

# London to Wales Route Strategy

March 2017



# Contents

<b>1. Introduction</b>	<b>1</b>
Purpose of Route Strategies	2
Strategic themes	2
Stakeholder engagement	3
Transport Focus	3
<b>2. The route</b>	<b>5</b>
Route Strategy overview map	7
<b>3. Current constraints and challenges</b>	<b>9</b>
A safe and serviceable network	9
More free-flowing network	9
Supporting economic growth	10
An improved environment	10
A more accessible and integrated network	10
Diversionary routes	14
Maintaining the strategic road network	15
<b>4. Current investment plans and growth potential</b>	<b>17</b>
Economic context	17
Innovation	17
Investment plans	17
<b>5. Future challenges and opportunities</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>6. Next steps</b>	<b>27</b>

# Route strategies

The division of routes for the programme of route strategies on the Strategic Road Network

- London to Scotland East
- London Orbital and M23 to Gatwick
- London to Scotland West
- London to Wales
- Felixstowe to Midlands
- Solent to Midlands
- M25 to Solent (A3 and M3)
- Kent Corridor to M25 (M2 and M20)
- South Coast Central
- Birmingham to Exeter
- South West Peninsula
- London to Leeds (East)
- East of England
- South Pennines
- North Pennines
- Midlands to Wales and Gloucestershire
- North and East Midlands
- South Midlands



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# 1. Introduction

The modernisation of England's motorways and major A roads, also known as the strategic road network (SRN), is making a vital contribution to economic wellbeing and growth. This Route Strategy – one of 18 such reports – provides a statement on the current performance of, and perceived pressures on, the London to Wales route to inform the planning of future investment.

The SRN supports national and local economic prosperity by:

- linking together major cities
- connecting with extensive local road networks
- providing links to major ports, airports, and rail terminals
- enabling good access to regions and cross-border routes between the nations of the United Kingdom

The establishment of Highways England through the Infrastructure Act 2015 has changed fundamentally the way we plan investment in the network. Funding is now determined every 5 years, in the [Road Investment Strategy \(RIS\)](#), which is set by Government. We are currently delivering on the commitments that were set out in the first RIS covering 2015 to 2020, which are already making a difference for road users across the network.

At the same time, we are working closely with the other 3 bodies with statutory responsibility for the RIS – Department for Transport, Office of Rail and Road and Transport Focus – on preparing for the next RIS (RIS2) for the period after 2020.





## Purpose of Route Strategies

Route Strategies provide a high level view of the current performance of the SRN as well as issues perceived by our stakeholders that affect the network. They are one of the key components of research required for developing the RIS. This suite of Route Strategies builds upon the analysis underpinning the first set of Route Strategies undertaken between 2013 to 2015, which together provided the first comprehensive assessment of the entire network. This time the Route Strategies aim to:

- bring together information from key partners, motorists, local communities, construction partners, environmental groups and across the business
- achieve a better understanding of the condition and performance of our roads, and local and regional aspirations
- shape our investment priorities to improve the service for road users and support a growing economy
- help inform the next RIS<sup>1</sup>

## Strategic themes

The Government’s vision for transforming the SRN is described in the [Road Investment Strategy post 2020: Planning Ahead](#) document available on [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk). This vision builds on the 5 broad aims published in the [Road Investment Strategy for 2015-2020](#): economy; network capability; integration; safety; and the environment. It also builds on Highways England’s 5 strategic outcomes (see Figures 1.1 and 1.2). Using the evidence from this and the other 17 Route Strategies, we will develop proposals that can help bring the Government’s vision for roads to life.

### RIS1 Strategic Vision as reiterated in “RIS Post 2020: Planning ahead”



Figure 1.1 - RIS1 strategic vision

### Highways England Strategic Business Plan’s key outcomes

- Supporting economic growth** through a modernised and reliable network that reduces delays, creates jobs and helps business compete and opens up new areas for development
- More free-flowing network** where routine delays are more infrequent, and where journeys are safer and more reliable
- Safe and serviceable network** where no one should be harmed when travelling or working on the network
- Improved environment** where the impact of our activities is further reduced, ensuring a long-term and sustainable benefit to the environment
- More accessible and integrated network** that gives people the freedom to choose their mode of transport and enable safe movement across and alongside the network

Figure 1.2 - Highways England strategic outcomes

<sup>1</sup>See Chapter 6 for more information on the next RIS

## Stakeholder engagement

Building on the engagement we started in the first round of Route Strategies, we have continued to work closely with a wide range of stakeholders to enhance our understanding of the strategic road network, and identify where users and other stakeholders feel investment is needed.

We used a number of methods to collate information. For example, we launched an online tool for customers and stakeholders over the summer of 2016 to inform us of the issues and challenges on our roads that affected them. As well as information collated from a range of people within Highways England, more than 300 different stakeholder organisations provided important feedback on the network during the evidence collection period. There were also more than 370 individual members of the public who contributed information. In total, around 2,700 individual points were raised by external stakeholders.

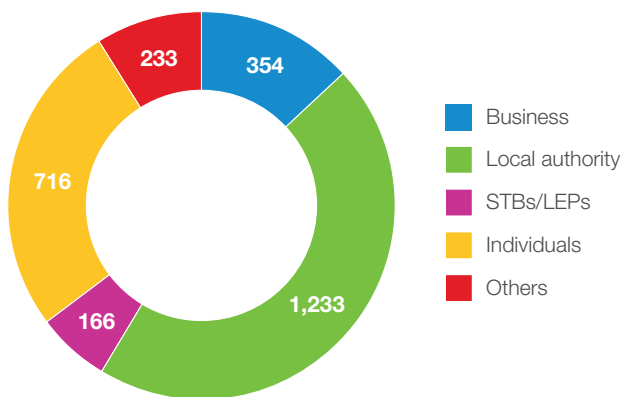


Figure 1.3 - External stakeholder responses

We are increasingly working with subnational transport bodies (STBs), including Midlands Connect, England’s Economic Heartland and Transport for the North, so we can ensure that their developing strategies and planning are integrated into our thinking (and vice versa).

## Transport Focus

We commissioned Transport Focus, the road user watchdog, to undertake research on road user priorities. More than 4,400 interviews were undertaken with drivers across the SRN. Figure 1.4 below shows the breakdown by user type and purpose.






































