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M5 Junction 10 Improvements Scheme

Frequently Asked Questions

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1) Scheme overview

1A) What does the scheme involve?

Gloucestershire County Council has been working on an improvements scheme around M5 Junction 10.

The objectives for the scheme are to:

- Support economic growth and facilitate growth in jobs and housing by providing improved transport network connections in west and north-west Cheltenham.
- Enhance the transport network in the west and north-west of Cheltenham area with the resilience to meet current and future needs.
- Improve the connectivity between the Strategic Road Network (SRN) and the local transport network in west and north-west Cheltenham.
- Deliver a package of measures which is in keeping with the local environment, establishes biodiversity net gain and meets climate change requirements.
- Provide safe access to services for the local community and including for users of sustainable transport modes within and to west and north-west Cheltenham.

The scheme comprises three main elements:

- M5 Junction 10
- West Cheltenham Link Road
- A4019 Tewkesbury Road

The M5 Junction 10 Improvements Scheme is categorised as a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP) under the Planning Act 2008. As such, an application for a Development Consent Order (DCO) is required to obtain consent to construct the scheme, rather than the traditional route of applying for planning permission, under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, from the local planning authorities. For more information on this process, please visit the Planning Inspectorate's [website](#).

1B) Why is the scheme needed?

New housing and employment development sites are proposed close to Junction 10 on the M5, including the West and North West Cheltenham Development Areas (also referred to as the Golden Valley and Elms Park developments, respectively). Land safeguarded for future development is also identified for the area, adjacent to the Junction 10 and to the south of the B4634 (to the north-west and west of Cheltenham respectively).

To unlock these housing and job opportunities, there is a need to ensure that there is sufficient capacity to accommodate the increased motorised and non-motorised users these developments will generate, within a sustainable transport context. There is also a need to address existing pressure on the local highway network.

Several of Gloucestershire County Council's policy documents have identified alterations to M5 Junction 10 as a key component for delivering new development sites. To unlock the housing and job opportunities, a highways network is needed that has the capacity to accommodate the increased traffic it will generate.

The existing M5 Junction 10 only has entry and exit slips to and from the north, with no connectivity to the M5 south of the junction. This causes existing traffic to cross Cheltenham through various routes to access and leave the M5 from the south, which contributes



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significantly to existing traffic flows in the town. Cheltenham currently experiences significant congestion at peak times, which has led to air quality issues at various locations across the town and directed the declaration of an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) within Cheltenham, which was revised in 2020 to focus on the north-western quarter of the town centre.

An all-movements junction has been identified as a key infrastructure requirement, needed to enable the housing and economic development proposed by the Gloucestershire Local Enterprise Partnership's (GFirst LEP) Strategic Economic Plan. It is also central to the transport network sought by the Council in the Gloucestershire Local Transport Plan. The planned housing and economic growth have been included by Cheltenham Borough, Tewkesbury Borough and Gloucester City Councils in the adopted Joint Core Strategy.

Alterations to M5 Junction 10 are critical to maintaining the safe and efficient operation of the junction; and enabling the planned development and economic growth around Cheltenham, Gloucester and Tewkesbury.

1C) The story so far

We secured Homes England funding for the scheme in March 2020. Work has continued since the March 2020 announcement to produce a scheme design.

Over the development of the scheme, we consulted with stakeholders and the public through multiple rounds of non-statutory consultation, statutory consultation, and targeted consultation. Our consultation and engagement with the public and stakeholders are detailed in Section 6 of these FAQs. A summary of consultation undertaken is provided in the table below.

Consultation activity	Date
Non statutory options consultation	14 October 2020 to 25 November 2020
Preferred Route Announcement	16 June 2021
Statutory consultation	08 December 2021 to 15 February 2022
Additional targeted consultation 1	08 August 2022 to 05 September 2022
Additional targeted consultation 2	18 January 2023 to 16 February 2023
Additional targeted consultation 3	29 May 2023 to 27 June 2023

On 19 December 2023, we submitted our DCO application to the Planning Inspectorate, this included a number of supporting documents including the Environmental Statement, Transport Assessment, and Consultation Report. These documents are available to view on the Planning Inspectorate's [webpage](#) for the scheme. Our application has been reviewed by the Planning Inspectorate, and on 16 January 2024 our DCO application was accepted for examination. We are now in the Pre-examination stage of the NSIP planning process.

We will publish that the application has been accepted by the Planning Inspectorate and include when and how parties can register to get involved. Registration will be open for at least 30 days during the Pre-examination stage. This is the preparation stage for the examination of the application. You must register during this time to get your interested party reference and make sure your comments are taken into account.

For information on how to register to have your say, please see the Planning Inspectorate's [webpage](#). For further detail, please see the Planning Inspectorate's [Advice Note 8.2](#) on how to register to participate in an examination.



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For the latest information on our scheme, including key dates and next steps, please visit our scheme [webpage](#).

1D) What are the next steps?

The scheme is now in the Pre-examination stage. For information on the Pre-examination stage, please see the Planning Inspectorate's [webpage](#).

The examining authority will be appointed and be made up of one or more inspectors. Anyone who wants to have their say will be able to register at this stage. We will publish that the application has been accepted by the Planning Inspectorate, including when and how parties can register to get involved. The time period for registering will be no less than 30 days. The Pre-examination stage usually takes about three months.

The next stage will be the Examination stage. The examining authority will ask questions about the proposed scheme. We (the applicant) and anyone who has registered to have their say can get involved and submit comments at each deadline in the timetable. You can also attend hearings that may take place. This stage takes up to 6 months.

For information on the Examination stage, please see the Planning Inspectorate's [webpage](#).

Further information on the process for NSIPs is provided on the Planning Inspectorate's [webpage](#). The Planning Inspectorate's [Advice Note 8](#) provides an overview of the nationally significant infrastructure process for members of the public. Information and signposting on the process for NSIPs is provided in Section 4 of these FAQs.

We are currently working to the following key milestones:

- Early 2025 – Decision expected.
- 2025 – Work commences (subject to planning consent).
- 2027 – Work complete (subject to planning consent).

1E) Has an Equality Impact Assessment been undertaken for the scheme?

