement in air quality with a small number of properties close to the new link experiencing a worsening of air quality conditions. We don't expect the scheme to result in significant adverse effects during construction or once it opens for traffic.
<b>Noise and vibration</b>	Our preliminary assessment predicts a large reduction in road traffic noise on the A460. Increases in road traffic noise may arise at points very close to the proposed scheme on Dark Lane, Hilton Lane and properties next to the new link. We're currently considering what mitigation is required to reduce these increases in traffic noise.
<b>Water environment</b>	The proposed scheme would cross a number of watercourses and require the loss of a number of ponds. Our design will mitigate losses as far as possible, protect the water environment from highway pollution and prevent increases in flood risk.
<b>Cultural heritage</b>	We're carrying out archaeological surveys, historic building and landscape recording to understand potential effects. There's potential for heritage features to be adversely affected either directly, through loss or damage during construction or indirectly, for example through adverse effects upon the setting of Hilton Park Historic Parkland. We're developing the design and landscaping to mitigate effects upon historic buildings and other cultural heritage features.
<b>Landscape and visual impacts</b>	Traffic on the new road, the presence of new bridges, lighting and sign gantries, can all affect views and the landscape. The scheme has the potential to have both adverse and beneficial effects upon views and the surrounding landscape. We're exploring mitigation proposals including scheme design, construction planning and provision of a suitable environmental design including new tree planting.



<b>Ecology and biodiversity</b>	The scheme area includes ponds, streams, grassland, sections of woodland and hedgerows, along with protected species, which could be affected by the proposed scheme. Impacts would potentially include the direct loss of habitat and breaking up of habitat, disturbance to wildlife from noise and lighting, and animal collisions with traffic. The ongoing environmental assessment will help to identify ways to avoid and mitigate potential ecological effects.
<b>Population and health</b>	Some minor diversions of existing public rights of way are required to ensure existing facilities for pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders are retained. We'll investigate proposals as part of the environmental assessment following feedback received from the public, local authorities and other interested groups at this consultation.
<b>Road safety</b>	The existing A460 has a higher than average rate of road accidents for a road of this type. The number of collisions involving personal injuries would reduce due to the reduced traffic on the A460.
<b>Construction duration and impacts</b>	The majority of the proposed scheme will be constructed away from the A460 and connections to existing roads will be planned to minimise disruption to traffic. The indicative site compounds allow for construction plant, storage areas and material stockpiles to be used during the construction of the proposed scheme.
<b>Land take</b>	As part of the Development Consent Order (DCO) process, we're consulting on the proposed areas of land required for the scheme. We're also working with affected land owners to mitigate the impact on them and their businesses or properties. This includes land needed for the construction of the new scheme and land required temporarily, for example, construction compounds and working space. The DCO application would seek powers to enable us to acquire land and rights over land compulsorily and take temporary possession of land following discussions with the relevant land owners.

