

# A358

## Taunton to Southfields Dualling Scheme

Public consultation

16 January - 27 February 2018



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# 1. Foreword



Thank you for taking an interest in our proposals to upgrade the A358 between the M5 at Taunton and Southfields Roundabout on the A303. This is part of

our programme of schemes to improve connectivity between the south west and London and the south east.

We held an initial (non-statutory) public consultation on our proposals last year when we sought feedback on the scheme. For ease of giving feedback, the scheme was divided into 2 sections:

- **Section 1** – a new motorway junction with the M5 and new dual carriageway link from the M5 to the existing A358, bypassing Henlade
- **Section 2** – upgrading the A358 from single carriageway to dual carriageway standard along the line of the existing road from the south-east of Henlade to Southfields Roundabout.

Having carefully considered the feedback received, we have chosen to hold a further consultation on our proposals before selecting a preferred route, with more options for Section 1 and more detail for Section 2.

There are still important elements to be taken into account before we choose the preferred route to be taken forward for further development.

We would therefore be grateful to receive your feedback on our proposals. If you responded to last year's consultation and have nothing further to add at this point, then you do not need to re-submit your original response as this will still be taken into account.

This booklet summarises our proposals, where you can find more detail and how you can let us know what you think using our questionnaire.

**Nick Aldworth**  
Regional Delivery Director (South West)

# 2. Highways England: what we do

Highways England operates, maintains and improves England's motorways and major A-roads. Our network totals around 4,300 miles, and while this represents only 2% of all roads in England by length, these roads carry a third of all traffic by mileage and two-thirds of all heavy goods traffic.

England's strategic road network forms the economic backbone of the country, is open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and is relied on by communities and businesses to get from A to B.

We aim to ensure that all our major roads are dependable, durable and most importantly, safe. In pursuit of that aim, we are delivering a £15 billion investment programme in our network as described in the Government's Road Investment Strategy 2015-2020, see:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/road-investment-strategy>

This A358 Taunton to Southfields scheme is part of this investment programme.



### 3. Introduction to the scheme

This scheme involves the section of the A358 from the M5 at Taunton to the A303 at Southfields Roundabout, a distance of 9 miles (14 kilometres).

The purpose of the scheme is to relieve congestion, support economic growth and improve safety, thereby also bringing benefits to the local communities adversely affected by traffic on the existing road.

The purpose of this consultation is to:

- inform the local communities and stakeholders about our scheme proposals and route options
- provide the opportunity for feedback on matters that can inform the decision-making on the preferred route
- build on the responses received in last year's consultation, specifically gathering more information about where any new sections of road should be and how they should tie into the existing A358.

A summary of our scheme proposals is presented in chapters 7 and 8 of this booklet.

Please take the time to read this booklet, attend a public exhibition event and provide us with your comments by filling in our consultation questionnaire. The feedback from this consultation will accompany the feedback from the 2017 consultation in informing the choice of preferred route.

**The consultation runs from Tuesday 16 January 2018 until Tuesday 27 February 2018.**

Further information on the scheme proposals and the 2017 consultation can be found by visiting our scheme website at: [www.highways.gov.uk/Taunton-to-Southfields](http://www.highways.gov.uk/Taunton-to-Southfields).

### 4. Background and need

The A303/A358 corridor provides vital connectivity between the south west and London and the south east for people, communities and businesses, including the tourist industry which is so important to the south west. But there are problems along the route.

In particular there are several single carriageway sections where road users suffer congestion and long delays. The problems are even worse at peak holiday times during the summer months and on weekends, when over an hour can be added to a typical journey between London and the south west.

In recognition of this and the harmful effects this has on the south west's economy, the Government's Road Investment Strategy 2015-2020 (RIS) sets out the intention to transform connectivity by upgrading the A303/A358 corridor to a high quality dual carriageway from the M3 motorway to the M5 motorway at Taunton.

A high quality dual carriageway is a road with typically no or limited minor road access and no right-turning movements across it, thereby providing a level of service approaching that which is found on a motorway, where mile-a-minute journeys are the norm.

You can find out more about the wider plans to improve the A303/A358 corridor by reading Highways England's booklet, *Creating an Expressway to the South West: The Case for the A303/A358 Corridor*, which is available to read or download from our consultation website. The booklet will also be available at our public events. In summary though, Highways England is intending to improve journeys to and from the south west, through the delivery of a number of schemes. The first 3 currently under development are:

1. A358 Taunton to Southfields
2. A303 Sparkford to Ilchester
3. A303 Amesbury to Berwick Down

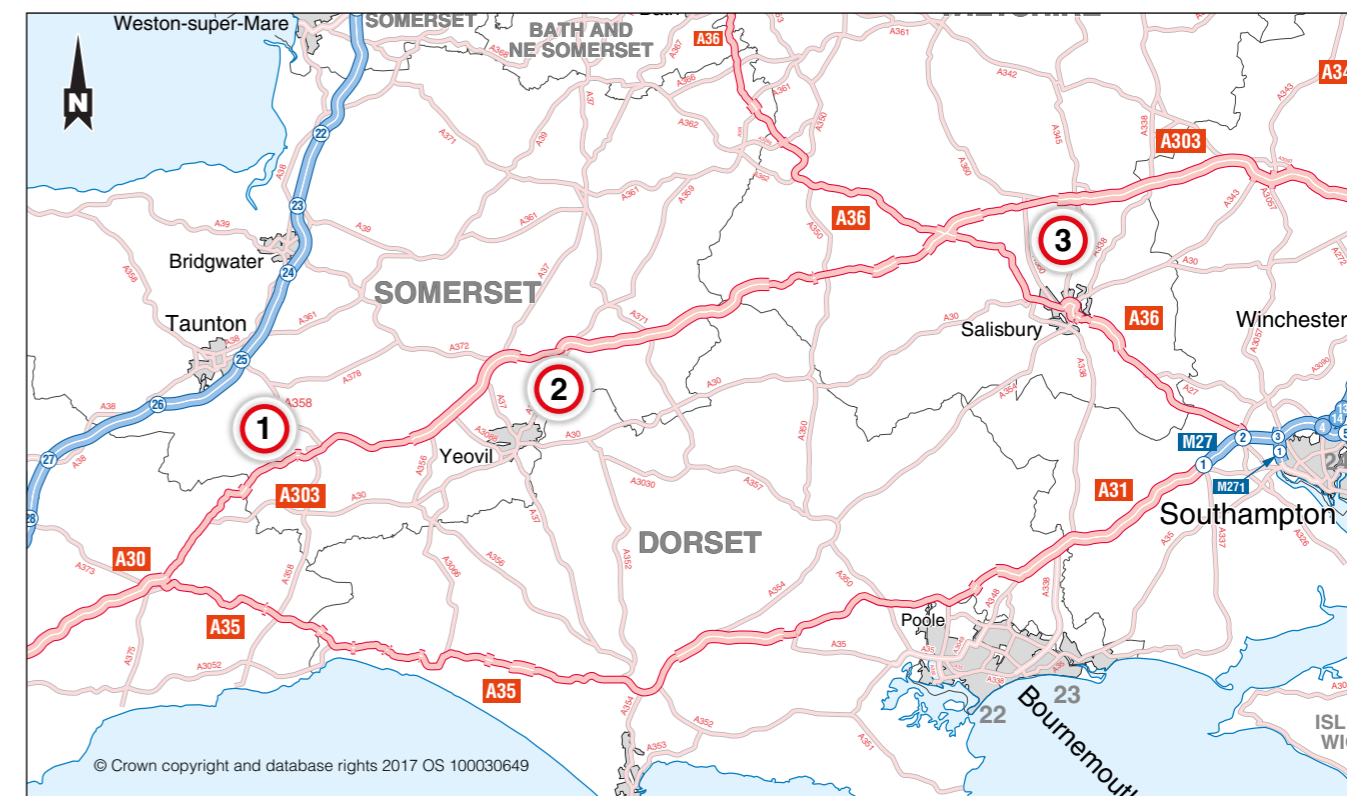


Figure 1: A303 / A358 route corridor schemes in RIS period 2015-2020



The existing A358 between Taunton and Southfields is predominantly single carriageway and has many local roads and private accesses directly onto it. There are bottlenecks where 2 lanes merge into 1, which in turn leads to delays and uncertain journey times. The northern section of the A358 in particular, on the approach to M5 junction 25, experiences regular severe congestion and delay, making it difficult to get into Taunton or onto the motorway. This in turn adversely affects the quality of life in local communities like Henlade and Ruishton.

