

# M5 Junction 10 Improvements Scheme

**Preferred Route Announcement**

June 2021



**Gloucestershire**  
COUNTY COUNCIL



## 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 Highways England and Homes England. For more information about Gloucestershire County Council, see: [www.gloucestershire.gov.uk](http://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk)

## 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. Highways England has been working closely with Gloucestershire County Council 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 Highways England, see: [www.highwaysengland.co.uk](http://www.highwaysengland.co.uk)

## Homes England

is the government's housing agency. Gloucestershire County Council is 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: [www.gov.uk/government/organisations/homes-england](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/homes-england)

Please note that an accessible version of this document can be found at [www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/J10](http://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/J10)

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## In autumn 2020 Gloucestershire County Council held an options consultation to hear views and opinions on the M5 Junction 10 Improvements Scheme.

The options consultation asked for feedback on the package of improvements including:

- › **Scheme element 1** - Improvements to Junction 10 on the M5 and a new road linking Junction 10 to west Cheltenham.
- › **Scheme element 2** - A38/A4019 Junction Improvements at Coombe Hill.
- › **Scheme element 3** - A4019 widening, east of Junction 10.

Thank you to everyone who provided feedback on our proposed scheme.

Since finishing the options consultation, we have decided to progress scheme element 2 (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 the Junction 10 works commencing. All feedback given during the options consultation phase has been considered and we will continue to work closely with our key stakeholders as the scheme design develops.

You can find out more about the improvements to the A38/A4019 Junction Improvements at Coombe Hill (scheme element 2) and other major projects on the council's website [www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/major-projects](http://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/major-projects)

An upgrade to Arle Court Park and Ride (now known as Arle Court Transport Hub) is also included as part of the package of improvements funded by Homes England. Similar to our approach at Coombe Hill, we have identified opportunities to accelerate the delivery programme for these works meaning that this element will be progressed separately. You can find out more about this on the council's website: [www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/ACTH](http://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/ACTH)