Yes, we have produced an Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) for the scheme. The EqIA examines the likelihood or actual effects of the scheme that could occur during planning, construction, and operation, on social groups as defined in the Equality Act 2010 as Protected Characteristic Groups (PCG).

The EqIA was submitted as part of our DCO application in December 2023. Where required, the EqIA will be reviewed and updated as the scheme progresses, in line with phases of work and new information relevant to the EqIA. The EqIA has and will continue to be used to inform the scheme design, so that identified negative impacts can be mitigated as much as possible, and any opportunities for furthering equality aims are taken. The recommendations made in the EqIA are also aligned to those in the Register of Environmental Actions and Commitments (REAC), to ensure all impacts are captured, mitigated and monitored accordingly.

We have produced an EqIA to demonstrate that we have paid due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) which came into force in April 2011. Under the PSED, we are required to have due regard for the need to achieve the objectives set out under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, to:



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- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010.
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

2) Scheme supporters

2A) Who are Gloucestershire County Council and what is their role?

Gloucestershire County Council is the Highway Authority for Gloucestershire. Alongside day-to-day highway and maintenance work and smaller improvements schemes, Gloucestershire County Council also undertakes major projects on key parts of the road network.

The M5 Junction 10 Improvements Scheme will be delivered by Gloucestershire County Council, with support from National Highways and Homes England.

For more information about Gloucestershire County Council, see our [website](#).

2B) Who are National Highways and what is their role?

National Highways, previously known as Highways England, is the government-owned company charged with operating, maintaining, and improving England's motorways and major A roads. In the South-West, its network totals 620 miles, and encompasses the M5 motorway amongst other major roads in Gloucestershire.

National Highways have been working closely with us on the development of the M5 Junction 10 Improvements Scheme to date and will continue to support it moving forward. Its formal role is that of a statutory consultee for the Gloucestershire County Council-led scheme.

For more information about National Highways, see their [website](#).

2C) Who are Homes England and what is their role?

Homes England is the government's housing agency. We are working with Homes England to secure infrastructure funding. They have the appetite, influence, expertise, and resources to drive positive market change. By using their investment products to drive market change and releasing more land to developers who want to make a difference, they are making possible the new homes that England needs and helping to improve neighbourhoods and grow communities.

The Housing Infrastructure Fund is administered and monitored by Homes England. The programme is helping to deliver up to 300,000 new homes across England by providing local authorities with grant funding for new infrastructure to unlock homes in areas of greatest housing demand.

For more information about Homes England, see their [website](#).



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3) Funding

3A) Who is funding the scheme?

We submitted a bid in March 2019 to Homes England for funding for the scheme. In March 2020, the council was informed that this bid to Homes England had been successful and £249 million of funding was allocated. Homes England are funding the M5 Junction 10 Improvements Scheme, Arle Court Park and Ride Scheme and the A38/A4019 Junction Improvements at Coombe Hill.

3B) Why isn't the upgrade to Arle Court Park and Ride included in this scheme?

An upgrade to Arle Court Park and Ride was included as part of the package of improvements funded by Homes England however, we have decided to take this forward through a different planning route meaning that this scheme will be progressed separately.

More information about the Arle Court Transport Hub proposals can be found [here](#).

3C) Why aren't the A38/A4019 Junction Improvements at Coombe Hill included in this scheme?

Since finishing our options consultation in autumn 2020, we have decided to progress the A38/A4019 Junction Improvements at Coombe Hill as a separate scheme. This will provide a more resilient local road network in advance of the M5 Junction 10 Improvements Scheme works commencing. All feedback given during the options consultation phase has been considered and we continue work with the local community and our stakeholders as the scheme design progresses. Please visit this [website](#) for the latest information.

3D) Does funding have to be spent on M5 Junction 10?

The funding from Homes England must be spent on infrastructure to unlock new housing developments and cannot be spent on routine maintenance or other projects. These funds are in addition to the highway budget that Gloucestershire County Council can spend on routine maintenance of county roads.

3E) Does the positive funding announcement guarantee that the M5 Junction 10 improvements will happen?

The successful funding bid announced by Homes England does not mean that the scheme will automatically go ahead.

On 19 December 2023, we submitted our DCO application to the Planning Inspectorate. Our application has been reviewed by the Planning Inspectorate, and on 16 January 2024 our DCO application was accepted for examination. We are now in the Pre-examination stage of the NSIP planning process.

After the Examination stage, the examining authority will write its recommendation report. This must be completed and sent to the relevant Secretary of State within three months of the end of examination. The Decision stage is when the relevant Secretary of State reviews the report and makes the final decision. They will have three months to make a decision. Once the Secretary of State has made a decision, there will be a six-week period where people can challenge the decision in the high court. This is called a judicial review. For information on the process for NSIPs, please see the Planning Inspectorate's [webpage](#).



4. Development Consent Order process

4A) What is a Development Consent Order, and why is it needed?

The M5 Junction 10 Improvements Scheme is categorised as a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP) under the Planning Act 2008. As such, an application for a DCO is required to obtain consent to construct the scheme, rather than the traditional route of applying for planning permission, under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, from the local planning authorities. For more information on this process, please visit the Planning Inspectorate's [website](#).

4B) What is the Development Consent Order process and how does it work?

The DCO process includes multiple stages, these are as follows:

- Pre-application (completed).
- Acceptance (completed).
- Pre-examination (current stage, 3 months approximately).
- Examination (up to 6 months).
- Recommendation (3 months).
- Decision (3 months).

Once the Secretary of State has made a decision, there will be a 6-week period where people can challenge the decision in the high court. This is called a judicial review.

For more information about the process for NSIPs, please visit the Planning Inspectorate's [webpage](#) or call the Planning Inspectorate on 0303 444 5000. The Planning Inspectorate have produced a number of advice notes to support the public in participating in the NSIP planning process, these advice notes are available on the Planning Inspectorate's [webpage](#). The Planning Inspectorate's [Advice Note 8](#) provides an overview of the NSIP planning process for members of the public.

Pre-examination stage

The examining authority will be appointed and will be made up of one or more inspectors. Anyone who wants to have their say will be able to register at this stage.

We will publish that the application has been accepted by the Planning Inspectorate, including when and how parties can register to get involved. The time period for registering will be no less than 30 days.