Completed interviews		
	3,487	79%
	322	7%
	407	9%
	206	5%
Commuting	501	11%
Business	1,367	31%
Leisure	2,457	56%

Figure 1.4 - Driver sample breakdown

**250 fleet managers from a mix of industries, size and regions**

The research found that the London to Wales route was one of the lower rated routes, with only 55% and 61% of users rating their experience of the motorway and A road sections respectively as either extremely good or fairly good. However, as Table 1.1 shows, only 27% of users still experienced problems using the route, with congestion and roadworks cited as the two main causes.

The full report has been published on Transport Focus’s website [www.transportfocus.org.uk/research-publications/publications/road-to-the-future](http://www.transportfocus.org.uk/research-publications/publications/road-to-the-future). We will continue to work closely with Transport Focus to understand customer priorities to ensure that the next RIS reflects their needs.

Experienced problems %	Route impacted	Largest problem	Second largest problem
61%	M25 to Solent		
58%	London Orbital and M23 to Gatwick		
50%	South Coast Central		
46%	Solent to Midlands		
44%	East of England		
43%	Birmingham to Exeter		
41%	South West Peninsula		
41%	North and East Midlands		
40%	London to Scotland East		
40%	South Pennines		
39%	Kent Corridor to M25		
37%	London to Scotland West		
32%	Midlands to Wales and Gloucestershire		 
30%	Felixstowe to Midlands		
30%	South Midlands		
28%	London to Leeds		
<b>27%</b>	<b>London to Wales</b>		
17%	North Pennines		



Congestion/traffic queuing



Roadworks



Delays caused by accidents/roads closed



Roads busy/high volume of traffic

Table 1.1 - Transport Focus summary



## 2. The route

The London to Wales route plays a crucial role in supporting economic growth and serves several high-technology locations. It runs for approximately 255 miles from the outskirts of London through to Wales. It comprises the M4 Corridor which serves key cities such as Reading, Swindon and Bristol, and extends towards Newport along the M4, to Chepstow along the M48 and on the M49, and the M32 towards Bristol. It also includes the A404/A404(M) connecting the M4 to the M40 at High Wycombe.

The route is a high-standard network, comprising the M4 and the A404 which is a dual carriageway linking the M4 to the M40. Smart motorways are being established on sections of the route including from M4 junction 3 for Hounslow to junction 12 for Reading, which is currently being upgraded. Two sections of smart motorway stretch from junction 19 to junction 20 north of Bristol.

The route links London in the east to many cities in the west, and provides a gateway to a large number of technology companies located in Swindon, Berkshire and the Thames Valley. Key towns and cities along the corridor include Slough, Reading, Newbury, Maidenhead, Swindon and Bristol. In addition it provides access to areas such as west Berkshire, Wiltshire, south Gloucestershire and Bath and north Somerset. It also provides links to key international gateways such as Heathrow Airport, Bristol International Airport and Bristol Seaport.

On average, the M4 carries 130,000 vehicles per day. This motorway is a heavily used network by both strategic and local traffic. High flows of traffic occur in summer periods. The route connects with a number of other motorways to the west including the M5, and the rest of the M4 and M48. To the east, the route connects to the London Orbital motorway (M25) and the M40.



Figure 2.1 - Route overview map

It provides a regional focal point for growth, particularly in locations such as Bristol, Swindon, Berkshire and southern Buckinghamshire where significant development is taking place. There are many strategic connections with other roads, rail, ports and airports carrying both freight, local and commuter traffic. The A34 provides access to Oxford to the north and Winchester and the Solent ports to the south. There are major shopping centres near the route such as Cabot Circus in Bristol and tourist destinations including Bath World Heritage City just south of the route. It also provides a link between Wales and western England along the Second Severn Crossing toll bridge. There is also a rail link that runs parallel to the route of the M4 with stations at Bath, Swindon and Reading. This is served by the Great Western Railway and the South Wales Mainline.

To the west the route supports a large number of employment, education and residential areas on the fringes of Bristol where the development of new dwellings is likely, in addition to plans for residential developments in Chippenham and Swindon. Further development sites around Bristol include Emerson's Green Enterprise Zone and the Filton Enterprise Area. To the east the route supports a large number of employment, education and residential areas in Reading, Maidenhead and Slough, where there is further development planned. There is considerable development in Oxfordshire which is heavily dependent on access to Heathrow.

These locations will open up economic opportunities along the M4 Corridor and are likely to increase the need for future capacity on the SRN. These developments will add to traffic demand along the network and could cause traffic to re-route onto local roads. There is a vast number of other local stakeholders including businesses, parish councils, airports and ports affected by the motorway.

The route also passes through or lies close to important environmental areas such as the Mendip Hills, the south tip of the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and North Wessex Downs AONB.



*The route provides a gateway to a large number of technology companies located in Swindon, Berkshire and the Thames Valley.*