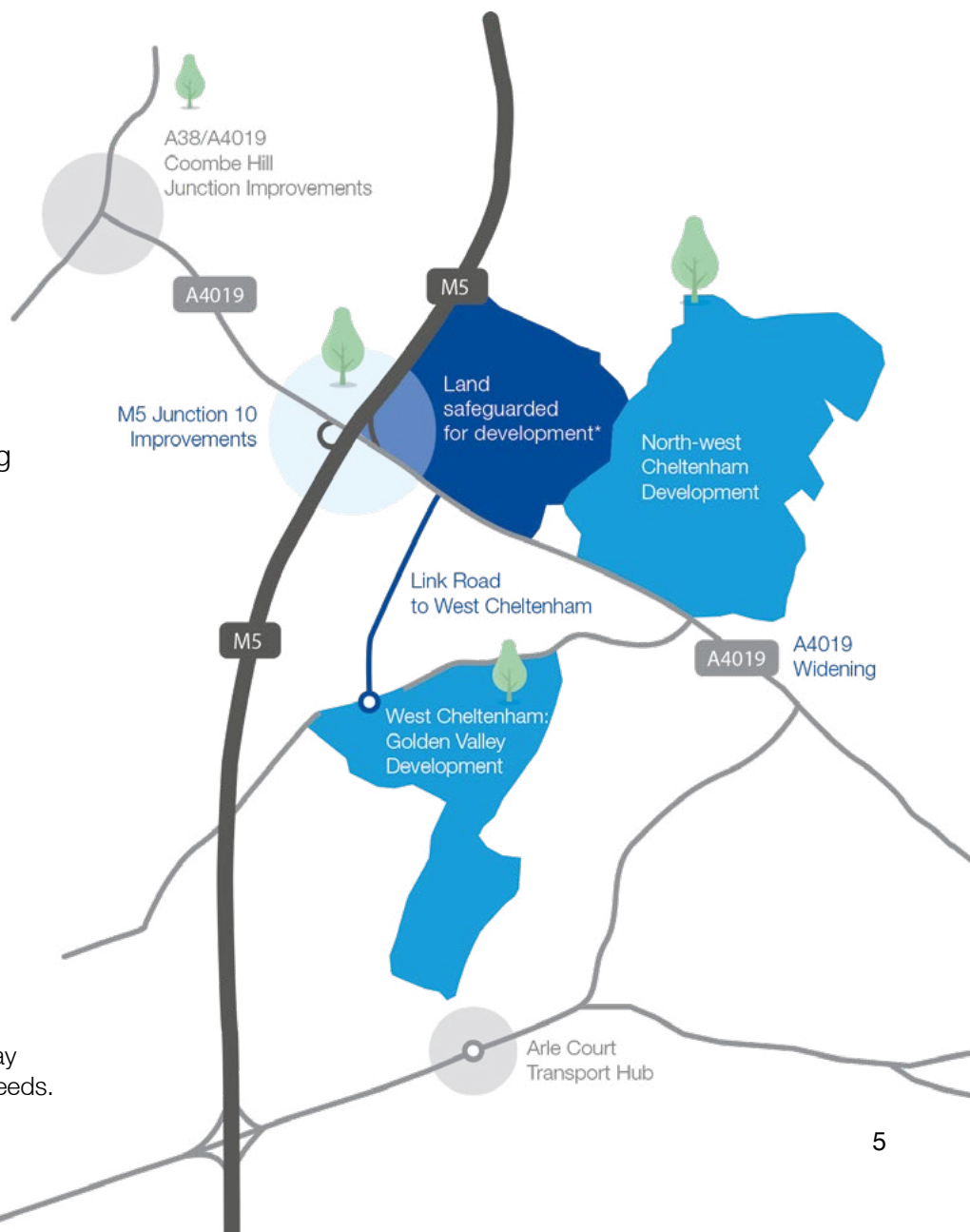
# About this brochure

## Preferred route announcement:

A public announcement of the scheme option that will be progressed to the next stage of design, following extensive technical work and initial public consultation.

In this brochure, we present the preferred design for the improvements to Junction 10 on the M5, the new road linking Junction 10 to west Cheltenham and the A4019 widening, east of Junction 10.

We explain how we've taken on board your feedback and present our rationale for making any changes to the scheme since the consultation. At the end of the brochure we will provide some information about what happens next.



\* This area has been identified in the Joint Core Strategy as land which may be required for future development needs.

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# The need for the M5 Junction 10 Improvements Scheme

New housing and employment sites are proposed for development close to Junction 10 of the M5 including the west and north-west Cheltenham developments.

To unlock these housing and job opportunities, we need to ensure that there is sufficient highway capacity to accommodate the increased motorised and non-motorised traffic it will generate.

An all movements junction has been identified as a key infrastructure requirement to enable the housing and economic development proposed by the Gloucestershire Local Enterprise Partnership's Strategic Economic Plan: [www.gfirstlep.com/about-us/our-vision/strategic-economic-plan](http://www.gfirstlep.com/about-us/our-vision/strategic-economic-plan) and is central to the transport network sought

by the county council in their adopted Gloucestershire Local Transport Plan: Transport Strategy for Gloucestershire to 2041 - Gloucestershire County Council.

The planned housing and economic growth have been included by Cheltenham Borough, Tewkesbury Borough and Gloucester City councils in the adopted Joint Core Strategy. More information can be found at: [www.jointcorestrategy.org](http://www.jointcorestrategy.org)

Highways England has also identified in their Birmingham to Exeter Route Strategy that improvements to M5 Junction 10 are a critical requirement to maintain the safe and efficient operation of the M5 corridor, whilst enabling the planned development and economic growth around Cheltenham, Gloucester and Tewkesbury.



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M5 Junction 10 currently only provides slip roads from the north and to the north. In order for traffic to travel south, traffic from Cheltenham must access the southbound M5 via Junction 11. This has put increasing pressure on already congested local roads and particularly on Junction 11, which provides access to and from Cheltenham on the eastbound A40.

A new link road is required to allow traffic from the west Cheltenham development to use Junction 10 and thereby reducing pressure on Junction 11 and local roads.

Widening the A4019 is required to accommodate the increase in motorised and non-motorised traffic that will be generated from the proposed housing and employment development. The widening includes dualling of the A4019 for motorised traffic and provision of separate, dedicated footways and cycle lanes for non-motorised traffic.

## **The key objectives of the scheme are to:**

- › Objective 1 - Provide the transport connections and network capacity in west and north-west Cheltenham to facilitate the delivery of housing and economic development sites allocated or safeguarded in the Joint Core Strategy.
- › Objective 2 - Provide a transport network in the west and north-west Cheltenham area with the levels of service, safety and accessibility to meet current and future needs.
- › Objective 3 - Provide greater connectivity between Highways England's Strategic Road Network (M5) and the transport network in west and north-west Cheltenham.
- › Objective 4 - Provide a more integrated transport network by providing opportunities to switch to more sustainable transport modes within and to west, north-west and central Cheltenham.
- › Objective 5 - Deliver a package of measures which is in keeping with the local environment and minimises any adverse environmental impacts.



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# Options consultation

We held our options consultation over a six-week period between 14 October and 25 November 2020.

We asked you to help us identify a preferred option for the new Junction 10 design and link road, and for feedback to help to ensure that our proposed improvements at Coombe Hill and along the A4019 work for you and the local community.

We promoted the consultation using a range of methods, including letters to interested parties, leaflets, posters, press releases to local and regional newspapers, and using social media. We also developed a dedicated consultation website where you could view our consultation documents and submit feedback online using our consultation survey. You could also submit feedback by email, freepost and over the phone.