The Pre-examination stage usually takes about three months. For information on the Pre-examination stage, please see the Planning Inspectorate's [webpage](#).

Examination stage

The examining authority will ask questions about the proposed scheme. We (the applicant) and anyone who has registered to have their say can get involved and submit comments at each deadline in the timetable. You can also attend hearings that may take place.

This stage takes up to 6 months. For information on the Examination stage, please see the Planning Inspectorate's [webpage](#).



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Recommendation stage

The examining authority will write its recommendation report. This must be completed and sent to the relevant Secretary of State within 3 months of the end of examination. For information on the Recommendation stage, please see the Planning Inspectorate's [webpage](#).

Decision stage

The Decision stage is when the relevant Secretary of State then reviews the report and makes the final decision. They will have 3 months to make a decision. For information on the Decision stage, please see the Planning Inspectorate's [webpage](#).

Judicial review

Once the Secretary of State has made a decision, there will be a 6-week period where people can challenge the decision in the high court. This is called a judicial review. For more information on the judicial review, please see the Planning Inspectorate's [webpage](#).

4C) How can I get involved in the Development Consent Order process?

We are now in the Pre-examination stage of the NSIP planning process.

We will publish that the application has been accepted by the Planning Inspectorate and include when and how parties can register to get involved. Registration will be open for at least 30 days, during the Pre-examination stage. This is the preparation stage for the examination of the application. You must register during this time to get your interested party reference and make sure your comments are taken into account.

For information on how to register to have your say, please see the Planning Inspectorate's [webpage](#). For further detail, please see the Planning Inspectorate's [Advice Note 8.2](#) on how to register to participate in an Examination.

5) Scheme construction and works

5A) Would access remain open to M5 Junction 10 whilst works are ongoing?

We have prepared a traffic management plan, and we have assumed that the existing slip roads on and off the M5 at Junction 10 will be closed for a substantial period during construction. This closure will support our contractor in accelerating the construction works, which will minimise disruption overall.

We will continue to develop and review our traffic management plan by working with the scheme contractor, Galliford Try, and with National Highways, to ensure that we minimise disruption linked to the works wherever possible, considering local residents and businesses.

5B) Who is the scheme contractor and what is their role?

Following a thorough and competitive tender process, Galliford Try was appointed as the scheme contractor in June 2023. Galliford Try are one of the UK's leading construction groups, delivering lasting change for the communities they work in. For more information on Galliford Try, please see their [website](#).



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Galliford Try provided support with our DCO application to the Planning Inspectorate. Galliford Try will work to ensure the scheme delivers best value for money and is achieved within budget and on time. Galliford Try will also work alongside the scheme consultants, AtkinsRéalis, to continue ongoing engagement with key stakeholders. For more information on the appointment of Galliford Try, please see our [press release](#).

6) Consultation on the scheme

6A) How have you consulted on the scheme?

We have detailed all consultation undertaken on the scheme in a Consultation Report, which was submitted as part of our DCO application to the Planning Inspectorate. The Consultation Report is available to view on the Planning Inspectorate's scheme [webpage](#). The Consultation Report provides an in-depth explanation of our adherence to statutory requirements under the Planning Act 2008, across all engagement activities undertaken on the project. It also provides detail of our responses to feedback received and explains any scheme design changes made, or not made in response.

A summary of our consultation throughout the scheme, feedback received, and changes made as a result is provided below.

Consultation activity	Date
Non statutory options consultation	14 October 2020 to 25 November 2020
Preferred Route Announcement	16 June 2021
Statutory consultation	08 December 2021 to 15 February 2022
Additional targeted consultation 1	08 August 2022 to 05 September 2022
Additional targeted consultation 2	18 January 2023 to 16 February 2023
Additional targeted consultation 3	29 May 2023 to 27 June 2023

Non-statutory options consultation and Preferred Route Announcement

We held a non-statutory options consultation between 14 October and 25 November 2020 where we presented a number of options for you to provide feedback on. The purpose of the options consultation was to provide an early opportunity for stakeholders, the local community, public, and other interested parties to be informed of, and provide their views on the options.

Feedback was primarily received via a feedback survey. We received 440 survey responses supplemented by 36 written responses (18 from stakeholders and 18 from the public). More than 80% of consultation survey respondents agreed or strongly agreed there was a need for the scheme, and there was a high level of support for all scheme elements.

The feedback from our options consultation helped to inform our decision on the Preferred Route and the development of the scheme design to progress to our statutory consultation. This Preferred Route Announcement (PRA) was published on 16 June 2021. The PRA also included the decision to progress the A38/A4019 Junction Improvements at Coombe Hill as a separate scheme in order to accelerate its delivery programme, and to provide a more resilient local road network in advance of our M5 Junction 10 Improvements Scheme.

The options consultation report and PRA leaflet are available on our scheme [webpage](#). We have detailed all consultation undertaken on the scheme in a Consultation Report, which



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was submitted as part of our DCO application to the Planning Inspectorate. The Consultation Report is available to view on the Planning Inspectorate's scheme [webpage](#).

Statutory consultation

We held a statutory consultation between 08 December 2021 and 15 February 2022. Our statutory consultation provided an opportunity to gather feedback on our proposed scheme. Our consultation included a series of face-to-face and virtual consultation events held during the consultation period, which provided multiple platforms for the local community and stakeholders to learn more about the proposed scheme and have their say. At these consultation events, attendees had the opportunity to listen to members of the project team present the proposals and ask any questions they may have had. These events were free, open to everyone, and planned for a range of times.

Our primary tool for collecting feedback was via a consultation survey. We received a total of 579 survey responses during the consultation (560 online and 19 hardcopies), supplemented by 38 written responses from stakeholders and members of the public. There was broad agreement on the need for our scheme, with 74% of survey respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing with our proposals for improvements to M5 Junction 10.

In response to the views that you provided throughout our statutory consultation, a number of changes were made to the scheme. These are summarised below:

- We did not take forward an option to close off right turns off the A4019 at Gallagher Retail Park junction.
- We plan to keep Withybridge Lane open, understanding that respondents do not want access restricted.
- We extended the segregated footway and cycleway on the A4019 and Junction 10 (within our scheme boundary).
- We rearranged proposed new junction locations on the A4019 addressing residents' concerns around safety and access.
- We kept access open for people and livestock under the River Chelt bridge.