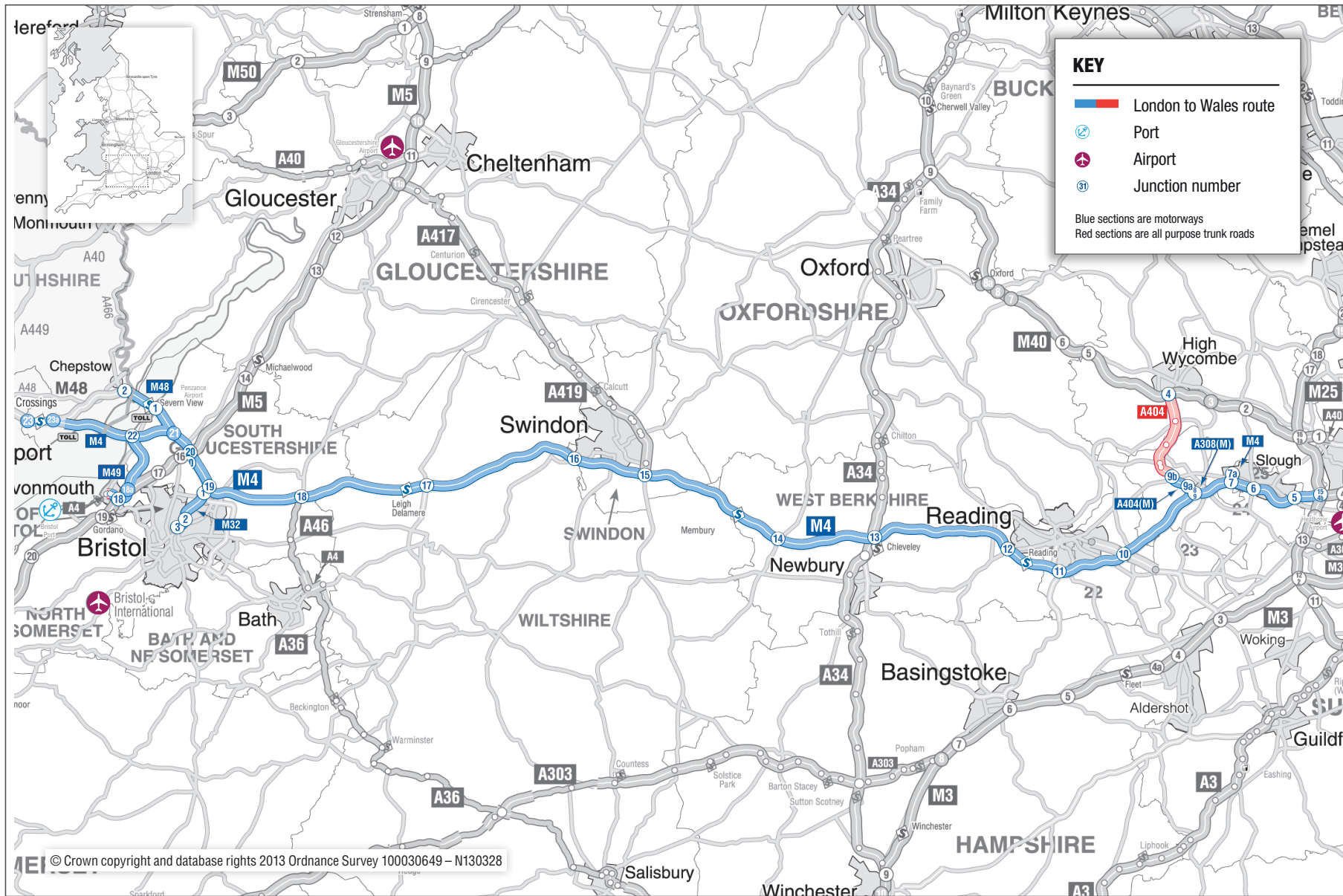


Figure 2.2 - Route Strategy overview map



## 3. Current constraints and challenges

This chapter outlines the emerging issues raised by stakeholders and is supplemented by Highways England information.

The following text and figures within this chapter provide a summary of the information collected and applied to our strategic themes.



### A safe and serviceable network

There are concentrations of safety issues at various points along the route, particularly at junctions close to major destinations such as London, Bristol, Swindon, Reading and Slough. As the route is primarily made up of motorway sections, incidents are often related to junction layouts and problems associated with congestion.

Near London on the M4 junctions 5-10 are among the worst ranked for safety issues. Further west, sections of the M4 between Swindon and Bristol such as junctions 15 and 16 are also among the worst ranked. There are also reports of signs not being clear and complaints about lane designations.

Further west, responsibility for servicing the network at M4 junctions 15 and 16 for circulating carriageways and slip roads fall under different authorities' jurisdiction. This introduces complexity over scheme design and implementation and maintenance challenges are a particular issue on elevated sections.



### More free-flowing network

Congestion is an issue at a number of sections on the route, particularly where the M4 provides access to major urban areas around Bristol and London.

The sections where the M4 connects to other motorways (M25, M5, M32, M48, and M49) also experience congestion, as does the A404/M40 at the Handycross roundabout.

Congestion issues are most concentrated around urban areas. One example is congestion on the north side of Bristol which affects the whole network because of the many conflicting traffic movements at critical points on the network. This in turn affects the resilience of the network. Junctions 18 and 19 of the M4 and the A4174 Avon Ring Road also experience congestion. The M32 into Bristol suffers congestion in the southbound direction and journey time delays in the peak periods are common. Furthermore, widespread queuing is common on the A419 towards Blunsdon in the peaks at junction 15. The A404 on the Maidenhead section of the route has capacity issues with future traffic growth likely with planned development in Maidenhead town centre. The M4 between junctions 5 and 7 contains some of the worst performing sections for free flowing traffic on the network.

Other issues that hinder a free-flowing network are problems of flooding and a lack of CCTV, variable message signs or safety cameras and issues with traffic signals.



## Supporting economic growth

The route is a critical strategic link that spans high-technology employment areas and key gateways such as Heathrow, west London hotspots and the Upper Lee Valley to the east. As a major corridor through the country, the route plays a major role in supporting the national economy and will remain a key driver in supporting economic growth in the south.

There are a large number of current and proposed development opportunities both alongside the route and near to other major highways corridors that directly access the route. In the west, this includes employment areas such as the Bristol North Fringe, Filton and Emerson's Green to the east of the city. The northern fringe of Bristol will experience a high degree of expansion in the coming years. Severnside and Avonmouth will also experience growth and an intermediate junction on the M49 is likely to facilitate this. Bristol Docks are also a focal point of growth and Bristol Port has consent to construct a deep sea container facility at Avonmouth. These developments are all likely to affect the SRN.

In Wiltshire, there are proposals for additional dwellings to be built at Chippenham and Swindon. Business developments are also proposed at junction 17 of the M4 near Chippenham and Malmesbury. As major residential and employment developments occur across the route, this will put pressure on the motorway.

The West of England's local enterprise partnership is currently working through a joint transport study for post-2026 and is exploring solutions to accommodate the known levels of growth and then looking at solutions for future growth leading up to 2036, including a new junction between junction 18 and junction 19. A feasibility study to look at this has been funded by the Department for Transport.



## An improved environment

The route passes through a number of areas experiencing different environmental challenges. Air quality is a key issue as the route passes through a number of AQMAs including in Reading and Bristol.