Because of the COVID-19 pandemic and social distancing rules that were in place at the time, we were unable to hold any public or face-to-face events.

Over 400 people and organisations responded to the consultation. A total of 440 survey responses were received during the consultation period (425 online and 15 hardcopies), supplemented by 36 written responses.

For further information on how we carried out the consultation, please read our Public Consultation Report available at **[www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/J10](http://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/J10)**



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# The preferred route

## Through the options consultation, we asked for your help to:

- › **Identify a preferred option for a new Junction 10 design and link road.**
- › **Ensure that our proposed improvements at Coombe Hill and along the A4019 work for you and the local community.**

Overall, the options consultation demonstrated that the majority of participants agree that there is a clear need to improve Junction 10, and that their preference for this would be Option 2. This option involves upgrading the existing junction with a grade separated roundabout centered on the existing junction, rather than offsetting the new junction to the north (Option 2A) or to the south (Option 2B).

In line with this consultation feedback and following further technical work, we've chosen to progress designs of Option 2 for improving M5 Junction 10 including the new link road. You can remind yourself of the details of the three options shortlisted for consultation in the options consultation brochure.

During the options consultation we also received valuable feedback on specific elements of the proposed designs for the junction, link road and widening along the A4019. Our preferred scheme also now incorporates design changes which have been made as a result of your feedback during the consultation and further technical work progressed since late 2020.

We believe that the design we have chosen to progress, which includes M5 Junction 10 Option 2, presents the best opportunity to deliver an improvement scheme which meets the needs of its users and our local community, and delivers a return on investment.





**The scheme we are progressing will:**

- › Create a highways network that has the capacity to accommodate growth in housing and employment in the area and the increased traffic it will generate.
- › Help to maintain the safe and efficient operation of the M5 corridor.
- › Reduce pressure on Junction 11 and local roads, thus improving the lives of people who live close to the route and make it easier for drivers, pedestrians, and other local road users to get around.
- › Aim to achieve an increase in the biodiversity across the scheme above existing levels (a biodiversity net gain) through the implementation of enhanced planting schemes to create a mosaic of species rich habitats. As much of the existing vegetation will be retained where possible, and new habitats created along the road verges and the drainage attenuation ponds. Grassed verges will be wildflower species rich mixes to enhance both the biodiversity and amenity value of these areas, and the attenuation ponds will be planted with wetland plants and designed to blend into the landscape. In essence we will seek to avoid or limit adverse effects on the landscape, biodiversity and visual amenity of the area, whilst also creating enhancements, and enabling the users of the M5 and the new link road to appreciate the landscape they are travelling through.



\* This design may be subject to changes as the scheme progresses to the next design stages. You will have the opportunity to view and comment on the design again during public consultation in late 2021.



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# Key findings from the consultation

In this section, you'll find an overview of the main topics of feedback we received on our proposals.

You can find more information on matters raised during the consultation and our responses to them in the Public Consultation Report and the Staged Overview of Assessment Report [www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/major-projects](http://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/major-projects)

## Headline findings

We found that there is a high level of agreement on the need for the scheme, with more than 80% of consultation survey respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing that the scheme is necessary.

Respondents to the consultation were also asked for their views on whether the overall scheme would achieve the current scheme objectives. Consultation responses showed that there is high confidence in the scheme's potential to deliver all five of the current objectives, although there is greater confidence to deliver objectives 1-3.

Given the changes to the scheme elements, we will be reviewing these objectives ahead of our next consultation to ensure that they provide a positive steer for the remaining elements of the scheme and continue to align with wider regional and national objectives.

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# Improvements to Junction 10 on the M5 and a new road linking Junction 10 to west Cheltenham

We asked you to tell us which of the three options in our consultation brochure was your preference for improving M5 Junction 10.

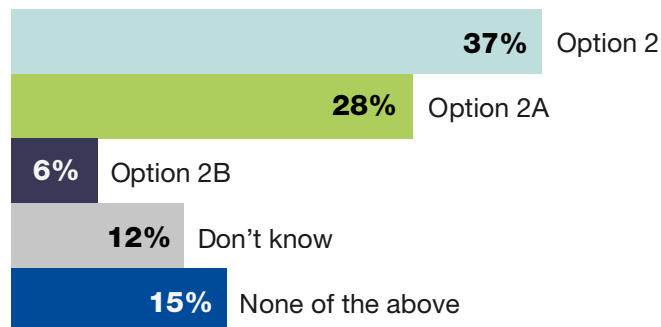
Over 390 people responded to the questions in this part of the consultation survey and we also received several written responses by email and post.

## What you told us:

The consultation found that your preferred option is Option 2, followed by Option 2A.