These changes demonstrate how valuable your feedback has been in helping us to identify where we can make improvements based on your concerns.

We published a statutory public consultation report in summer 2022 which detailed how our statutory consultation was carried out and how we analysed your responses. We also provided the results of the analysis and how your responses were considered. This report and a summary report are available on our scheme [webpage](#). We have detailed all consultation undertaken on the scheme in a Consultation Report, which was submitted as part of our DCO application to the Planning Inspectorate. The Consultation Report is available to view on the Planning Inspectorate's scheme [webpage](#).

Additional targeted consultation 1

Following our statutory consultation, aspects of our scheme proposals changed. This was due either to engagement with stakeholders, responses to our statutory consultation, and/or decisions made to produce a better scheme. Therefore, to comply with the Planning Act 2008, we undertook targeted consultation on these changes with the relevant prescribed consultees and Persons with an Interest in Land between Monday 08 August 2022 and Monday 05 September 2022. The changes included several minor amendments to the red



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line boundary of the scheme to accommodate design changes and environmental mitigation, and changes in layout with an option for future provision of a bus lane.

Detail on our approach, responses received, and any changes made or not made are provided in the Consultation Report. The Consultation Report is available to view on the Planning Inspectorate's scheme [webpage](#).

Additional targeted consultation 2

As a result of feedback received during our statutory consultation, targeted consultation, and ongoing engagement with stakeholders, we made further proposed changes to our scheme design. To comply with the Planning Act 2008, we held a further targeted consultation on these proposed changes with relevant prescribed consultees and Persons with an Interest in Land between Wednesday 18 January 2023 and Thursday 16 February 2023.

Detail on our approach, responses received, and any changes made or not made are provided in the Consultation Report. The Consultation Report is available to view on the Planning Inspectorate's scheme [webpage](#).

Additional targeted consultation 3

Following feedback from various stakeholders, we proposed to include a bus lane on the A4019 eastbound carriageway from Cheltenham West Community Fire and Rescue Station to Gallagher Junction. To comply with the Planning Act 2008, we held a targeted consultation on the proposed change with relevant prescribed consultees, Persons with an Interest in Land, and key stakeholders between Monday 29 May 2023 and Tuesday 27 June 2023.

Detail on our approach, responses received, and any changes made or not made are provided in the Consultation Report. The Consultation Report is available to view on the Planning Inspectorate's scheme [webpage](#).

Ongoing engagement

Throughout the development of our scheme, we have had regular engagement with the public, landowners and stakeholders. This has included meetings with key stakeholders, attendance at parish council meetings, and individual meetings/dialogue with members of the local community. We have had ongoing communication with stakeholders and the public, for example through our dedicated email inbox (M5Junction10@atkinsrealis.com), and through our scheme [webpage](#).

A full explanation of all consultation and engagement with stakeholders throughout the development of our scheme is provided in the Consultation Report, which is available on the Planning Inspectorate's scheme [webpage](#).

6B) How have you ensured your consultations have been accessible?

We have taken steps to ensure our consultations have been accessible, which has informed our approach to our consultation materials, consultation events, feedback options and more.

Consultation materials



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For both our options and statutory consultations, we produced a range of accessible consultation materials including dedicated consultation websites and consultation brochures, that were promoted to the public via posters, leaflets, and social media.

All promotional and consultation materials were provided in a clear and accessible format. All digital consultation materials were provided in a clear and uncomplicated format that considered those with learning disabilities, colour blindness, and visual impairments in compliance with Web Content Accessibility Guide (WCAG) 2.0 standards. Steps taken to ensure materials were accessible included:

- Using plain English throughout. Where this was not possible, for instance with engineering terms, a definition was provided.
- The use of simplified plans.
- Hard copy materials could be sent by post free of charge on request, and were made available in public places to ensure materials were accessible to those who did not have access to the internet or have difficulty navigating digital materials.

We also encouraged members of the public to contact the project team with any queries via the M5 Junction 10 email inbox and project phoneline.

Events

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, our options consultation in autumn 2020 was fully digital and no face-to-face engagement took place, in line with government guidelines at the time of consultation and following the guidance of the Consultation Institute (tCI).

Our statutory consultation included a series of face-to-face and virtual consultation events held during the consultation period, which provided multiple platforms for the local community and stakeholders to learn more about the proposed scheme and have their say. These events were free, open to everyone, and planned for a range of times.

Our approach of using a mix of face-to-face and virtual consultation events was considered in line with COVID-19 guidelines at the time. We implemented a number of important measures in line with advice and guidance at the time from central and local government to reassure and protect those attending events, such as implementing one-way systems and providing sanitising stations.

Feedback

For both our options and statutory consultations, our primary tool for collecting feedback was via a consultation survey. For both consultations, the survey was available online via the dedicated consultation website, or a paper copy and freepost envelope could be requested free of charge. At our face-to-face statutory consultation events, paper copies of surveys could be completed or online surveys could be completed via dedicated iPads. For both our options and statutory consultations, a dedicated phone line was provided for those unable to



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access a digital or paper copy of the consultation materials and/or survey. If required, the survey could be completed over the phone via our customer service team.

7) Land and property matters

7A) How has consultation informed the land take of the scheme?

Any changes to the scheme design which informed land take were consulted on, either through the statutory consultation or through targeted consultations.

Additionally, consultation undertaken throughout the development of the scheme has informed the overall land take required. For example, following our statutory consultation, some design changes were made to accommodate or exclude specific requirements. We then undertook targeted consultation on those proposed design changes, which resulted in some alterations to the red line boundary and the land required for the scheme.

We have been in dialogue with landowners throughout the scheme and all affected parties were contacted during our statutory consultation period and targeted consultation periods. For information on how we have consulted on the scheme, please see Question 6A.

We will continue to engage with landowners through our land agent, Carter Jonas, throughout the DCO process. If you feel that you should have been contacted over land ownership in relation to the proposed scheme but have not, please contact us at M5Junction10@atkinsrealis.com.

7B) Is my land / property subject to a Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO)?