To the east of the route towards the M25 London Orbital, noise pollution is a concern with numerous noise important areas identified. Suitable noise mitigation measures have not yet been identified. Between Slough and Reading, there are clusters of flooding and water pollution and between the A308 and A404, litter and anti-social behaviour is common in laybys. There is a flooding and pollution cluster site between junction 16 and 17.

On the west of the route, there is a SSSI at junction 17 between Bristol and Swindon known as the Stanton St Quintin Quarry and Motorway Cutting. The Severn Estuary is also a SSSI and a Ramsar site (wetland site designated of international importance under the Ramsar Convention).



## A more accessible and integrated network

Within the evidence, locations have been identified where there is a lack of safe and convenient cycle facilities and crossing points on both the M4 and near London on the A404. On the A404 there are problems for non-motorised road users (NMUs) crossing the road on existing rights of way.

Near Heathrow local roads are used by HGVs, which affects villages, and there have been calls to direct HGVs to and from the A4 at M4 junctions 3 and 5.

Furthermore, access to Avonmouth and Severnside is currently deemed unsatisfactory, especially with the high growth rates in the area.

London to Wales - Route Strategy: Map 1 of 3

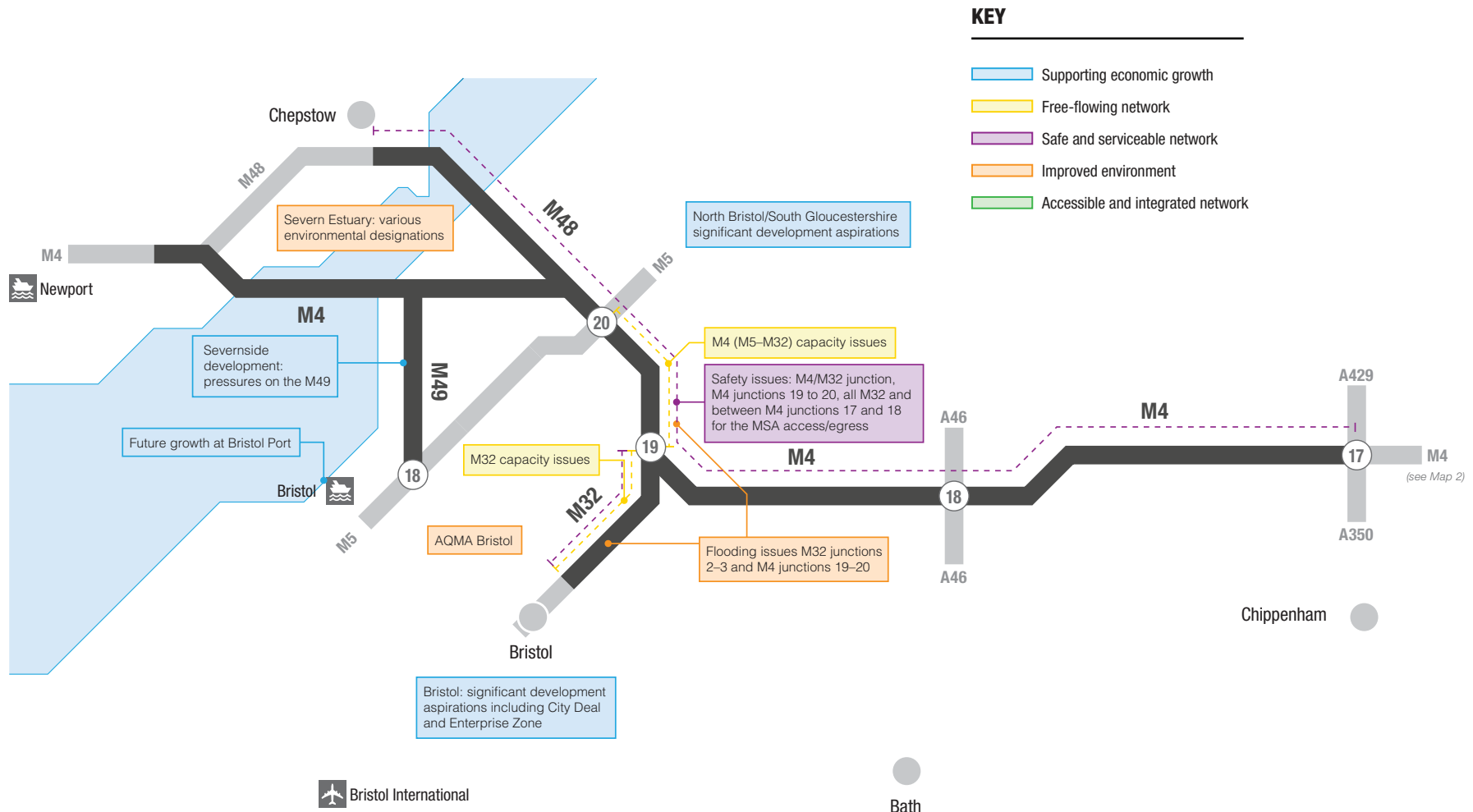


Figure 3.1 - Key challenges for the route

London to Wales - Route Strategy: Map 2 of 3

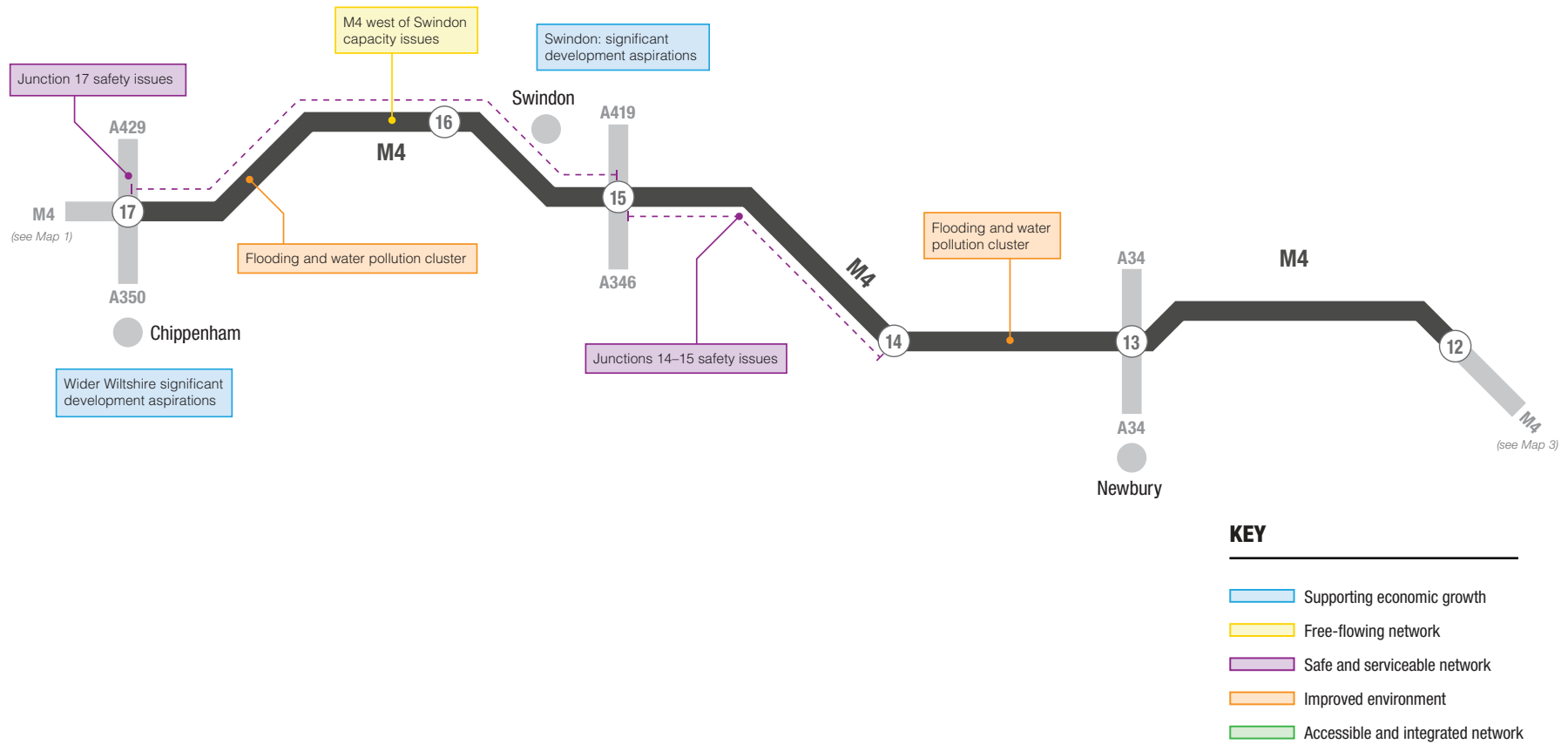


Figure 3.2 - Key challenges for the route



London to Wales - Route Strategy: Map 3 of 3

**KEY**

- Supporting economic growth
- Free-flowing network
- Safe and serviceable network
- Improved environment
- Accessible and integrated network