## Which is your preferred option for M5 Junction 10?

Response (n = 394)



Some respondents also suggested alternative design considerations or junction locations, which have been considered by the project team. You can find out more about our thoughts on these suggestions in the Public Consultation Report and the Staged Overview of Assessment Report which are available on [our website](#).

## How we've considered your comments:

We have incorporated your feedback in our overall decision-making process, along with many other factors including design, environmental and engineering constraints and cost. Following this decision-making process, Option 2 will be taken forward as the preferred route.



Slip road re-aligned

Existing road realigned

Existing drain widened

Proposed roundabout junction with two new bridges

Existing bridge to be demolished

Existing road widened to dual carriageway

New roundabout with access for future development and new link road

New slip road

A4019 widening

Existing drain widened

New flood mitigation Structure

New bridge

New link road with single carriageway

New single carriageway link road

New two-way 4m wide cycle track and 2m wide footway

New roundabout on B4634 with access to future development and new link road

\* This design may be subject to changes as the scheme progresses to the next design stages. You will have the opportunity to view and comment on the design again during public consultation in late 2021.

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### **What you told us:**

There were concerns raised about the alignment and width of the proposed west Cheltenham link road.

### **How we've considered your comments:**

As a result, additional assessments have been carried out for the link road to optimise its alignment and minimise its impact on the local environment, taking into consideration comments on elements such as flooding, drainage, severance (the impact of transport infrastructure on the movement of pedestrians and cyclists and their ability to access goods, services and social networks) and highway standards.

Following these assessments, we have now realigned the propose link road slightly to the west, south of the River Chelt.

We have also reviewed the predicted traffic for the link road, which also found that the estimated peak traffic flows in both directions would be within the capacity of a single lane. Our updated design now proposes a single carriageway, rather than the two-lane dual carriageway proposed in the options consultation, further reducing the impact of the link road on the local environment.

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### **What you told us:**

Respondents suggested that pedestrian and cycling facilities should be included along the link road to provide continuity with the proposals along the A4019.

### **How we've considered your comments:**

We're pleased that so many of you value walking and cycling facilities and as a result of your comments, we're now proposing a 4m cycle track and 2m footway on the western side of the link road. This will be a continuation of the facilities proposed for the A4019 and will help to encourage the use of alternative modes of transport between the development sites. We are currently exploring the most suitable way to connect the new cycle track and footway on the link road into the provision along the A4019.

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# A4019 widening, east of Junction 10

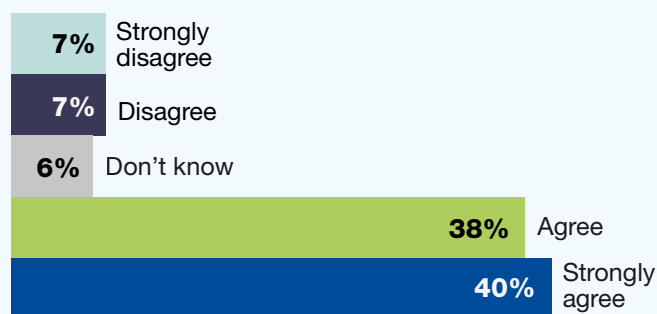
During the consultation, we shared our initial ideas for widening the A4019, east of Junction 10. We received over 370 responses to this section of the consultation survey.

## What you told us:

We asked whether you agreed that the A4019, east of Junction 10, needed widening. The majority of consultation participants expressed that they did agree with the need to widen the A4019.