Where land, property and rights are required to deliver the scheme, it is our clear preference to acquire these by early voluntary negotiation. Negotiations will continue up until and during the process of granting the DCO. If the DCO is granted, compulsory purchase powers would become available to enable the acquisition of land and rights not successfully acquired by negotiation.

Landowners and tenants that might be affected have been offered meetings throughout the process and we will continue to work closely with them throughout the DCO process and the development of the scheme.

7C) What land is required for the scheme and who owns this?

Where land and property is required on a permanent basis, we have been in consultation with landowners throughout the scheme. All affected parties were contacted during our statutory consultation period and targeted consultation periods. We will continue to engage with landowners through our land agent, Carter Jonas, throughout the process. If you feel that you should have been contacted over land ownership in relation to the proposed scheme but have not, please contact us at M5Junction10@atkinsrealis.com.

As part of our DCO application, the land required for the scheme and the ownership of this land has been detailed in the Book of Reference and the Statement of Reasons documents. These have been published as part of our DCO application, and are available to view on the Planning Inspectorate's scheme [webpage](#).



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The Statement of Reasons sets out why compulsory acquisition and temporary possession powers are being sought in the DCO application. The Statement of Reasons details for each land parcel whether land or rights are required on a permanent or temporary basis together with the progress of the negotiations for all land parcels.

The Book of Reference lists the plots of land and their ownership over which permanent and temporary acquisition or rights are required.

Both the Book of Reference and Statement of Reasons have been prepared and submitted in compliance with Regulation 5(2)(d) of the Infrastructure Planning (Applications: Prescribed Forms and Procedure) Regulations 2009, as amended, and in accordance with the Department for Communities and Local Government [guidance](#).

8) Traffic and congestion

8A) Will the scheme reduce the congestion and queuing on the M5?

New housing and employment development sites are proposed close to Junction 10 on the M5, including the West and North West Cheltenham Development Areas (also referred to as the Golden Valley and Elms Park developments, respectively). Land safeguarded for future development is also identified for the area, adjacent to the M5 Junction 10 and to the south of the B4634 (to the north-west and west of Cheltenham respectively). To unlock these housing and job opportunities, there is a need to ensure that there is sufficient capacity to accommodate the increased motorised and nonmotorised users these developments will generate, within a sustainable transport context. There is also a need to address existing pressure on the local highway network.

The ongoing work undertaken on modelling journey time and congestion demonstrates that the M5 Junction 10 Improvements Scheme will improve the operation of the motorway junction and reduce queuing on the A4019.

The design of the scheme has been guided by traffic modelling to ensure that the highway network has adequate capacity and to avoid traffic queues extending onto the motorway. The traffic modelling considers both planned and potential developments, including safeguarded land, as identified in the Joint Core Strategy (JCS). More information on the JCS can be found [here](#). Current assessments suggest that the scheme would largely meet future travel demands in the scheme area. Subject to planning consent being granted, once works are completed and the road is open to the public, traffic patterns in the area will be monitored and any emerging issues will be addressed.

8B) What will happen to traffic if the motorway junction is upgraded?

Our scheme aims to provide a more direct route from the M5 to North and West Cheltenham, diverting traffic away from unsuitable local roads such as Princess Elizabeth Way. This will improve journey times for local users and have positive quality of life benefits. Initial evaluations indicate that our scheme will effectively address the anticipated increase in travel demand resulting from both natural traffic growth and the proposed Elms Park and Golden Valley Developments along the A4019 and Old Gloucester Road.

Our scheme proposes to make the M5 Junction 10 an all-movement junction, which would allow traffic, currently using M5 Junction 11 to access the A4019 via the A40 and Princess Elizabeth Way, to travel to M5 Junction 10 and reach the same destination. This is



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anticipated to decrease the volume of traffic that would typically use the A40 and Princess Elizabeth Way.

To ensure that the highway network has sufficient capacity for the traffic flow and to prevent queues from extending onto the motorway, traffic modelling has been conducted as part of the design process. This traffic modelling information is detailed in the Transport Assessment which was submitted as part of our DCO application. The Transport Assessment is available on the Planning Inspectorate's scheme [webpage](#).

8C) What traffic modelling has been undertaken?

To determine how our scheme would affect the road network around the M5 Junction 10 and A4019 corridor, a computer programme called Paramics Discovery was used to create a simulation model. This model is based on real-world data and considers various factors that affect traffic, such as the volume of vehicles on the road and the layout of the roads themselves. By running the simulation model, we could predict how our scheme will affect traffic flow in the area, both on major roads and smaller local streets.

Before analysing the transportation impacts of the proposed development, the assessment methodology was established. The Gloucestershire Countywide Traffic Model (GCTM) was then used to assess how the development will affect traffic in the area in the planned opening year and 2042 (the design year).

For information on how we plan to manage traffic related to construction works, please see Question 5A which provides an overview of our traffic management plan. Traffic modelling information is detailed in the Transport Assessment which was submitted as part of our DCO application. The Transport Assessment is available on the Planning Inspectorate's scheme [webpage](#).

8D) Will speed limits be introduced across the scheme?

As part of the scheme design, we are proposing to change speed limits on the A4019 compared to existing speed limits. Road safety is a high priority, and once the scheme is operational we will work with local partner organisations to introduce reduced speed limits where local residents have expressed the need for slower speeds.

The scheme design has been developed in line with current design standards and has been subject to an Initial Road Safety Audit. The design will be subject to further Road Safety Audits during detail design phase and post construction to ensure the safety of all users.

The speed limit is a key factor that is considered when designing a road network to ensure that it is safe and efficient for all road users. When designing a road network, engineers will consider a range of factors that can affect the safe and efficient movement of traffic, including the expected traffic volumes, the road alignment, the topography of the area, and the surrounding environment.

We are continuing to consider speed reduction measures such as fixed speed limit signs, speed cameras and traffic calming measures. We will liaise with the police to agree suitable speed limits, recognising the increased presence of traffic signal-controlled junctions and the increasingly urban character of the area from the adjacent development.



9) Environment, ecology, and surveys

9A) What changes have been made to the scheme since the statutory consultation relating to the environment?