In addition, there are increasing capacity challenges for M5 junction 25.

The proposed Nexus 25 employment site in particular will create a need for additional capacity at the junction. This is one of the key reasons why we are not simply able to dual the existing road leading into the existing roundabout at junction 25.

The need for improvement has long been recognised and proposals for widening the road were previously taken to a public consultation in 2007, but were not progressed further at that time. The Government's strategy for improving connectivity to the south west now provides a clear context for the development and delivery of the scheme.



## 5. Scheme objectives

Highways England is developing a scheme to address the need for improvement to the A358, which has been clearly identified as part of the Government's road investment strategy for improving connectivity to the south west.

Within that context, we have set ourselves a number of objectives for the scheme, which are:

- **Capacity** – reduce delays and queues that occur during peak hours and at seasonal times of the year
- **Safety** – improve safety along the route corridor and along the A358 Taunton to Southfields route for pedestrians, cyclists and other non-motorised users
- **Environment** – avoid unacceptable impacts on the surrounding natural and historic environment and landscape and explore opportunities for enhancement
- **Local communities** – reduce community severance and promote opportunities for improving their quality of life
- **Connectivity** – improve the connectivity of the south west to the rest of the UK and improve business and growth prospects
- **Resilience** – improve journey time reliability and resilience, and provide extra capacity to make it easier to manage traffic when incidents occur
- **Support economic growth** – facilitate growth in jobs and housing by providing a free-flowing and reliable connection between the south east and the south west.

All the potential options for the scheme have been assessed against economic, social and environmental criteria relating to these objectives, which is how we have arrived at the 3 options being presented for this public consultation.

Further information about the options is set out in the *Technical Appraisal Report (TAR)* which can be found on the consultation website at [www.highways.gov.uk/Taunton-to-Southfields](http://www.highways.gov.uk/Taunton-to-Southfields). This document can also be viewed at the public information points.





## 6. Looking at the options

We have considered a wide range of route options for upgrading the A358 between Taunton and Southfields. To make sure we get to the best solution, we first identified all the feasible options and then gradually narrowed them down following the broad steps set out below.

### Step 1 – Option identification and sifting

From our early appraisal, 28 potential options were identified for improving the A358, with an additional route evolving through the design process. The options considered included routes using the existing road in part or full, as well as entirely new routes across open landscape. These options were appraised against economic, social and environmental criteria and were reduced to 4 options.

*Note: In deciding to create a high quality dual carriageway to the south west via the A358, the Government decided not to pursue the alternative A303/A30 corridor from Ilminster to Honiton and Exeter. This section of A303/A30 passes through the Blackdown Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and the impacts of large-scale road-building were deemed unacceptable within the AONB. Therefore, this alternative was not considered as part of this scheme. Instead smaller-scale improvements will be pursued along this section to improve safety and journey quality for road users.*

### Step 2 – Appraisal of shortlisted options

The 4 shortlisted options were appraised in greater detail as set out in the technical appraisal report (TAR, dated April 2017) which was published at the time of the 2017 consultation. From these 4 options, one was discounted on environmental grounds, because the new route would run west of the existing road through a tranquil area near the Blackdown Hills AONB and would harm a designated Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).

### Step 3 – Selection of options for the initial consultation

From the 3 remaining options, we chose one option for the public consultation in 2017. This led to community members and stakeholders indicating that they would like to see more options for connecting the new road with the M5 motorway.

### Step 4 – Review of options following consultation

We considered carefully the consultation feedback and concluded that it would be beneficial to carry out further consultation on more route options before selecting a preferred route. We have updated the technical appraisal report accordingly, to explain the sifting that has been undertaken from the original 28 options to arrive at the options now being consulted on. To support this, we have made the information which has informed this process, such as traffic levels, possible junction layouts, journey times and comparative assessments, more accessible.

### Step 5 – Selection of options for further consultation

The above steps have led to our decision to undertake this further non-statutory public consultation on 3 selected options for upgrading the A358 from Taunton to Southfields.

Details of this process are set out in the technical appraisal report (dated January 2018), which can be found on the consultation website at [www.highways.gov.uk/Taunton-to-Southfields](http://www.highways.gov.uk/Taunton-to-Southfields), which can also be viewed at the public information points.

## 7. Scheme proposals

As with the proposals put forward at the 2017 consultation, to help us focus on your comments, the scheme has been divided into 2 sections (see figure 2):

- **Section 1** – a new motorway junction with the M5 and new dual carriageway link from the M5 to the existing A358, bypassing Henlade.
- **Section 2** – upgrading the A358 from single carriageway to dual carriageway standard along the line of the existing A358 from south east of Henlade to Southfields Roundabout

There are 3 options for Section 1 of the scheme - the Pink option, the Blue option and the Orange option. Each of these options connects with online widening we are proposing for Section 2, to upgrade the A358 along its existing corridor. The following pages provide information about each option.

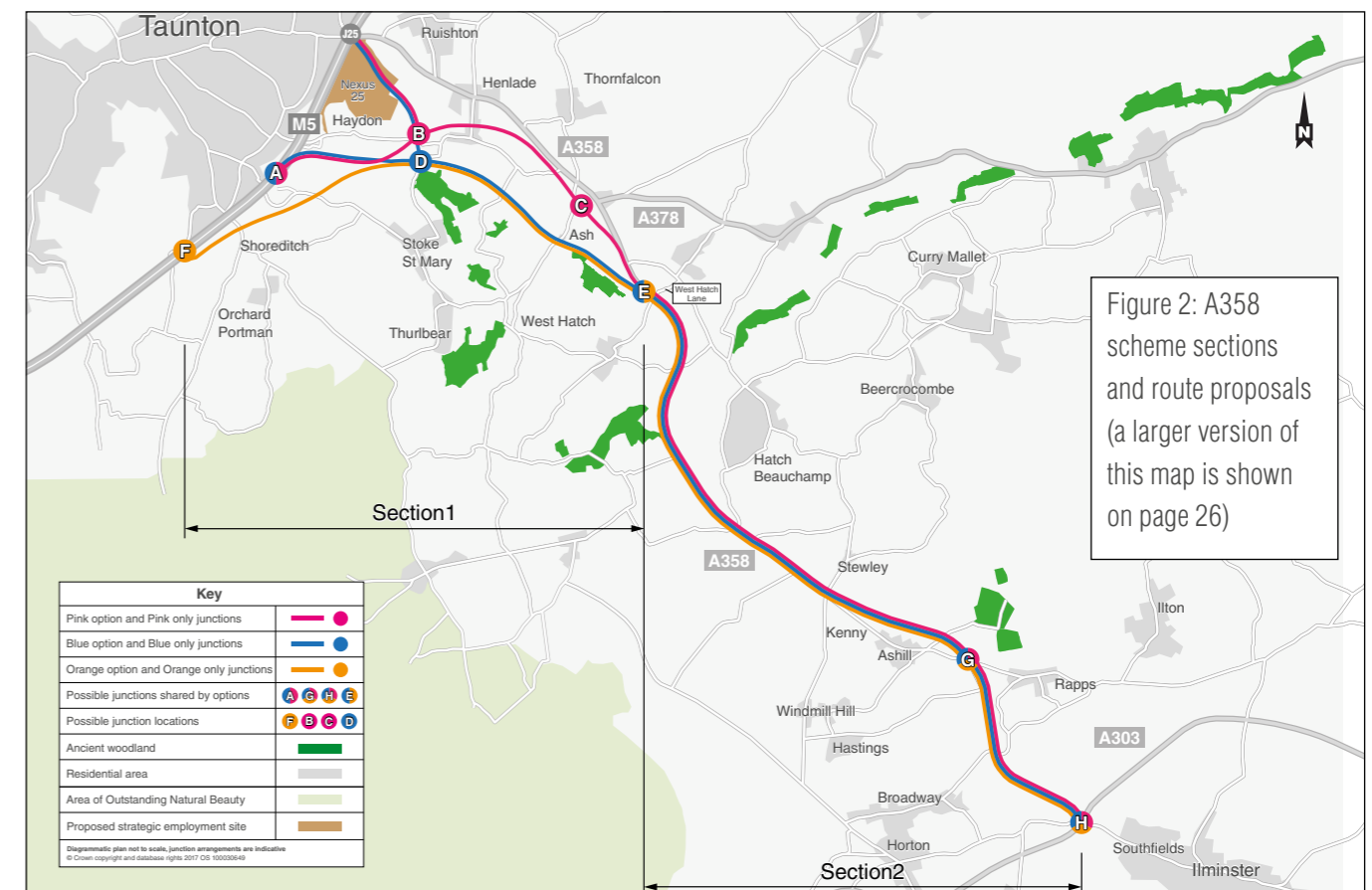
Within Section 1 each of the 3 options – the Pink option, Blue option and Orange option – follows a slightly different alignment. However, they all share the same online widening proposal within Section 2.