## To what extent do you agree the proposals are required for the A4019?

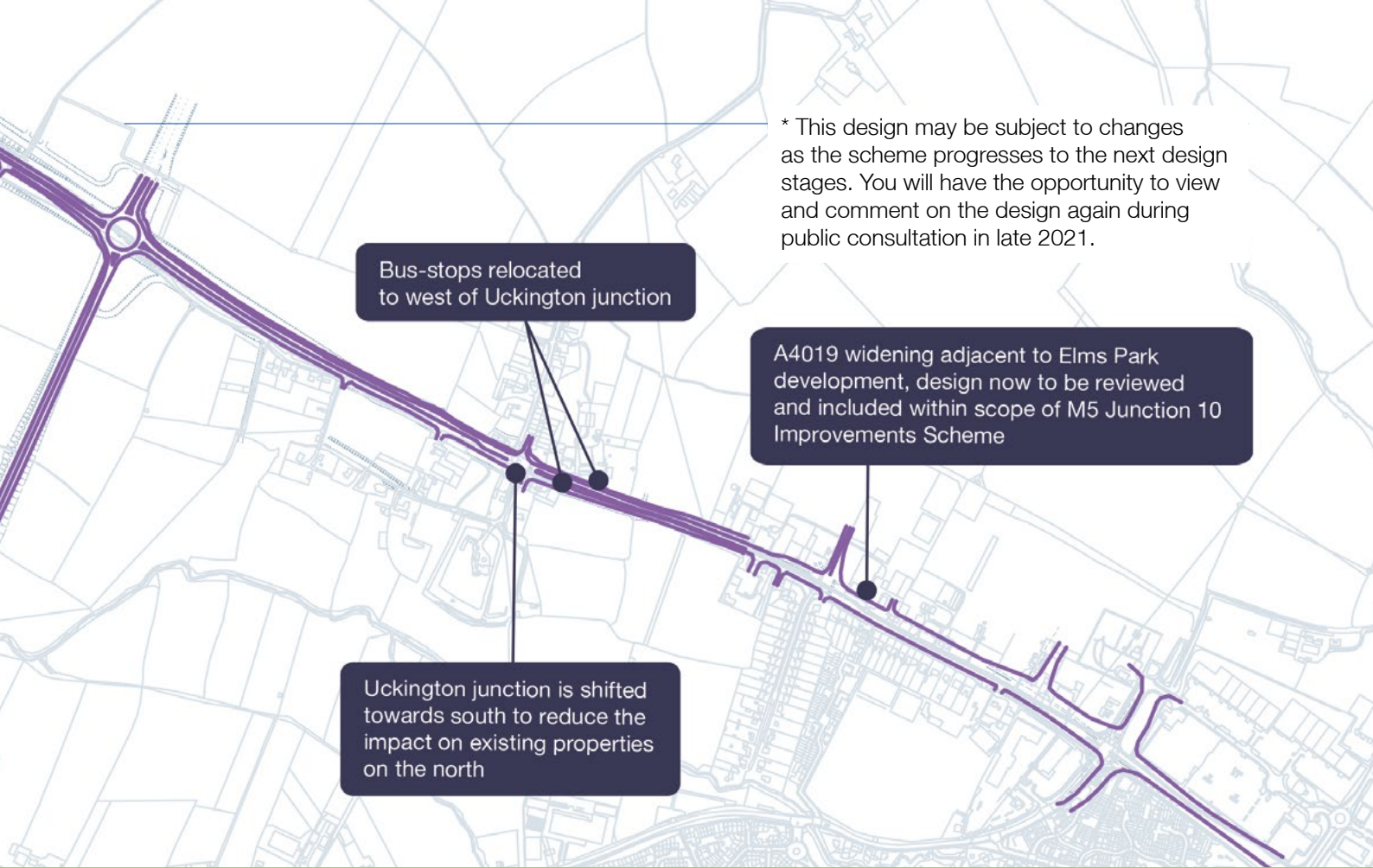
### Response (n = 377)



We also asked you to tell us whether you agreed with the need for pedestrian, cyclist and horse riding facilities along the widened road. While a high level of support for providing pedestrian and cycling facilities was shown, support for the provision of horse riding facilities was more mixed.

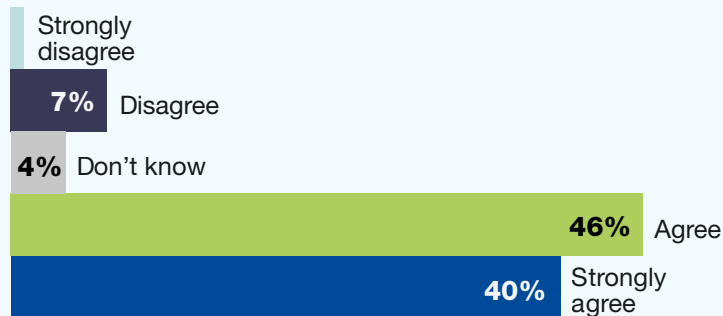


\* This design may be subject to changes as the scheme progresses to the next design stages. You will have the opportunity to view and comment on the design again during public consultation in late 2021.

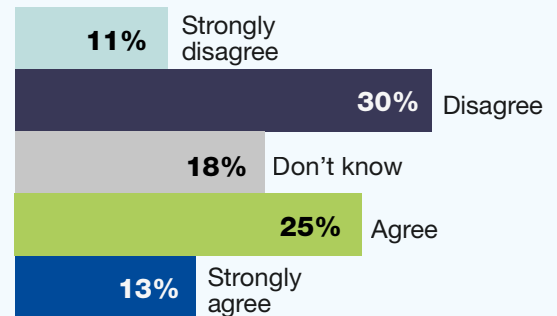


### To what extent do you agree or disagree that pedestrian, cyclist and horse riding facilities should be provided on the A4019?