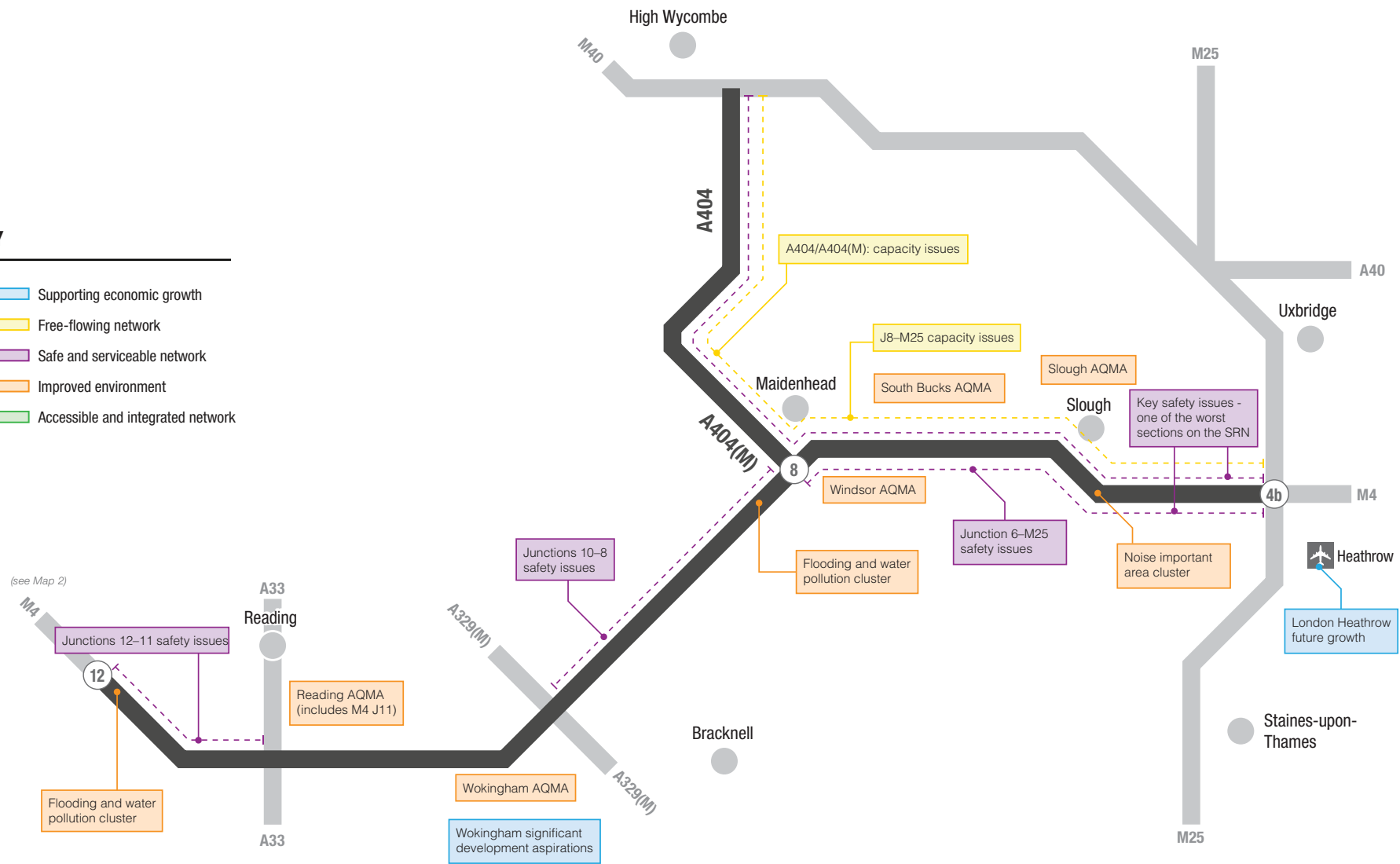
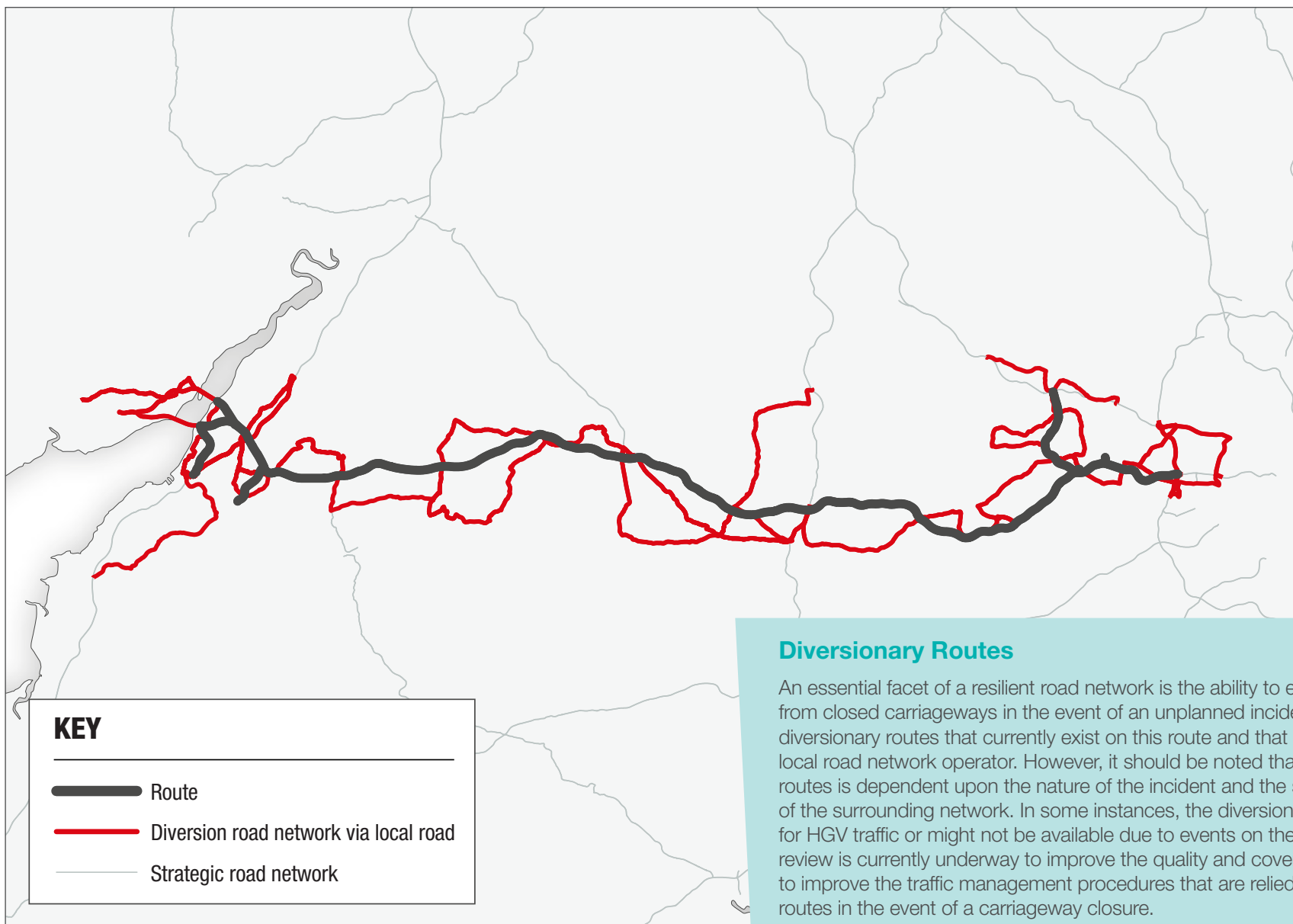


Figure 3.3 - Key challenges for the route



### Diversiónary Routes

An essential facet of a resilient road network is the ability to effectively divert traffic away from closed carriageways in the event of an unplanned incident. The map indicates the diversionary routes that currently exist on this route and that have been agreed with the local road network operator. However, it should be noted that the provision of these routes is dependent upon the nature of the incident and the suitability and availability of the surrounding network. In some instances, the diversion route may not be suitable for HGV traffic or might not be available due to events on the local road network. A review is currently underway to improve the quality and coverage of these routes, and to improve the traffic management procedures that are relied upon to implement these routes in the event of a carriageway closure.

Figure 3.4 - London to Wales diversionary routes

## Maintaining the strategic road network

We carry out routine maintenance and renewal of roads, structures and technology to keep the network safe, serviceable and reliable. We also ensure that our contractors deliver a high level of service on the SRN to support operational performance and the long-term integrity of the asset.

The heavy year-round use of all our routes means that they require regular maintenance and inspections for repairs to keep them fully operational, in order to support economic growth. Our maintenance regime focuses on 4 key aspects of the routes: road surfaces, bridges and structures, drainage and earthworks. The summary condition of each on this route is set out below:

### Road surface

The surface condition across the route is considered to be sound or having some deterioration with less than 0.5% having severe deterioration that would require focused investigation.

### Bridges and structures

The structures across the route are mostly in very good or good condition. According to an analysis of current data, fewer than 2% of our structures are in poor or very poor condition.

### Drainage

Drainage assets are represented by both linear assets (for example pipes, channels, ditches, drains) and non-linear assets (for example gullies, chambers). Across the route, drainage assets are considered to be in good condition for linear assets and very good condition for non-linear assets. Of those assets inspected, 70% of linear assets have been assessed as having no defects or only superficial defects, with 95% of the non-linear assets also falling into those same categories.