Specifically:

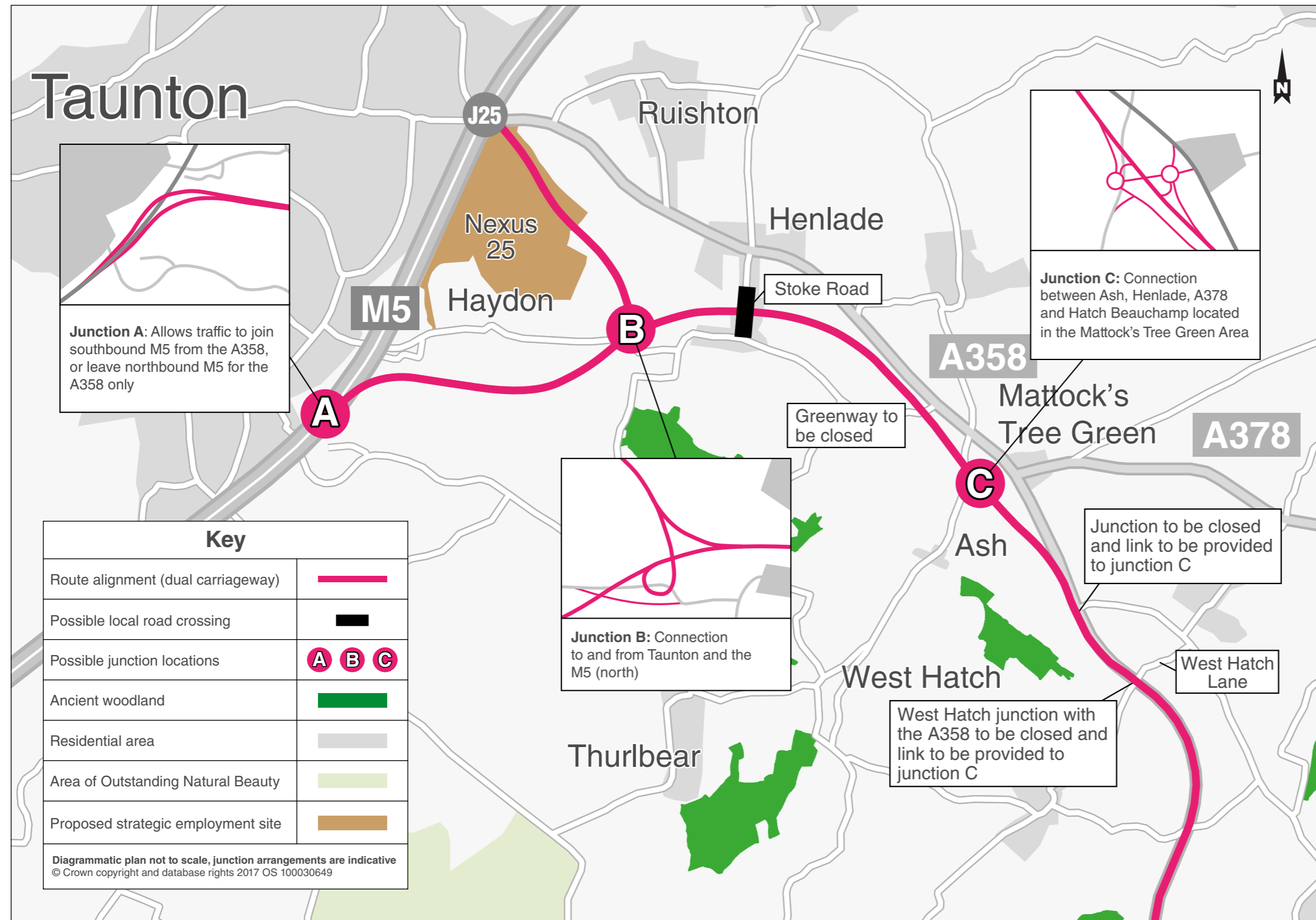
- The Pink and Blue options connect with the M5 via a combination of a new junction to the south of the existing junction 25 and a spur linking with junction 25 via the proposed Nexus 25 employment site
- The Orange option was the route presented in the 2017 consultation. It connects with the M5 via a new junction to the south of the existing junction 25

The main difference between Pink and Blue options is that the Pink option runs closer to the line of the existing A358 for a longer distance than the Blue does before departing to provide a new connection with the M5.

The preferred route, that is subsequently chosen, could contain elements of each of these options (ie a possible mix and match) informed by further assessment, which will take your feedback from this consultation into account.



## Pink option



## Route description

This route option commences with a new junction (junction A) on the M5 approximately 1.2 miles (2 kilometres) south of the existing junction 25. From the M5, the route runs south of Haydon and north of Stoke Hill to a proposed junction (junction B) with a new dual carriageway spur road which would run northwards for approximately

0.9 miles (1.5 kilometres) to connect with the existing junction 25, via the proposed Nexus 25 employment site. From junction B, the route continues through a gap between properties along Stoke Road, Henlade, before running parallel to the existing A358 to a new junction at Mattock's Tree Green (junction C).

## Junctions and access

■ **Junction A** – A limited movement junction on the M5 would cater for westbound A358 traffic continuing south on the M5 and northbound M5 traffic wishing to travel east on the A358\*. This junction has been located far enough south to avoid the proposed Nexus 25 employment site and to ensure a wide buffer between housing and the M5.

\* It is not possible to fit slip roads allowing all movements to be made (ie westbound A358 traffic wishing to travel north on the M5, and southbound M5 traffic wishing to travel east on the A358) at this location, due to their impact on local housing and communities, existing bridges and the operation of junction 25. It should also be noted that such slip roads are not necessary due to the proposed link road to junction 25.

■ **Junction B** – A free-flowing junction would provide direct access between the new A358 and the proposed Nexus 25 employment site and the existing junction 25 on the M5. This has been located to provide the most direct link from the proposed dual carriageway to junction 25, whilst avoiding land associated with the employment site and minimising impact upon Stoke Hill.

■ **Junction C** – A new junction at Mattock's Tree Green would accommodate free-flowing traffic on the new road while providing connections with both the existing A358 and the A378. This junction would also serve nearby communities such as Henlade, Ruishton, Creech St Michael, Hatch Beauchamp and Stoke St Mary. This has been located so that it is close to (and may therefore largely replace the need for) the existing traffic signal controlled junction, in open land just to the south of the existing junction.