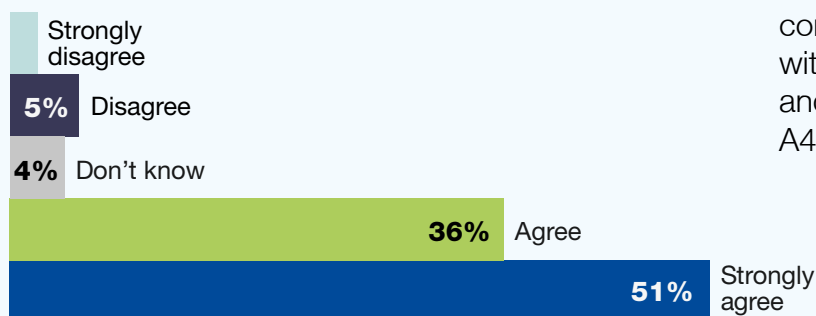
#### Pedestrians (n = 377)



#### Horse riders (n = 375)



#### Cyclists (n = 377)



We were pleased that so many consultation participants agreed with the need for pedestrian and cycling facilities along the A4019, east of Junction 10.

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## How we've considered your comments:

Following feedback received as part of the options consultation, we have extended the proposed footway and cycle track beyond the original extents to the west of M5 Junction 10, to Stanboro Lane.

## What you told us:

During the consultation many provided comments on the importance of suitable crossing facilities for pedestrians and cyclists. This was one of the most common topics when discussing walking, cycling and horse riding provision in general.

## How we've considered your comments:

Facilities to enable pedestrians and cyclists to safely cross the M5 and benefit from the extended footway and cycle track to Stanboro Lane will be developed during the later design stages and in consultation with appropriate user groups, council officers and Highways England.

Signalised pedestrian and cyclist crossing facilities will also be included at the A4019 junction at Uckington as part of the signalisation of the junction. This will include a staggered pedestrian crossing between the northern and southern sides of the A4019 to ensure connectivity between the footway on the southern side and the proposed cycle and pedestrian facilities on the northern side.

We will also continue to work with stakeholders and council officers, such as the Public Rights of Way team, to better understand the potential for improvements for horse riders in the area.



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### **What you told us:**

Respondents raised concerns about the impact on residential properties as a result of widening the A4019 to the north of the existing road.

### **How we've considered your comments:**

In response to this we have undertaken another review of the impacts and feasibility of widening to the north, taking into consideration your comments as well as technical details such as the placement of utilities (gas, electricity, water etc.) and the number of properties impacted. The review concluded that impacts on landowners could be reduced if the widening was moved to the south of the A4019. Under this option, the existing property/plot boundaries to the northern side of the A4019 at Uckington would be retained, representing a benefit to the greatest number of local residents.

The next stage of the design development will include the widening of the A4019 to the south at Uckington, instead of the north.

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### **What you told us:**

There were concerns about connectivity between the Elms Park development and the A4019 proposals resulting in a lack of continuity and consistency for the road network and walking, cycling and horse-riding facilities.

### **How we've considered your comments:**

We have incorporated the Elms Park development access arrangements into the proposed improvements to the A4019 and we will be working closely with the Elms Park development team to ensure consistency between the schemes. Previously, improvements to the road network beyond the scheme's eastern extent formed part of the Elms Park development which was being promoted by Tewkesbury Borough Council.

Incorporating the access arrangements into the proposed improvements to the A4019 will also help ensure that both schemes are constructed with the lowest impact on existing users.



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# Further comments

**In this section you'll find an overview of some of the other most frequently raised comments, grouped into themes, and how we've responded to them.**

You can also read a comprehensive list of matters raised during the consultation and our responses to them in our Public Consultation Report [www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/J10](http://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/J10)

## Environmental considerations

### What you told us:

Your comments covered a wide range of environmental issues including ecology, pollution, noise and light impacts as well as the impact of exhaust emissions on climate change and risks to green belt land. This indicated a need for publication of further information about what measures will be used to mitigate any environmental impacts.

The proposed scheme's impact on flooding in the local area was an area of concern, particularly for local residents.

### How we've considered your comments:

We have started to undertake further technical work in order to provide more detailed information about each scheme element and its environmental impacts. Our further work will contribute to our understanding of the complex ecology, landscape and historical features of the area, among other things, and will help us to design a scheme that retains or enhances the local environment as possible. Community and stakeholder engagement will be an important part this upcoming work, including for archaeological investigations. You will also have the opportunity to review and comment on this work during the next stage of consultation in autumn 2021.

Flood modelling is also being undertaken to allow us to assess the impact of the scheme and allow us to determine any mitigation required. We will also look to raise the road levels of the A4019 to reduce the risk of flooding and deal with the impacts of future climate change before they happen by designing in resilience within the road drainage for increased rainfall and mitigate for any displacement of floodplain. We have started liaison with the Environment Agency and other key stakeholders to help us ensure the proposed mitigation is appropriate. You will have the opportunity to review and comment on the results of this flood modelling and proposed mitigation during the next stage of consultation in late 2021.