### Earthworks

The geotechnical earthworks across the route are considered to be in good condition, with the total length of earthworks that require further investigation amounting to less than 8%.

New assets have an operational 'life', during which, under normal conditions and maintenance, the risk of failure is expected to be low. Beyond this period, the risk of asset failure is expected to increase, although for many types of asset the risk of failure remains low and we do not routinely replace assets solely because they are older than their expected operational life. We use a combination of more regular maintenance and inspection, along with a risk-based approach to ensure that assets remain safe while achieving value for money from our maintenance and renewal activities.



### Future developments

We have taken steps to transform our approach to maintenance by establishing an asset management programme that develops and implements the Asset Management Framework for Highways England.

The framework aligns strategic objectives with regional asset management plans and lifecycle asset management plans. It also includes the analysis required to plan the investment and expenditure on the strategic road network during the next road period, developing the business case options for capital renewals. It will provide a clear articulation of the total value that will be delivered by investment in RIS2, including the costs and benefits of delivering the capital renewals programme.

### Operations

We are establishing a nationally consistent approach to the management of our operational capability through our Operational Excellence change programme. This will deepen our understanding of how our interventions impact on the performance of the network and on the journeys of our customers. We are using the latest analytical software to process traffic data and gain insight into:

- how our operational services can improve safety and provide security to road users
- how the attendance of a traffic officer has an impact on incident durations
- how information provided by Highways England can benefit road users who plan their journeys beforehand and then while on their journeys

By better understanding our current operational performance, we can create a baseline from which we can identify opportunities for improvement.



## 4. Current investment plans and growth potential

Investment in the strategic road network can make areas more attractive for inward investment, unlock new sites for employment and housing and facilitate regeneration.

From servicing the UK's logistics needs, linking our manufacturing heartlands and connecting to our international gateways, supporting services-driven activity in high-growth towns and cities, to meeting the needs of our visitor economy, the SRN is critically important to servicing the UK economy.

### Economic context

Highways England has been working with a wide range of stakeholders to develop a strategic economic growth plan, which we are calling *The Road to Growth*. This plan explores the economic role of the strategic road network, and aims to explain how we will further increase our contribution to the UK economy. As part of the evidence base for *The Road to Growth*, over 400 economic hotspots – or economic opportunity areas (EOAs) – around the SRN have been identified in consultation with Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs). The figures in this chapter highlight the EOAs which most closely align and are supported by the route.

To inform the development of *The Road to Growth* and assess the relationship between the SRN and economic growth, a suite of evidence reports were completed. These reports were published alongside The Road to Growth discussion paper and were subject to public consultation from November 2016 to January 2017. Alongside the engagement we have undertaken with all LEPs across England, the following evidence reports have ensured we have a more comprehensive economic evidence base and a better understanding of future challenges and opportunities:

- economic growth and the SRN – an evidence review of the relationship between transport investment and economic growth

- commercial development – an assessment of the relationship between the main property sectors and the SRN
- international gateways – a review of principal international gateways (ports and airports) and their contribution to the economy
- socio-economic analysis and future forecasts – mapping of socio-economic data (population, deprivation and employment) and sectoral forecasts up to 2030. This included identification of the likely growth forecasts for all sectors with a particular focus on those sectors heavily dependent on the SRN

*The Road to Growth* sets out our evidence findings to date and the steps we will take to enhance our enabling role in supporting economic growth.

### Innovation

In April 2016, we published our Innovation, Technology and Research Strategy which set out how Highways England will use pioneering behaviours to help support our strategic objectives and create value for customers and stakeholders.

The £150 million Innovation Designated Fund was established to support innovative capital projects and to support developing the use of emerging technologies, new materials and ways of working.

### Investment plans

The following figures show the location of Highways England major improvement projects which have previously been announced to help tackle some of the issues on the network. The Highways England website and delivery plan updates should be consulted for the latest information.

The figures also show strategic studies which have been progressed during RIS1, innovation projects and economic opportunity areas.