A full account of the environmental impact of our scheme is detailed in the Environmental Statement, which has been published as part of our DCO application and is available on the Planning Inspectorate's scheme [webpage](#). We have made a number of changes to increase the environmental benefit and mitigate any negative environmental impacts arising from the scheme. These changes have been made as a result of consultation, engagement and/or decisions made to better the scheme. Changes are detailed in the Consultation Report, which was published alongside the Environmental Statement.

The following are some key changes to the scheme following our statutory consultation:

- Due to a variety of concerns regarding the residual effect on bats as well as active travel provision linking segregated routes to local networks, we included the provision of an underpass on the A4019 for bat mitigation. The underpass is also shared use and designed to accommodate non-motorised users, including equestrians.
- Due to concerns regarding the residual effect on bats, a structure for roosting bats will be created in the flood storage area to mitigate the loss of roosts in scheme construction. A structure for roosting bats will also be created east of Uckington to mitigate the loss of roosts in the construction of the scheme.
- Due to concerns regarding the residual effect on bats, with regards to their ability to forage to the north and south of the A4019, we removed sections of street lighting to the east and west of Uckington to provide dark corridors for bats to cross the road in these locations.
- Due to concern over the loss of wildlife and consequent environmental impact and concerns regarding the replacement of lost habitat, further changes were made to the flood storage area to improve the biodiversity value within the scheme.
- Due to a variety of concerns regarding the proposed link between Cooks Lane and Moat Lane, this proposed link was removed.
- Due to concerns regarding the Uckington Moated Site, a highly designated heritage asset, the Moat Lane/A4019 Junction was realigned so that the Moat House buildings are no longer in sight of this junction.
- Due to concerns regarding what may happen to animals due to the removal of trees and hedgerows, mitigation measures were included in the environment design to address losses in existing vegetation caused by the scheme construction. Some of these mitigation measures will be completed before construction.

9B) How does this scheme reflect the recent action plan set out as part of Gloucestershire County Council's response to the UK Government Climate Emergency announcement?

We are committed to creating a sustainable future. We jointly hosted a Climate Change Summit in May 2019 with the Gloucestershire Local Enterprise Partnership (GFirst LEP), and as a result, we will be updating our Climate Change Strategy for the county. For more information, and to view our previous Corporate Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan, visit this [webpage](#).



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All Gloucestershire councils have now declared a climate emergency. Our declaration in May 2019 included commitments for us to be net zero by 2030, and deliver a carbon neutral county by 2050, working with partners to deliver an 80% reduction by 2030.

Our approach to how we tackle climate change is also being informed by national policy, such as the Transport Decarbonisation Plan that presents a view of current and future technology enabling a transition to a low carbon transport system without people needing to change their lifestyles.

Our Local Transport Plan (LTP) is in the process of being updated, and as part of this, we are considering decarbonising road and rail freight by 2050.

As a local authority, it is our role to ensure that anyone who lives, works or travels through Gloucestershire is prepared for the impacts of climate change; that's why it's important that we invest in, maintain and improve Gloucestershire's transport network, however, we recognise that this should not be at great expense to the local environment.

When compared to the existing road network, the implementation of the M5 Junction 10 Improvements Scheme may result in a reduction in emissions due to reducing stop-start traffic on local roads.

9C) What type of environmental assessment are you undertaking and what legislation are you following?

The M5 Junction 10 Improvements Scheme has been categorised as a NSIP and therefore requires a DCO. An Environmental Impact Assessment was required for the scheme under the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations 2017. An Environmental Statement, the output from the Environmental Impact Assessment, has been developed and submitted as part of our DCO application for the scheme. The Environmental Statement provides a detailed explanation of all assessment undertaken, and is available on the Planning Inspectorate's scheme [webpage](#).

The approach to the Environmental Impact Assessment included:

- Establishing the baseline, by gathering information about the environment to enable the environmental constraints and opportunities to be identified. Receptors are identified and their sensitivity or vulnerability to change is established. A receptor is something that is affected through the construction or operation of the scheme, and could include people, buildings, plants, bodies of water, and more.
- Identifying the potential adverse and beneficial impacts of the scheme (without mitigation) on the environmental receptors identified in the baseline, for the construction and operation phases.
- Developing mitigation measures to avoid, reduce or offset the potential adverse environmental impacts, and where possible to enhance beneficial effects.
- Combining the magnitude of residual impacts, such as soil and land disturbance, noise and vibration, and dust and air quality issues, with the sensitivity of receptors allows for a prediction of the likely significant effects of the construction site on receptors, local communities, and the environment.

Dependent upon the topic, the comparison has been carried out for the baseline year and a future assessment year or a series of future assessment years (15 years after opening, or the worst year in the first 15 years of operation).



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We undertook assessments on carbon dioxide (CO₂) equivalent emissions and Biodiversity Net Gain alongside other assessments and measures to guide the scheme development. Our approach has been led by legislation on environmental assessment in order to assess and understand any impacts and mitigation required. For example, relevant legislation guided our approach to the management of protected species on sites, the management of drainage and rainwater, and producing an Environmental Management Plan as part of the Environmental Statement.

Consideration has been given to the potential for major events (such as natural disasters or accidents caused by human activity) to interact with the scheme. In relation to this scheme, it has been concluded that the potential for major events is no greater for the scheme than for other similar schemes in the UK and for other receptors locally. Major climate events are considered in the assessment of the effects of climate on the scheme. Other major events have been scoped out of further consideration.

A precautionary approach was applied to the assessment undertaken, so that the assessment detailed in the Environmental Statement presents a 'most likely worst case' scenario of the extent and impacts of the scheme. This is because implementing projects on the ground sometimes requires minor changes, and this approach to assessment allows for these minor changes to have been considered.

9D) I've been contacted about surveys, why do you want to survey my land?

Environmental surveys were carried out on all land that is close to any part of the scheme. Surveying this area has allowed us to track and understand wildlife movements that occur in the vicinity of our proposals.

We will always contact landowners in advance of a survey and carry necessary ID when visiting their land. It is important to note that we are aware of fraudulent activity where individuals impersonate surveyors and conduct fake surveys. As such, we encourage landowners to always ask for appropriate identification and to contact us if they have any doubts about the legitimacy of a surveyor. If you have any concerns or queries regarding surveys, please contact the project team by emailing M5Junction10@atkinsrealis.com.