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# Walking, cycling and horse riding facilities

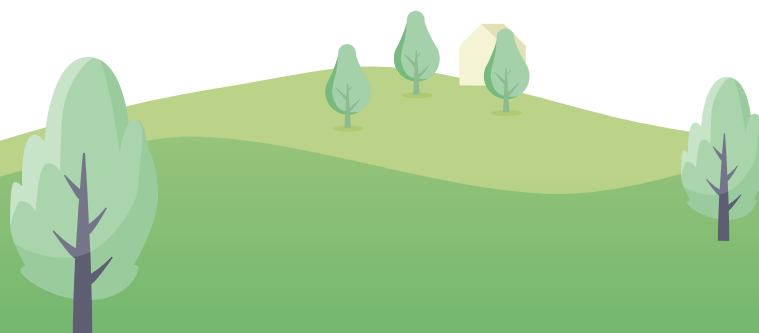
## What you told us:

A majority of comments in this category were specific design considerations and suggestions for walking, cycling and horse riding facilities. This included the segregation of pedestrians, bicycles and horse riders from road users, crossing facilities, maintenance and connectivity with the wider Cheltenham cycle network.

Some participants responded about the need for all types of sustainable travel to be integrated into the scheme.

## How we've considered your comments:

In response to your comments, we commissioned a 'Walking, Cycling and Horse Riding Strategy' for the scheme in early 2021. This document recommended providing walking and cycling facilities to safely cross the motorway, adjacent to the A4019 and along the link road. As outlined earlier in this document, we've already committed to making these specific design changes to improve provision for walking and cycling, in line with this recommendation and your comments. All designs will follow the latest guidance as well as relevant design standards.



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# Impact on local communities

## **What you told us:**

Some local residents and communities expressed concerns about the potential impact of the scheme on their standard of living as a result of noise, pollution and visual impact.

Your comments from the consultation also told us that residents living close to the scheme should be able to leave or remain in their property, as per their individual wishes.

## **How we've considered your comments:**

As part of the planning process, we will be carrying out various environmental assessments, including impacts on noise and air quality. Where possible, measures will be provided to mitigate any adverse effects on the landscape, biodiversity and visual amenity of the area and retain or replace planting that provides screening value. This will also allow local communities and users of the M5 and new link road to appreciate the landscape they live in or are travelling through.

Lighting design is also being developed as part of the next design stage. Minimising 'light spill' (where light falls where it's not intended to fall for example, street lighting) beyond the areas that are required to be lit is a key component of the lighting design.

We will also continue to liaise closely with any residents and businesses expected to be directly impacted by the scheme. It always remains the case that, where any third-party land is required to deliver highway works, Gloucestershire County Council's clear preference is a negotiated settlement route (an agreement between Gloucestershire County Council and the landowner).

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# Access to and impact on the local road network

## What you told us:

Some consultation participants asked about how easy access to properties and local services along the A4019 could be retained in the event of widening.

You also told us to reconsider the impacts of the proposed scheme on the local road network.

## How we've considered your comments:

We are aware of access issues created by widening of the A4019 and are investigating options to mitigate any additional journey times for those residents and businesses that currently have direct access onto the A4019. We will be liaising with those residents and businesses directly affected as we develop our proposals.

Further traffic assessments for the local road network have been carried out so we can better understand any potential traffic increases. This will help us to determine whether additional mitigation measures will be required.

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# Safety considerations

## What you told us:

A majority of comments in this category were related to our plans to stop speeding on the link road and the A4019. Some consultation participants also asked for certain speed limits to be introduced at Coombe Hill.

## How we've considered your comments:

Whilst speed enforcement is currently the responsibility of the Police, on local roads the Gloucestershire County Council Road Safety Team and Camera Enforcement Team provide speed management measures to reinforce appropriate speeds and we understand that this is an important issue. We will be consulting with these teams during the next stage of the design and their feedback along with your comments and those received from the Police, will be considered when we implement the next stage of design.



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# Disruption during construction

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## **What you told us:**

Some consultation participants asked what our plans are for ensuring that disruption caused by construction is minimised.

Several responses also highlighted a need to ensure that construction is coordinated with other road works in the area.

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## **How we've considered your comments:**

We are working closely with Highways England and Gloucestershire County Council's Area Highways Team to make sure that going forward, we co-ordinate our construction plans with local highway maintenance and improvement works as well as helping to minimise the impact of the scheme's construction on local roads.

Exact measures to mitigate the impact of traffic on local roads during scheme construction will be considered in the next stage of design.



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# Cost of the scheme

## What you told us:

We received several comments relating to the funding of the scheme, and if the money can be spent on other transport schemes, projects or to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic.

## How we've considered your comments:

The improvements to Junction 10 on the M5 are part of several strategic plans including the Gloucestershire Local Enterprise Partnership's Strategic Economic Plan, the Gloucestershire Local Transport Plan and the Joint Core Strategy. These plans highlight the need for the scheme to unlock new housing and employment developments as well as the efficient operation of the M5 corridor.