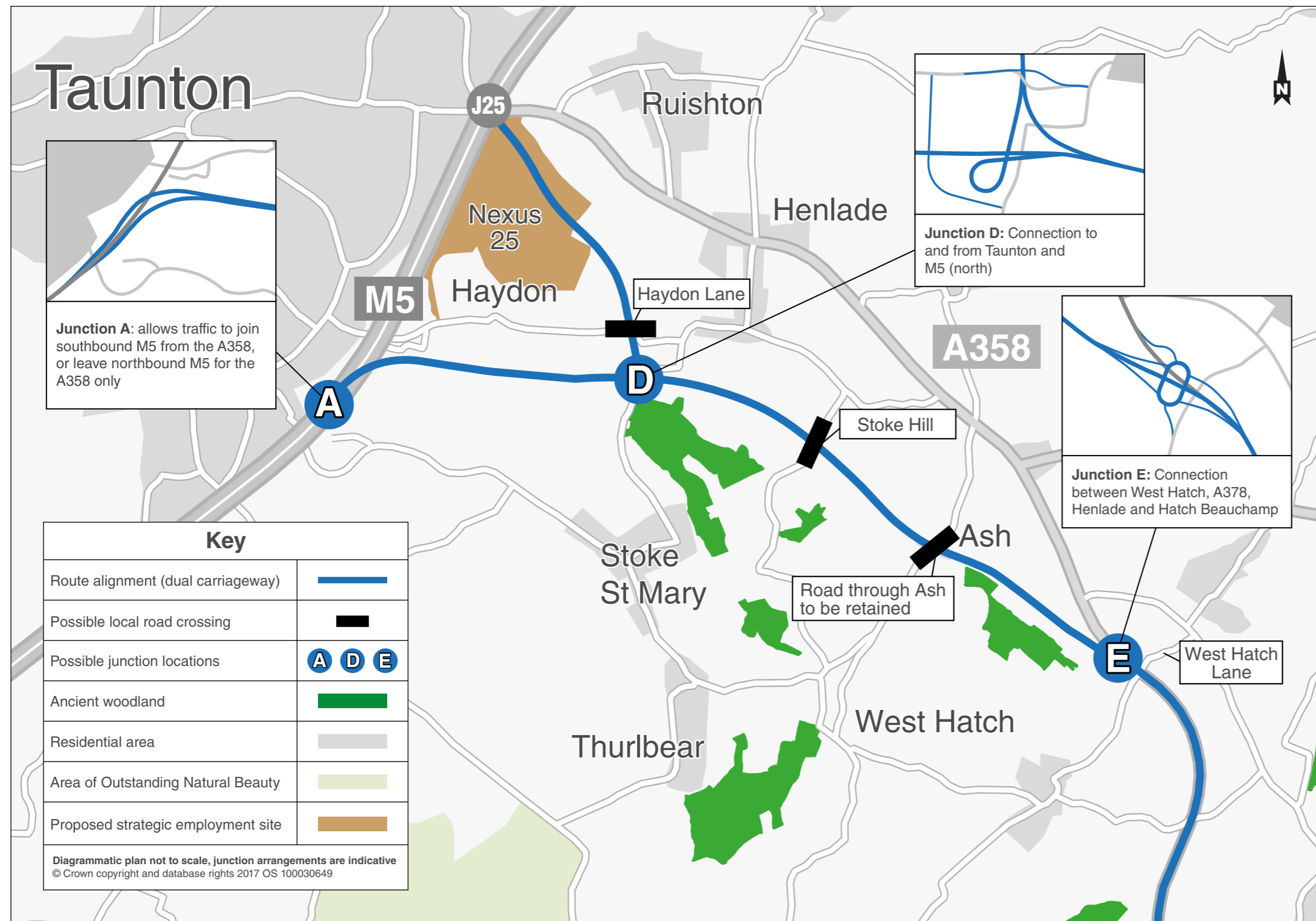
■ **Local road crossings** – Where the new A358 runs across existing local roads (at Haydon Lane and Stoke Road), these will be maintained via new bridged crossings.

Figure 3: The Pink option from the M5 to the existing A358

The distance between junctions B and C would be approximately 1.6 miles (2.6 kilometres).



## Blue option



## Route description

As with the Pink option, the Blue option commences at the M5, with a new junction (junction A), approximately 1.2 miles (2 kilometres) south of the existing junction 25. From the M5, the route runs south of Haydon for 1.2 miles (2 kilometres) to a proposed junction (junction D) with a new dual carriageway link road which would run northwards for 1.2 miles

(2 kilometres) to connect with the existing junction 25 via the proposed Nexus 25 employment site.

From junction D, the route continues in a south easterly direction for approximately 1.5 miles (2.5 kilometres), passing to the north of ancient woodland north of Stoke St Mary and to the south of Lower Henlade and Ash, before connecting

with the existing A358 at a new junction near West Hatch (junction E). The distance between junctions D and E would be approximately 1.6 miles (2.6 kilometres).

## Junctions and access

■ **Junction A** – As with the Pink option, a limited movement junction would cater for westbound A358 traffic continuing south on the M5 and northbound M5 traffic wishing to travel east\*. This junction has been located far enough south to avoid the proposed Nexus 25 employment site and to ensure a wide buffer between housing and the M5.

\* It is not possible to fit slip roads allowing all movements to be made (ie westbound A358 traffic wishing to travel north on the M5, and southbound M5 traffic wishing to travel east on the A358) at this location due to their impact on local housing and communities and the operation of junction 25. It should also be noted that such slip roads are not necessary due to the proposed link road to junction 25.

■ **Junction D** – This would be a similar arrangement to junction B on the Pink option, but at a location a little further south. A free-flowing junction would provide access between the new A358 and the proposed Nexus 25 employment site and junction 25. This has been located to provide the most direct link from the proposed dual carriageway to junction 25, whilst avoiding land associated with the employment site and minimising impact upon Stoke Hill.

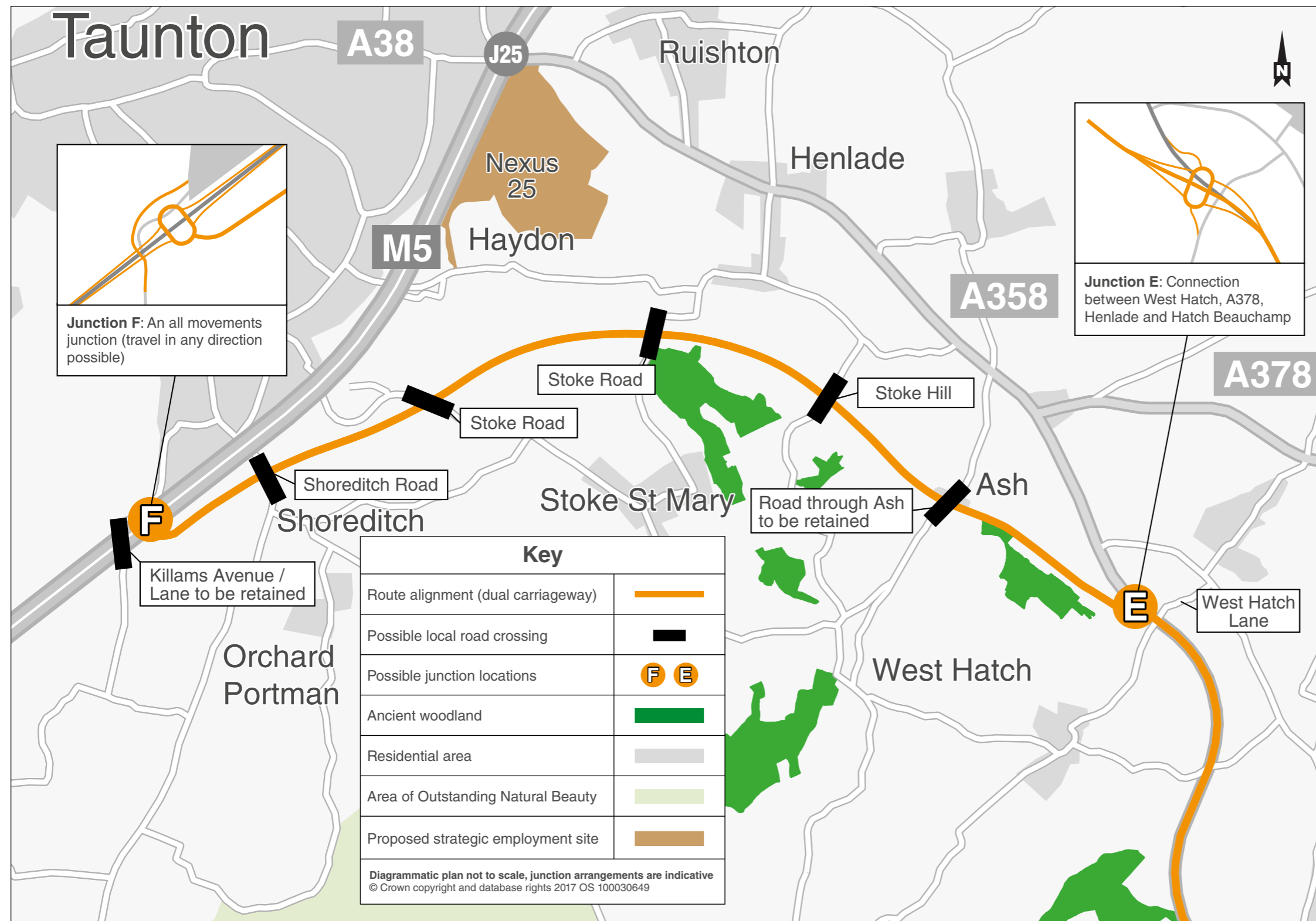
■ **Junction E** – A new split-level junction near West Hatch would accommodate free-flowing traffic on the new road while providing a connection with the existing A358 (and thereby to the A378) via slip roads and a roundabout, serving nearby communities. This has been located to provide a connection between the proposed dual carriageway and the existing retained A358 carriageway at the point where the two roads split.