9E) What type of environmental surveys will be undertaken on my land and why?

Environmental surveys have helped us to understand what wildlife and habitats are present, and whether there are any protected species that need to be considered when developing the design for the scheme.

All of the surveys are undertaken on foot, by specialist surveyors, and the type of survey undertaken depends on the nature of the land, for example whether it contains ponds or lakes, hedges or woodland, or flowing water or rivers. The surveys undertaken have investigated:

- Bats: conducted at dusk or dawn to record bat activity.
- Dormice: involved the deployment of plastic/wood nest tubes in woodland hedgerow and scrub habitats, which are then checked at regular intervals for signs of dormice.
- Otter and water vole: search of watercourses for signs of use by otter and water vole.
- Breeding and wintering birds: the presence of breeding and wintering birds.



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- Reptiles: involved the deployment of artificial refuges (usually small pieces of roofing material) in suitable grassland habitats, which are then checked for the presence of basking reptiles.
- Habitat suitability and eDNA: the suitability of habitats for great crested newts and the collection of water samples from suitable waterbodies.
- Invertebrates: the suitability of habitats for invertebrates.
- Hedgerows: the plant species present in the hedgerows and their condition.
- Invasive plants: for the presence of invasive non-native species of plants.

If you were contacted about undertaking surveys on your land, someone from our survey coordination team would have contacted you ahead of surveys taking place to provide you with more details about the survey specifics and to reconfirm your consent.

9F) How will the scheme impact biodiversity and how will this be mitigated?

Based on the scheme design, our scheme is projected to achieve a positive net gain in biodiversity within the current DCO limits.

Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) is an approach which aims to leave the natural environment in a measurably better state than beforehand. Natural England have developed an approach to BNG which has been applied to the scheme, measuring the existing (pre-construction) habitats, and measuring predicted losses and gains, as part of the development of the scheme design. Whilst there would be initial habitat loss during site clearance, the measures incorporated in the scheme design will ultimately lead to habitat gains. An assessment of the BNG for the preliminary design of the scheme has been undertaken using the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) Metric 3.0. The methodology applied and the corresponding results are reported as part of the Environmental Statement.

In September 2023, the Government confirmed that upcoming legislation will formalise mandatory BNG, with new housing, commercial and infrastructure developments required to deliver 10% BNG to ensure a net positive impact for the local environment. Implementation of this requirement for NSIPs, such as our M5 Junction 10 Improvements Scheme, is planned for 2025. As stated, based on the scheme design, our scheme is projected to achieve a positive net gain in biodiversity within the current DCO limits. For more information on the upcoming changes, please see the [press release](#) from DEFRA, Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, and Trudy Harrison MP.

We are implementing a wide range of mitigation measures to support biodiversity as part of the M5 Junction 10 Improvements Scheme. These measures include:

- The design of the River Chelt bridge as a clear span structure over the river to avoid direct impacts on the river and riverbanks and ensure fauna can continue to move along the river unimpeded.
- Wildlife crossings underneath the new Link Road, and the A4019.
- Creation of new habitats including woodland, scrub, hedgerows, and species-rich grassland, as well as wetland habitats with areas of water present for all or part of the year.
- Minimization of light spill from any required lighting beyond the road.
- Creation of green corridors to connect with the wider area and establish a robust habitat network.
- Inclusion of a drainage design to reduce flood risks and avoid water quality impacts to local watercourses.



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Overall, the measures taken ensure that the scheme will provide more higher quality habitat for wildlife in the long term than is currently available, and significant adverse effects on biodiversity resources are not anticipated.

Alongside these measures, the flood management strategy will provide a flood storage area adjacent to Junction 10 of the M5, and the layout and landscape design of this area is being developed to deliver a range of new habitat creation which will ensure that the scheme will provide more higher quality habitat in the long term than is currently available. An Environmental Statement has been developed and published as part of our DCO application, and is available on the Planning Inspectorate's scheme [webpage](#).

9G) How will the scheme impact air quality and how will this be mitigated?

An Environmental Statement has been developed and published as part of our DCO application, and is available on the Planning Inspectorate's scheme [webpage](#).

As indicated in the environmental assessment proposed for the scheme, impacts were evaluated during both the construction and operational phases. Factors such as dust emissions and construction traffic were taken into account during the construction phase, while the assessment during the operational phase considered impacts on human health, compliance risks, and designated habitats. It is anticipated that any air quality impacts resulting from construction activities will be temporary and effectively mitigated through the implementation of best practices and appropriate measures. Overall, in the initial year, the scheme is not projected to have a significant adverse effect on air quality to human health receptors or designated habitats.

The redesign of M5 Junction 10 and the provision of the Link Road aims to alter traffic patterns, resulting in decreased annual mean nitrogen dioxide concentrations for most areas. Improved connectivity between the Strategic Road Network (SRN) and the local transport network in West and North-West Cheltenham is expected to contribute to these reductions. An air quality assessment, conducted according to industry best practice guidance (LA105), examined the potential impact on air quality, specifically nitrogen deposition from road traffic emissions on designated habitats within 200m of the affected road network. The assessment identified six non-statutory designated sites and one veteran tree in close proximity to the road network. Results indicated air quality improvements and reduced nitrogen deposition rates at all locations upon implementing the scheme.

9H) How will the scheme impact noise pollution, and how will this be mitigated?

An Environmental Statement has been developed and published as part of our DCO application, and is available on the Planning Inspectorate's scheme [webpage](#).

The noise and vibration section of the Environmental Statement presents the assessment of the scheme's effects on noise and vibration, considering both construction and operational phases, which result from construction activities and road traffic. Road traffic, primarily from vehicles using the existing M5 and the existing A4019 Tewkesbury Road, serves as the dominant source of noise near the scheme. Within or near the scheme, there are eight Noise Important Areas (NIAs) identified by strategic noise mapping conducted by DEFRA, indicating areas where the highest noise levels from major roads affect 1% of the population.

The Environmental Statement identifies potential impacts once the scheme is operational including positive and/or negative impacts on noise, for example those linked to changes in traffic flows, speeds, and composition. The scheme has the potential to have an impact on



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noise levels during the construction phase and when in operation, due to changes in traffic on the affected road network - that is, roads will experience a change in traffic due to the scheme.