The funding from Homes England has been ring-fenced for this purpose so cannot be spent on other projects, such as the county's response to the COVID-19 pandemic.



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# What happens next?

**Now that we have announced our preferred route, we will carry out further survey and assessment work to help us refine and design the scheme in more detail.**

There will be another opportunity to share your views on our proposals before we submit our planning application. We're planning to hold our next public consultation in late 2021 when you will have an opportunity to provide feedback on our detailed proposals.

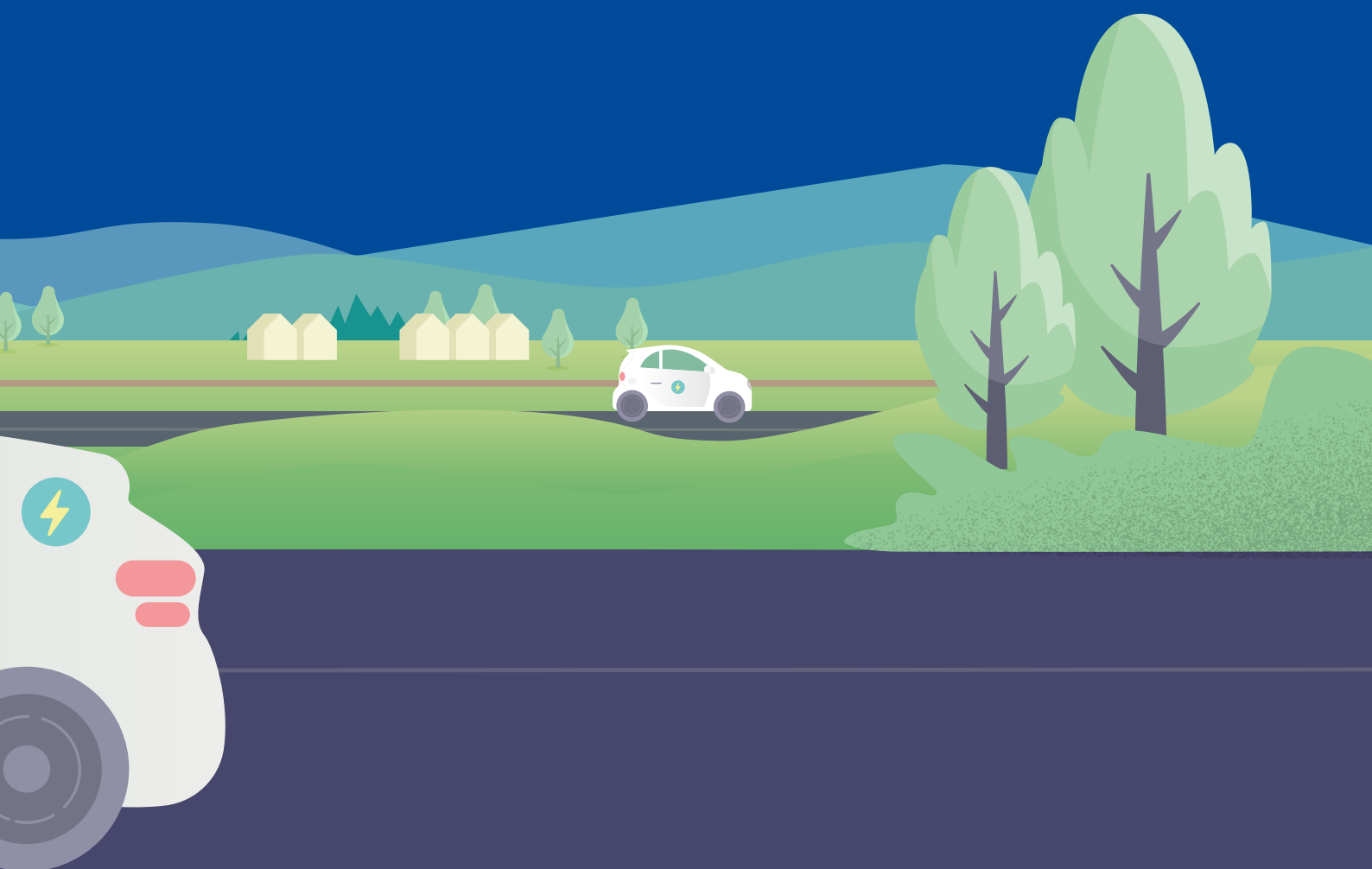


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# Further information

To find out more about the work done to date and to stay up to date on progress, please visit our website: [www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/J10](http://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/J10)

The website contains further information, documents, images and the latest news explaining the need to upgrade the scheme, the work we've carried out so far and what is still to come.



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