■ **Local road crossings** – Where the new A358 runs across existing local roads (at Stoke Road, Haydon Lane, Stoke Hill and Ash), these will be maintained via new bridged crossings.

Figure 4: The Blue option from the M5 to the existing A358



## Orange option



## Route description

The Orange option formed the proposal presented at the initial consultation in 2017. A new junction on the M5 (junction F) would be constructed approximately 2.1 miles (3.5 kilometres) south of the existing junction 25. From the M5, the route runs north east, crossing the B3170 north of Shoreditch, before curving around the north side of Stoke Hill and then

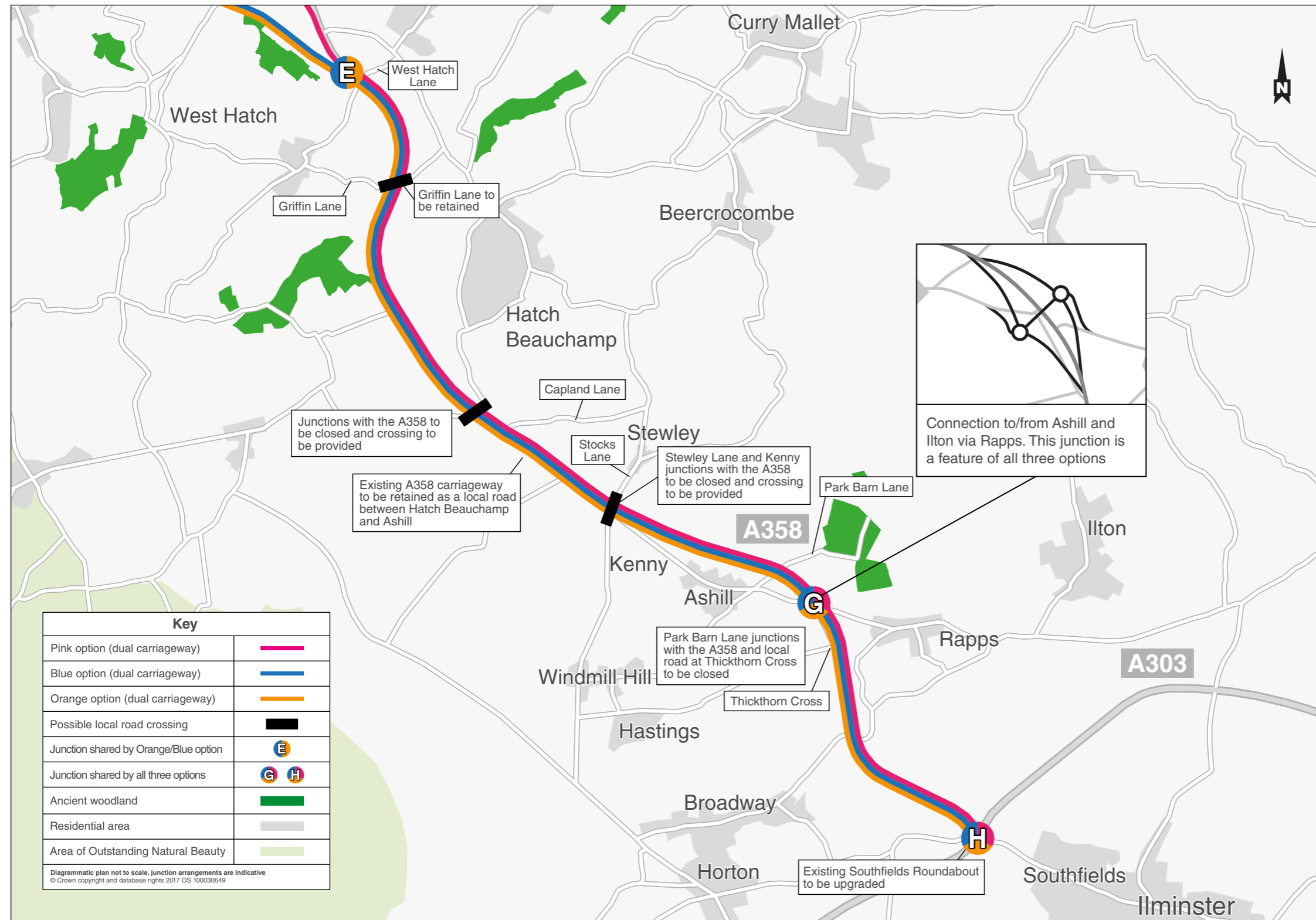
continuing on the same alignment as the Blue option. This involves passing to the north of ancient woodland north of Stoke St Mary and to the south of Lower Henlade and Ash, before connecting with the existing A358 at a new junction near West Hatch (junction E). The distance between junctions F and E would be 3.8 miles (6.1 kilometres).

## Junctions and access

- Junction F** – A new all movements, split-level junction on the M5 would allow travel in any direction between the motorway and the new A358. People wishing to travel to Taunton from the new A358 would join the motorway at junction F and travel a short distance between the new junction and the existing junction 25 to gain access to the A38 for journeys into Taunton. The new junction has been located far enough south to provide the minimum permitted separation from junction 25, whilst avoiding the need to remove existing housing along the B3170 and Killams Avenue.
- Junction E** – As with the Blue option, a new split-level junction near West Hatch would accommodate free-flowing traffic on the new road while providing a connection with the existing A358 (and thereby to the A378), serving nearby communities. This has been located to provide a connection between the proposed dual carriageway and the existing retained A358 carriageway at the point where the two roads split.
- Local road crossings** – Where the new A358 runs across existing local roads (at Shoreditch, Stoke Road (twice), Stoke Hill and Ash), these local roads will be maintained via new bridged crossings.

Figure 5: The Orange option from the M5 to the existing A358

## Proposal for Section 2



## Junctions and access

- **Junction G** – A new split-level junction near Ashill would accommodate free-flowing traffic on the A358 while providing a connection with the local road network, serving nearby communities towards Ilton to the east and Ashill to the west.
- **Junction H** – The existing Southfields Roundabout would be enlarged to accommodate the upgraded dual-carriageway A358.
- **Local road crossings** – Where the upgraded A358 runs past existing roads (at Griffin Lane, Capland Lane and Stewley Lane), these local roads would be maintained via new bridged crossings.

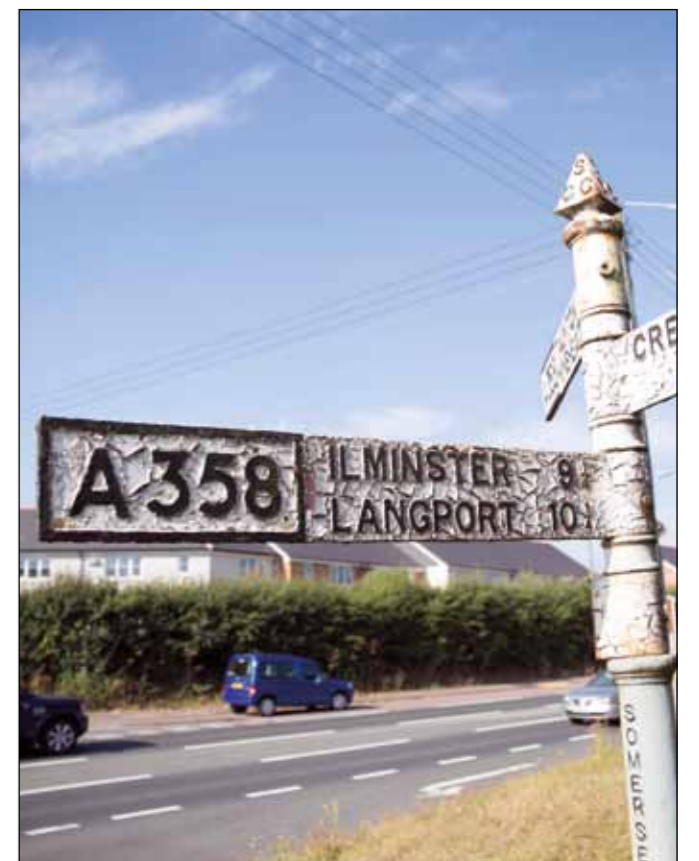
## Route description

From the eastern end of Section 1, the route for Section 2 follows the line of the existing road as far as Southfields Roundabout on the A303. This section is either 6.5 miles (10.4 kilometres) or 5.8 miles (9.4 kilometres), depending on whether the starting point is junction C (Pink option) or junction E (Blue or Orange options). Our proposal is to upgrade this section of the A358 to dual carriageway by widening the existing road.