## Next steps

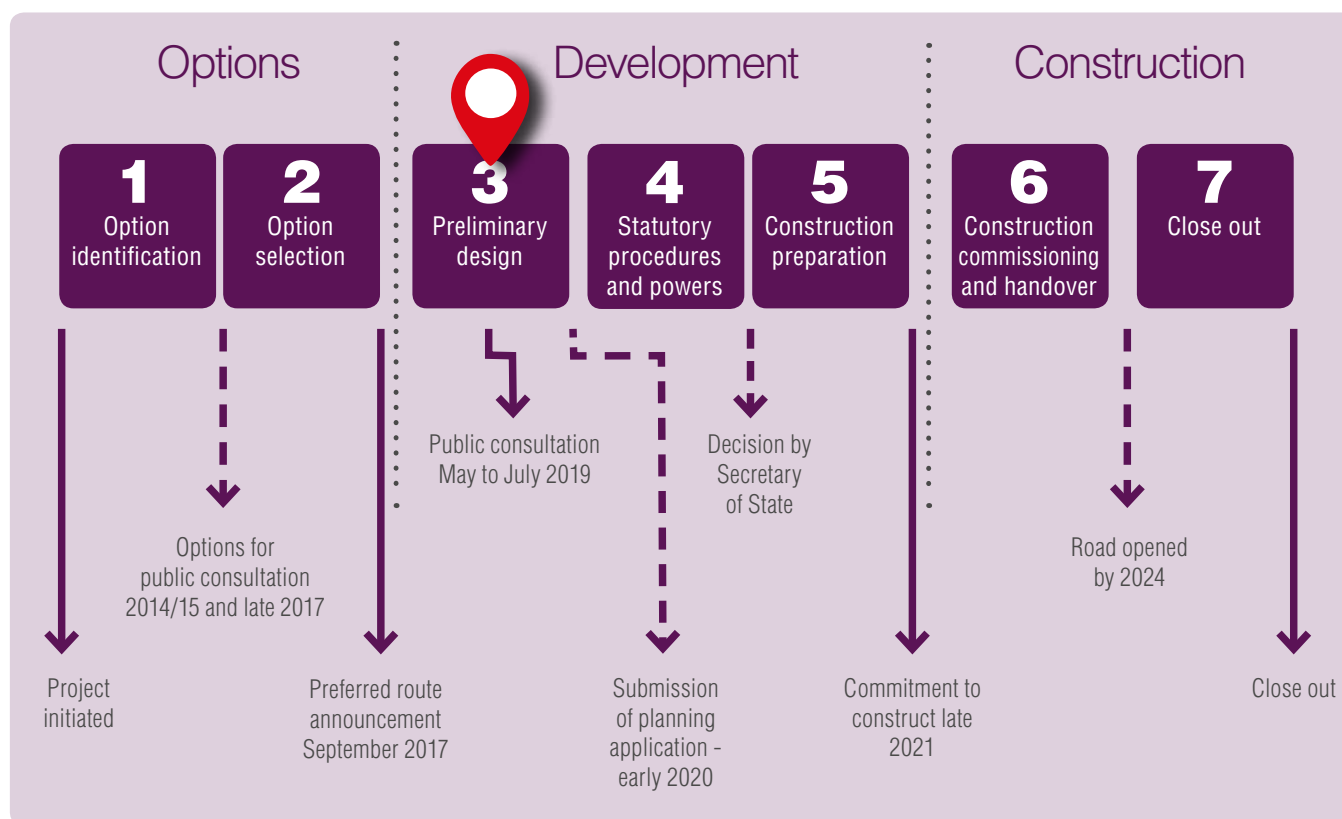
Once the statutory consultation has closed on 5 July 2019, we'll review all the suggestions and comments received during consultation. We'll take time to analyse and consider your feedback when making further refinements to the proposed design and to develop our mitigation measures. We'll set out a summary of the responses, and describe how our proposals have been informed by and influenced by them, in a consultation report. This will form part of our Development Consent Order application and will also be available to the public following submission of the application. We expect to submit our application by early 2020 and, provided it is granted, construction will start late 2021.

In addition to this statutory consultation process, we'll continue to engage with anyone interested in, or impacted by, the scheme.

To help us shape the final design in preparation of our submission to the Planning Inspectorate, **it is important you are involved now and submit your response by 5 July 2019.**

Once we submit our application, the Planning Inspectorate (acting on behalf of the Secretary of State) will examine the application in public hearings and then make a recommendation to the Secretary of State for Transport, who will decide on whether or not the scheme will go ahead.

The process for this is explained in the table below.



For more information please visit our webpage where you can also sign up for email alerts whenever the webpage for this scheme is updated. If you have any queries about this scheme please call 0300 123 5000 or email [M54toM6linkroad@highwaysengland.co.uk](mailto:M54toM6linkroad@highwaysengland.co.uk)



If you need help accessing this or any other Highways England information, please call **0300 123 5000** and we will help you.

© Crown copyright 2019.

You may re-use this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence:

visit [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/)

write to the **Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU**, or email [psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk).

Mapping (where present): © Crown copyright and database rights 2019 OS 100030649. You are permitted to use this data solely to enable you to respond to, or interact with, the organisation that provided you with the data. You are not permitted to copy, sub-licence, distribute or sell any of this data to third parties in any form.

This document is also available on our website at [www.highwaysengland.co.uk](http://www.highwaysengland.co.uk)

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

If you have any enquiries about this publication email [info@highwaysengland.co.uk](mailto:info@highwaysengland.co.uk) or call **0300 123 5000**\*. Please quote the Highways England publications code **PR23/19**.

Highways England creative job number BHM19\_0148

\*Calls to 03 numbers cost no more than a national rate call to an 01 or 02 number and must count towards any inclusive minutes in the same way as 01 and 02 calls.

These rules apply to calls from any type of line including mobile, BT, other fixed line or payphone. Calls may be recorded or monitored.

Printed on paper from well-managed forests and other controlled sources when issued directly by Highways England.

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

Highways England Company Limited registered in England and Wales number 09346363