A construction noise assessment has been undertaken. This determined that daytime works within 50m of a noise sensitive property, evening or weekend works within 100m of a noise sensitive property, or night-time works within 300m of a noise sensitive property have the potential to lead to a significant noise effect.

The impacts of noise during the construction stage will be minimised through the implementation of best practice measures during construction, and the siting of construction compounds away from properties, where possible. During construction, local residents will be kept informed of the progress of the works, and when the noisiest activities will be taking place. In most cases, where it is unavoidable for roadworks to be close to residential properties, they will not be in place for lengthy periods. This means that construction noise is not anticipated to lead to significant effects, avoiding the need for temporary rehousing or noise insulation.

The levels of construction vibration are likely to lead to a minor to moderate impact during ground compaction, but since the works will not be in place for lengthy periods, this is not anticipated to lead to significant effects.

Noise barriers are included in the design as a mitigation measure to minimise noise impacts during the operational stage, for example within NIAs. The details of the noise barriers with regards to their construction and the materials used will be undertaken as part of the detailed design stage for the scheme and can be reviewed in the Environmental Statement which is available on the Planning Inspectorate's scheme [webpage](#). Alongside noise barriers, new road surfacing is proposed throughout the scheme which will reduce noise and vibration levels and traffic in the operational stage.

9J) How will the scheme impact flood risk, surface water and groundwater, and how will this be mitigated?

An Environmental Statement has been developed and published as part of our DCO application, and is available on the Planning Inspectorate's scheme [webpage](#).

As part of the design of the scheme, detailed modelling was undertaken to understand the baseline flood risk conditions and to evaluate the flood risk both to and from the scheme.

Any potential effects on water quality will be minimised through a drainage design that uses sustainable drainage systems, so that all water from the road surfaces is captured and treated before being released into watercourses, at greenfield run off rate. The impacts to the River Chelt will be minimised through the implementation of ecological enhancements upstream and downstream of the new watercourse crossing. The effects of the scheme on flooding will be minimised through the embedded mitigation measures within the design, including a series of culverts under part of the new Link Road, and the creation of a flood storage basin between the M5 and Withybridge Lane. These will ensure that the new road does not block the movement of flood water, to avoid causing any additional flooding.

Modelling indicates that there remain potential localised significant adverse effects to the River Chelt floodplain. This is as a result of predicted changes in the movement of water, which could cause an increase in flood depth by around 100mm for some areas of existing



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farmland. The effects of the scheme on the groundwater environment will be minimised through embedded mitigation measures within the design. Site specific groundwater data, piling risk assessments and the use of best practice have been included in the design considerations. For all other aspects of road drainage and the water environment, the scheme will not result in significant adverse effects.

9) Will widening of the A4019 increase the level of vibrations for local residents?

The Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB) guidance (reference document LA 111) states that the main source of vibration is the passage of vehicles over poor quality road surfaces from irregularities such as potholes.

The widening of the A4019 will require it to be resurfaced, meaning the road surfaces would be smooth when laid and there would be no vibration. As time goes on, maintenance would address issues with the surfacing as they arise.

It is unlikely that vibrations from such surfaces will be noticeable across the M5 Junction 10 Improvements Scheme when in operation.

10) Wider context

10A) How will the scheme impact the objectives outlined in the Joint Core Strategy?

The Joint Core Strategy (JCS) 2011 – 2031 was adopted by Gloucester City Council, Cheltenham Borough Council and Tewkesbury Borough Council in December 2017.

The JCS sets out the long-term vision and objectives for the area together with strategic policies for shaping new development and locations for new development up to 2031. Together, these policies help to provide a strategic planning framework for the JCS area, which guides future planning decisions and helps to achieve the overall vision for the area.

New housing and employment development sites are proposed close to Junction 10 on the M5, including the West and North West Cheltenham Development Areas (also referred to as the Golden Valley and Elms Park developments, respectively). Land safeguarded for future development is also identified for the area, adjacent to the M5 Junction 10 and to the south of the B4634 (to the north-west and west of Cheltenham respectively). To unlock these housing and job opportunities, there is a need to ensure that there is sufficient capacity to accommodate the increased motorised and nonmotorised users these developments will generate, within a sustainable transport context. There is also a need to address existing pressure on the local highway network.

Several of Gloucestershire County Council's policy documents have identified alterations to M5 Junction 10 as a key component for delivering new development sites. To unlock the housing and job opportunities, a highways network is needed that has the capacity to accommodate the increased traffic they will generate.

The planned housing and economic growth have been included by Cheltenham Borough, Tewkesbury Borough and Gloucester City Councils in the adopted JCS. The main purpose of the scheme is to provide key infrastructure to support the development set out in the JCS.

More information on the JCS can be found [here](#).



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10F) Is there a link between the M5 Junction 10 Improvements Scheme and other highway works?

The M5 Junction 10 Improvements Scheme is planned to be open to traffic in 2027. Whilst we make every effort to co-ordinate works to ensure the network remains safe and serviceable, essential maintenance projects must happen now.

For further information on National Highways maintenance projects planned in Gloucestershire in 2024, please see their South West Maintenance schemes [webpage](#).

10B) How will the scheme relate to the Elms Park development?

The Elms Park development is a live planning application which currently proposes improvements to the A4019 between the Cheltenham West Community Fire and Rescue Station near Homecroft Drive and Gallagher Retail Park, including delivery of a park and ride scheme. For further information on the scheme, please visit the scheme's [webpage](#). The inclusion of a bus lane in our scheme is intended to complement the proposals set out in the Elms Park Planning Application, which also includes further measures for buses travelling into Cheltenham.

10C) Is there a link between the M5 Junction 10 Improvements Scheme and the M5 Junction 9 and A46 (Ashchurch) Transport Scheme?

Our improvements around M5 Junction 10 are separate to the M5 Junction 9 and A46 (Ashchurch) Transport scheme. The interaction between the M5 Junction 9 improvements and Junction 10 improvements will be a key consideration in the design and technical work for the Junction 9 scheme.

More information about the M5 Junction 9 and A46 (Ashchurch) Transport scheme can be found [here](#).