This on-line widening improvement will avoid the damaging environmental impacts that would arise if a new dual carriageway was built away from the line of the existing A358. A new junction would be provided near Ashill (junction G), 1.6 miles (2.5 kilometres) to the north of Southfields Roundabout (junction H). Existing local road junctions and private accesses would be removed from the new dual carriageway, but traffic movements between

communities either side of the new road would be maintained via bridge crossings. Access to the new dual carriageway would be accommodated via the proposed junction (see the inset on Figure 6). Pedestrian, cycle and horse rider movements across the new dual carriageway would also be maintained safely via bridge crossings accommodating affected public rights-of-way.

Figure 6: Route proposals for Section 2





## 8. Scheme benefits and effects

A summary of the benefits and impacts of the scheme proposals (without taking into consideration mitigation measures that would be included in the future development of the scheme), as well as a comparison of how the Section 1 route options in combination with Section 2 would perform in delivering the scheme objectives, is presented below. A more in-depth analysis of each option can be found in the *Technical Appraisal Report (January 2018)*. This report can be read or downloaded from the website ([www.highways.gov.uk/Taunton-to-Southfields](http://www.highways.gov.uk/Taunton-to-Southfields)), and is also available to view at the public information points and the public exhibitions.

		Pink option	Blue option	Orange option
<b>Key differences for connecting with the M5</b>		Both Pink and Blue options would provide a new junction on the M5 for traffic movements to and from the south only, plus a spur linking with the existing junction 25 on the M5.		The Orange option would provide a new junction on the M5 for all movements to and from the M5 north and south of the junction.
<b>Scheme length</b>		14.6km, plus a 1.5km spur leading to M5 junction 25	14.1km, plus a 2km spur leading to M5 junction 25	15.3km
<b>Relative journey time savings</b> (between Southfields Roundabout and M5 junction 25 in 2038, morning peak period) compared with doing nothing.		Approximate 10-minute saving	Approximate 11-minute saving	Approximate 8-minute saving
<b>Capacity</b> Each of the 3 options would provide increased capacity. New junctions would also accommodate easy queue-free access to and from nearby local communities. The specific differences between the options are noted alongside.		This will reduce traffic on the existing A358 through Henlade, from a daily average of 35,100 vehicles without the scheme, to 4,700 vehicles with the scheme in 2023 (opening year).  The reliance on junction 25 may lead to queuing on the new spur road at peak times.	This will reduce traffic on the existing A358 through Henlade from a daily average of 35,100 vehicles without the scheme, to 8,400 vehicles with the scheme in 2023 (opening year).  The reliance on junction 25 is likely to lead to queuing on the new spur road at peak times.	This would reduce traffic on the existing A358 through Henlade from a daily average of 35,100 vehicles without the scheme, to 25,300 vehicles with the scheme in 2023 (opening year).  This would remove the highest proportion of longer-distance A358 traffic from the existing busy junction 25, freeing up its use for local Taunton traffic.
<b>Safety</b>		For all options, the new dual carriageway would be safer than the existing A358, as existing local road junctions and private accesses would be closed, avoiding conflicting traffic-turning movements.  Comparatively the Pink and Blue options are better than the Orange option.		The Orange option is worse than the Pink and Blue in this regard. An increase in slight accidents is expected due to more traffic remaining on the existing A358 through Henlade.
<b>Environment</b>	<b>Noise</b> The options presented here are compared without allowing for mitigation measures. Measures – such as screening – would reduce the noise impact.	The route would run closer to some properties in Henlade and would introduce a new source of traffic noise where it passes through countryside towards its connection with the M5.	The new road would be further away from more properties and would produce the greatest reductions in traffic noise. This option will introduce new sources of traffic noise where the route passes through countryside towards its connection with the M5.	This option would leave more traffic on the existing A358 through Henlade than the other 2 options and would provide the least degree of noise relief. It will introduce new sources of traffic noise where the route passes through countryside towards its connection with the M5.
	<b>Air quality</b>	The differences between the options in terms of overall vehicle emissions are marginal, with no risks to human health being generated by the scheme.		
	<b>Greenhouse gases</b>	All 3 options would lead to marginal increases in greenhouse gas emissions through a slight increase in journey lengths, albeit achieved in shorter, more reliable journey times. There is no substantial difference between the options.		
	<b>Landscape</b>	This option would remain closer to the existing A358 for longer and therefore would have the least impact on open countryside.	This option would intrude on the countryside south and west of Henlade.	This option would intrude on the countryside south of Henlade and west of Stoke St Mary.

		Pink option	Blue option	Orange option
Environment (cont.)	<b>Historic environment</b>	There is some potential for the scheme to have impacts on buried archaeology and on heritage assets such as listed buildings. There is nothing to discriminate substantially between the options.		
	<b>Biodiversity</b> Mitigation measures to avoid or reduce impacts will be incorporated into the more detailed design. Key differences between the options are indicated alongside.	5 local wildlife sites could be affected	6 local wildlife sites could be affected as well as ancient woodland	6 local wildlife sites and 1 local nature reserve could be affected as well as ancient woodland
	<b>Water environment</b>	There is no difference between the options in terms of impacts on the water environment. The detailed drainage design will seek to avoid any adverse effects on watercourses and flood zones.		
<b>Local communities</b>		Henlade would benefit through average daily traffic reducing on the existing A358 from 35,100 in 2023 to 4,700. The route would pass close by Lower Henlade, Haydon and Holway settlements, including the new junction on the M5 being next to community land at Higher Holway.	Henlade would benefit through average daily traffic reducing on the existing A358 from 35,100 in 2023 to 8,400. The route would pass close by Ash, Stoke St Mary, Haydon and Holway settlements, including the new junction on the M5 being next to community land at Higher Holway.	Henlade would benefit through average daily traffic reducing on the existing A358 from 35,100 in 2023 to 25,300. The route would pass close by Ash, Stoke St Mary, Shoreditch and Dowlands/Killams settlements.
<b>Connectivity between the south west and the south east</b>		Connectivity would be improved with all options		
<b>Resilience</b>		The spur road connection into junction 25 would reduce traffic on the existing A358 between West Hatch and junction 25, helping to reduce periods of congestion there. However both options rely on the operation of the existing M5 junction 25, which can be congested at times. This means there is likely to be queuing on the spur road at peak times.		The new junction on the M5 would provide the greatest improvement in journey-time predictability, reliability and resilience for longer-distance traffic wishing to avoid being caught in potential queues at peak times at junction 25.
<b>Support economic growth</b>		Both options would help to provide a free-flowing and reliable connection between the south east and the south west as part of the A303/A358 corridor improvement.  The new spur road would provide direct access to the proposed Nexus 25 site for traffic approaching via the A358 from the south east.		This option would help to provide a free-flowing and reliable connection between the south east and the south west as part of the A303/A358 corridor improvement.  It would provide a more reliable connection for longer-distance traffic seeking to avoid the risk of being held up at junction 25.  By removing more long-distance traffic from junction 25, the junction will be able to function more effectively, helping to accommodate local growth.  Traffic wishing to access the proposed Nexus 25 site from the south east would most likely travel via the new A358 joining the M5 and approaching it via junction 25.
<b>Scheme cost*</b>		The most likely cost estimate of the Pink option is £452 million.	The most likely cost estimate of the Blue option is £401 million.	The most likely cost estimate of the Orange option is £366 million.

\*The total estimated cost at 2014 Q1 prices includes scheme preparation costs, purchase of land and the construction of the new road.



## Journey times comparison

Figure 7 illustrates the relative journey time savings that the options would deliver for traffic travelling during the morning peak-period from Southfields Roundabout with a destination in Taunton, or north or south on the M5, for the year 2038.

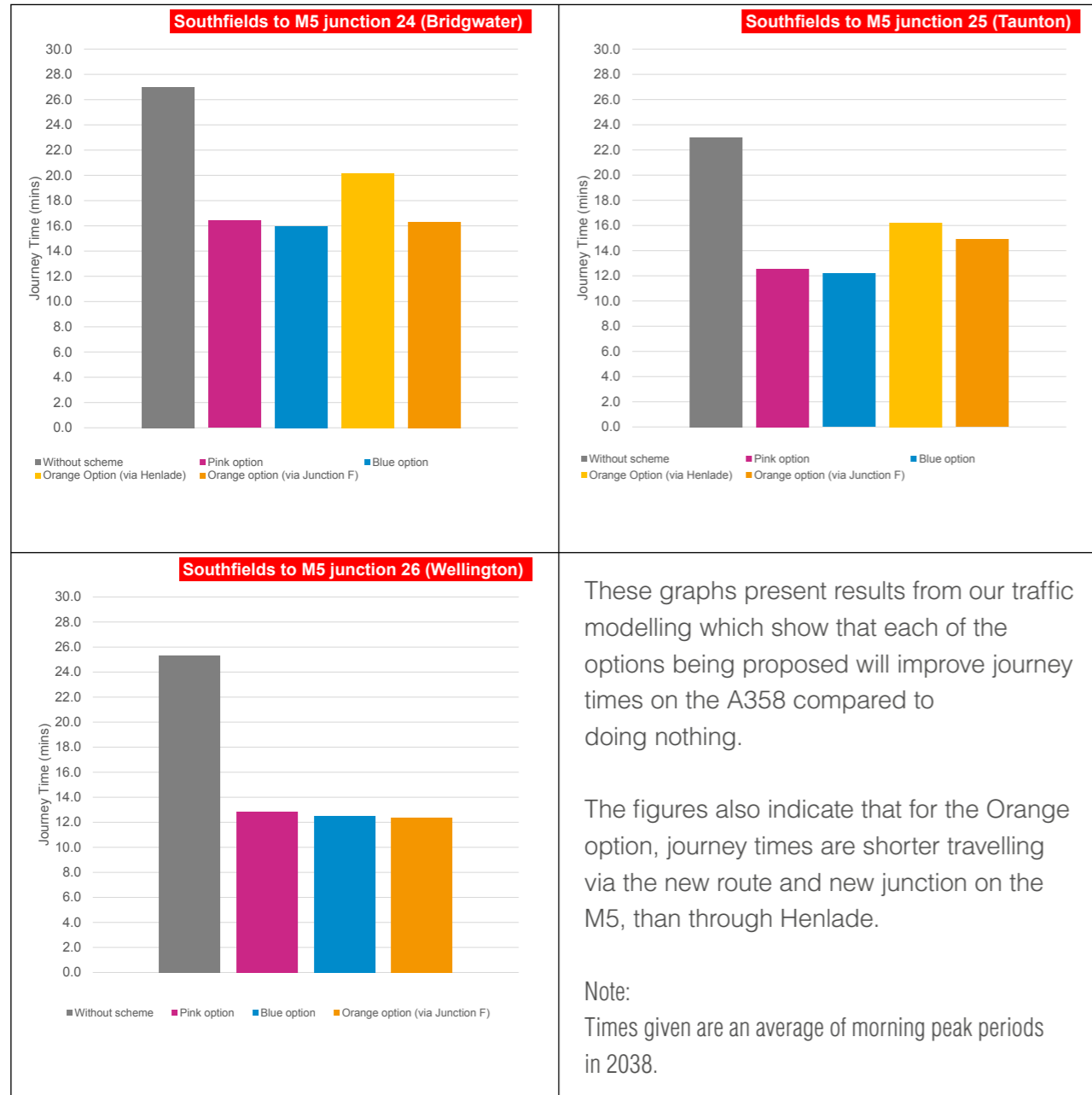


Figure 7: Journey times comparison

The choice between the Pink, Blue and Orange options is essentially about how best to:

- provide an effective connection between Southfields Roundabout on the A303 and the M5, and accommodate easy access to Taunton, Somerset and the south west
- accommodate potential access to the proposed Nexus 25 strategic employment site to the south east of junction 25 with the M5 providing traffic relief for Henlade
- minimise impacts and maximise benefits for local communities and the environment
- deliver an affordable solution.

## 9. What our proposals mean for you

*The Road Investment Strategy: 2015 -2020 sets out objectives supporting local, regional and national traffic benefits and economic growth. We are committed to delivering a scheme which supports these goals.*

### In relation to local communities and environment

- Makes it easier to access Taunton and its surrounding communities and developments
- Provides traffic relief to Henlade and local communities.

Through ongoing work with stakeholder groups, for instance local authorities, businesses, specialist organisations, community representatives and user groups we will endeavour to produce a scheme that:

We understand that local people will want to know the likely impact that building the scheme will have on their daily life, as well as any potential opportunities that such large-scale investment will bring.

### In relation to transport

- Reduces congestion, by increasing the road's capacity for free-flowing traffic and making mile-a-minute travel the norm
- Boosts road safety and eases driver stress, by creating a high quality strategic route
- Decreases the likelihood of the road being closed due to incidents or accidents
- Makes it safer and easier for local people to reach community facilities by separating local movements from traffic passing through the area.

We will take community and environmental impacts fully into account at all stages of the planning, design, decision-making and development process. That means liaising closely with local communities, local authorities and environmental bodies as work progresses in continuing the development of the scheme after the preferred route has been chosen.

### In relation to economic growth

- Boosts growth across the whole of the south west region by making arrival times easier to predict
- Improves the perception of the south west by making it an easier place to visit and do business
- Raises productivity, across the south west and more locally in Taunton and Somerset, by creating high-quality connections to other UK regions
- Supports the predicted growth in jobs and housing by increasing the capacity of the strategic road network

# 10. What happens next

## This is your opportunity to give your views on our proposals.

We would be grateful to receive your further feedback on our proposals. If you responded to last year's consultation and have nothing further to add at this point, then you do not need to re-submit your original response as this will still be taken into account.

If, after reading this booklet, you have further questions or would like to find out more, you can come to one of our exhibition events, details of which are available through our scheme consultation website ([www.highways.gov.uk/Taunton-to-Southfields](http://www.highways.gov.uk/Taunton-to-Southfields)) or you can contact us by phone or email using the details on page 25.

### Tell us what you think

When you are ready to give us your views please fill in a consultation questionnaire. You can complete it online or download and print it from our website. If you need a hard copy, let us know and we can send one in the post. If you complete our questionnaire in paper format, please return it in the prepaid envelope provided or post it to:

**Freepost HIGHWAYS CONSULTATION**

## Please get involved and provide your responses by midnight on 27 February 2018.

We will analyse your feedback and respond to it in the report we prepare on the consultation. Your views will help us make a decision on the choice of the preferred route.

## Development Consent Order

This scheme is classified as a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP) under the Planning Act 2008. As such we are required to make an application for a Development Consent Order (DCO) to gain authorisation to construct the scheme.

There will be another statutory round of consultation following the development of our preferred solution, and before we submit our DCO application. Following the submission of the application, the Planning Inspectorate will hold a public examination before making a recommendation to the Secretary of State for Transport who will decide whether or not the project should go ahead.

More information about the DCO process can be found on the Planning Inspectorate's website: <http://infrastructure.planningportal.gov.uk>

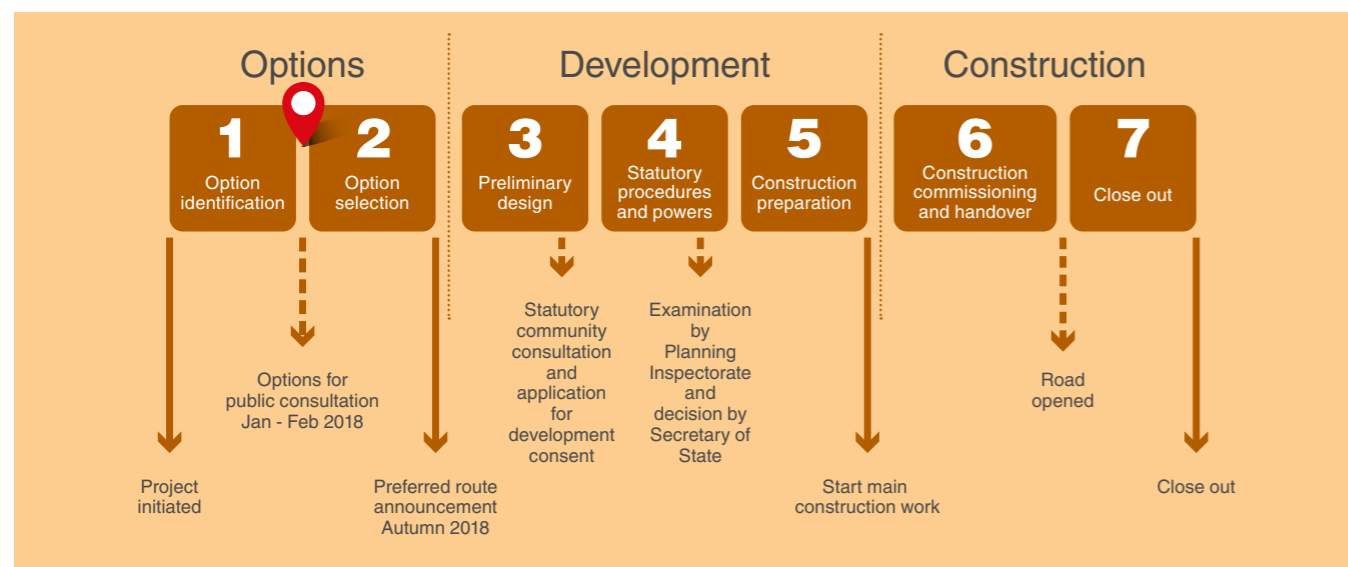


Figure 8: Proposed timeline and the Development Consent Order application process.

# 11. How to find out more

## To find out more about our proposals and give your views you can:

- Visit our scheme website at [www.highways.gov.uk/Taunton-to-Southfields](http://www.highways.gov.uk/Taunton-to-Southfields)

Here you can find copies of this booklet, along with maps of the scheme and the technical appraisal report which contains further details of the scheme and the proposals we are consulting on. You can provide your views on our proposals by completing the questionnaire online.

- Join us at one of our public events:

Members of our team will be on hand to answer your questions. To find out more about where and when the events are being held visit our website.

- Visit a public information point:

You can find copies of consultation questionnaires and other documents relating to the consultation at a public information point

## Contact us

Email us at [A358TauntontoSouthfields@highwaysengland.co.uk](mailto:A358TauntontoSouthfields@highwaysengland.co.uk)

Call us on 0300 123 5000

### Write to us at

A358 Taunton to Southfields Project Team  
Highways England  
2/07K Temple Quay House  
2 The Square  
Temple Quay  
Bristol, BS1 6HA

Public information points	
<b>Taunton Deane Borough Council,</b> The Deane House, Belvedere Rd, Taunton, Somerset, TA1 1HE	<b>Martock Library,</b> Martock Shopping Centre, Martock, Somerset, TA12 6DL
<b>Taunton Library,</b> Paul Street, Taunton, Somerset, TA1 3XZ	<b>Iminster Meeting House &amp; Arts Centre,</b> East Street, Iminster, TA19 0AN
<b>Somerset County Council, County Hall,</b> Taunton, Somerset, TA1 4DY	<b>Henlade Post Office,</b> Henlade, Taunton, TA3 5DH
<b>South Somerset District Council,</b> Brympton Way, Yeovil, Somerset, BA20 2HT	<b>Somerset County Council Mobile Library</b>
<b>South Petherton Library,</b> St. James Street, South Petherton, Somerset, TA13 5BS	<b>Blackbrook Leisure Centre &amp; Spa,</b> Blackbrook Way, Taunton, TA1 2RW



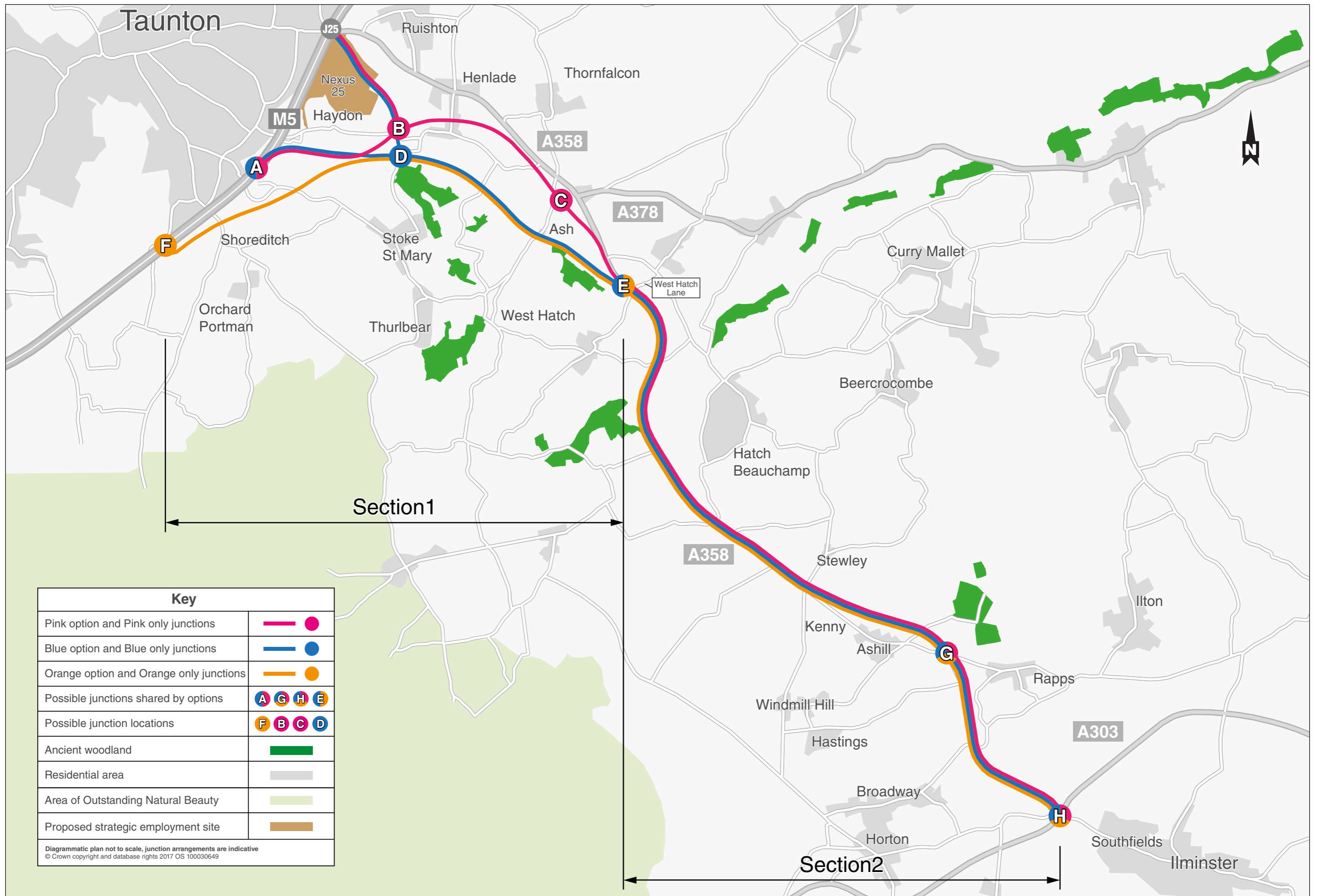


Figure 2 enlarged: A358 scheme sections and route proposals





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