London to Wales - Route Strategy: Map 1 of 3

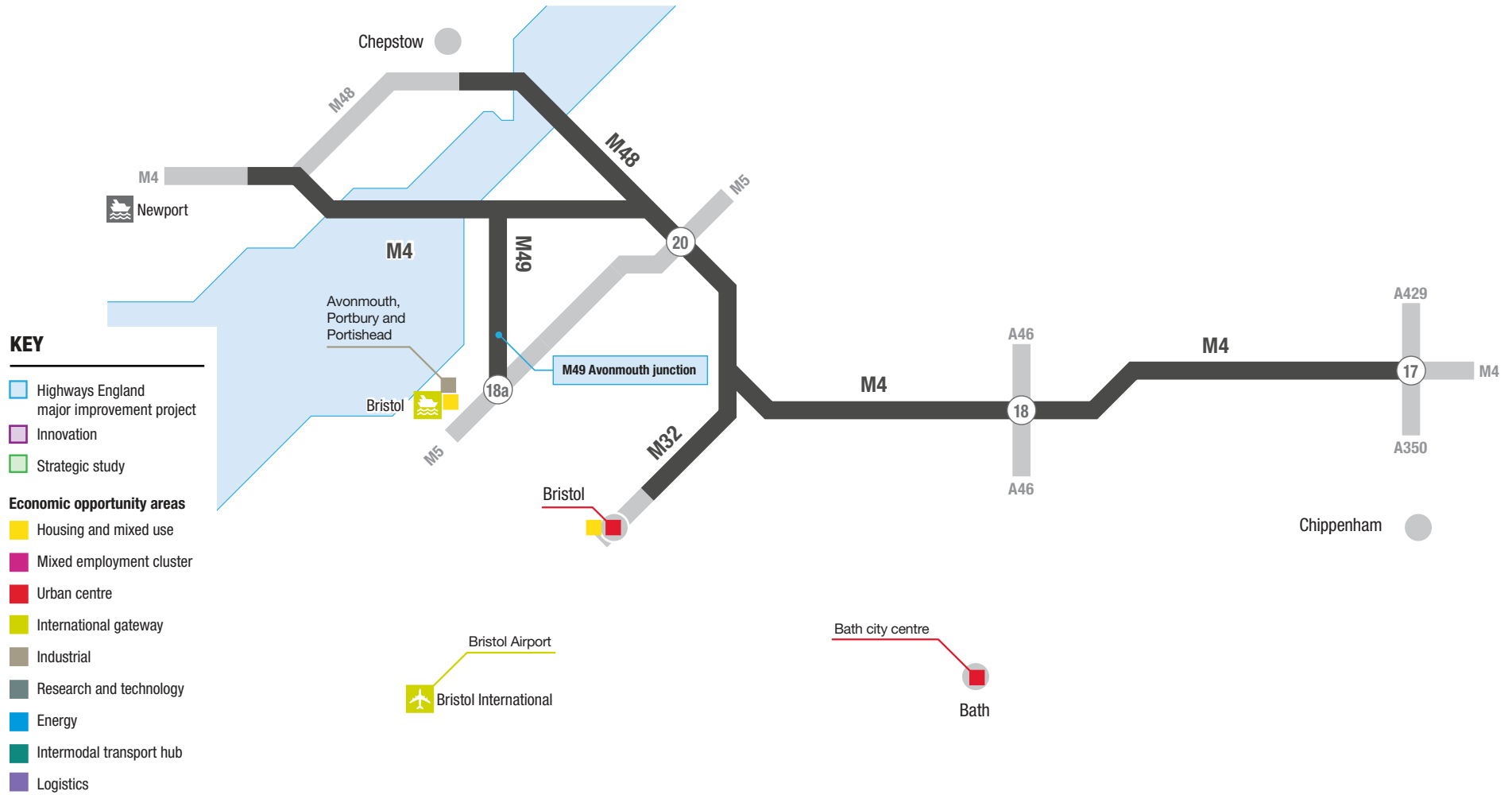


Figure 4.1 - Investment plans and economic opportunity areas

London to Wales - Route Strategy: Map 2 of 3

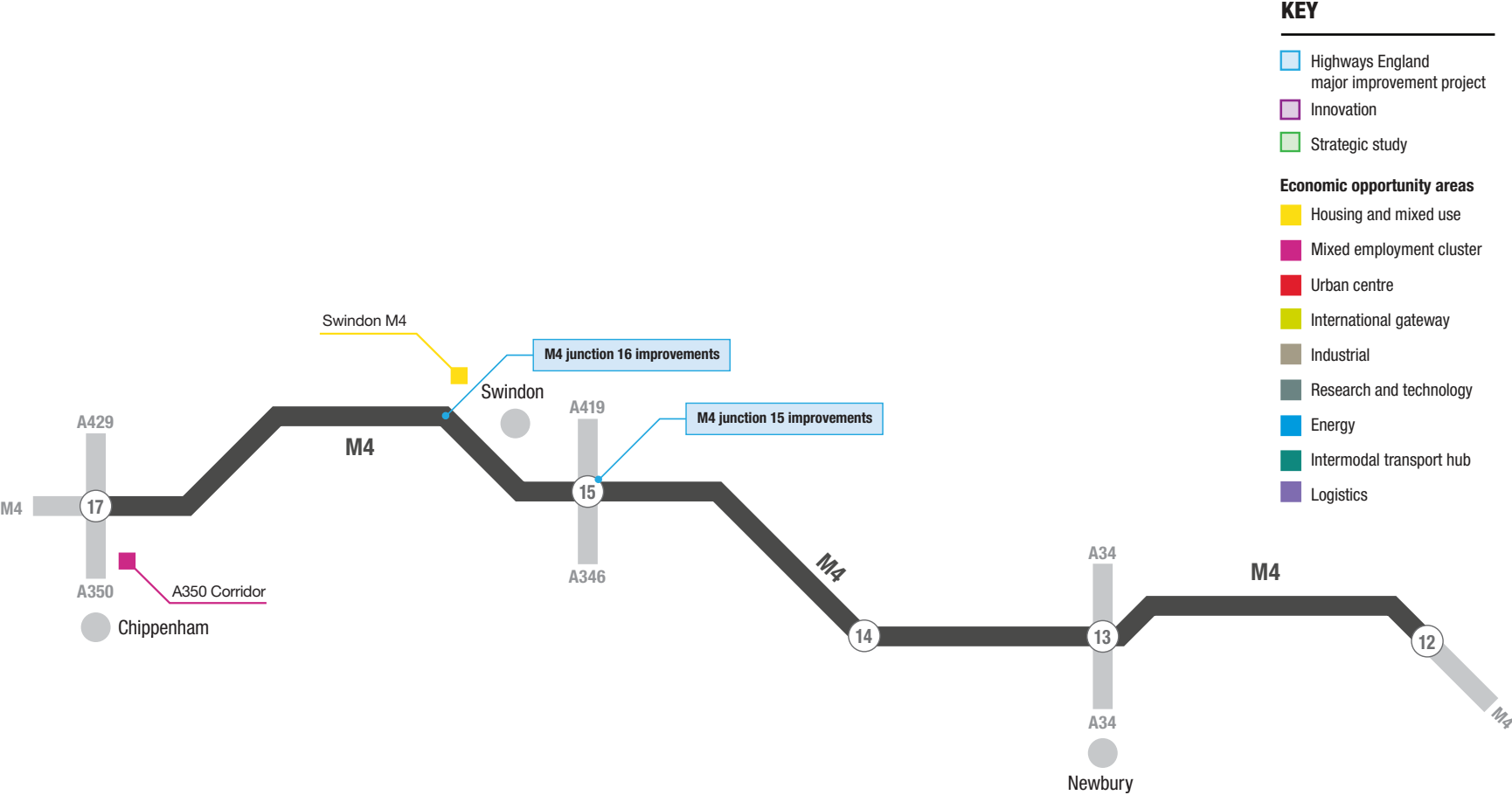


Figure 4.2 - Investment plans and economic opportunity areas

London to Wales - Route Strategy: Map 3 of 3

**KEY**

- Highways England major improvement project
- Innovation
- Strategic study

**Economic opportunity areas**

- Housing and mixed use
- Mixed employment cluster
- Urban centre
- International gateway
- Industrial
- Research and technology
- Energy
- Intermodal transport hub
- Logistics

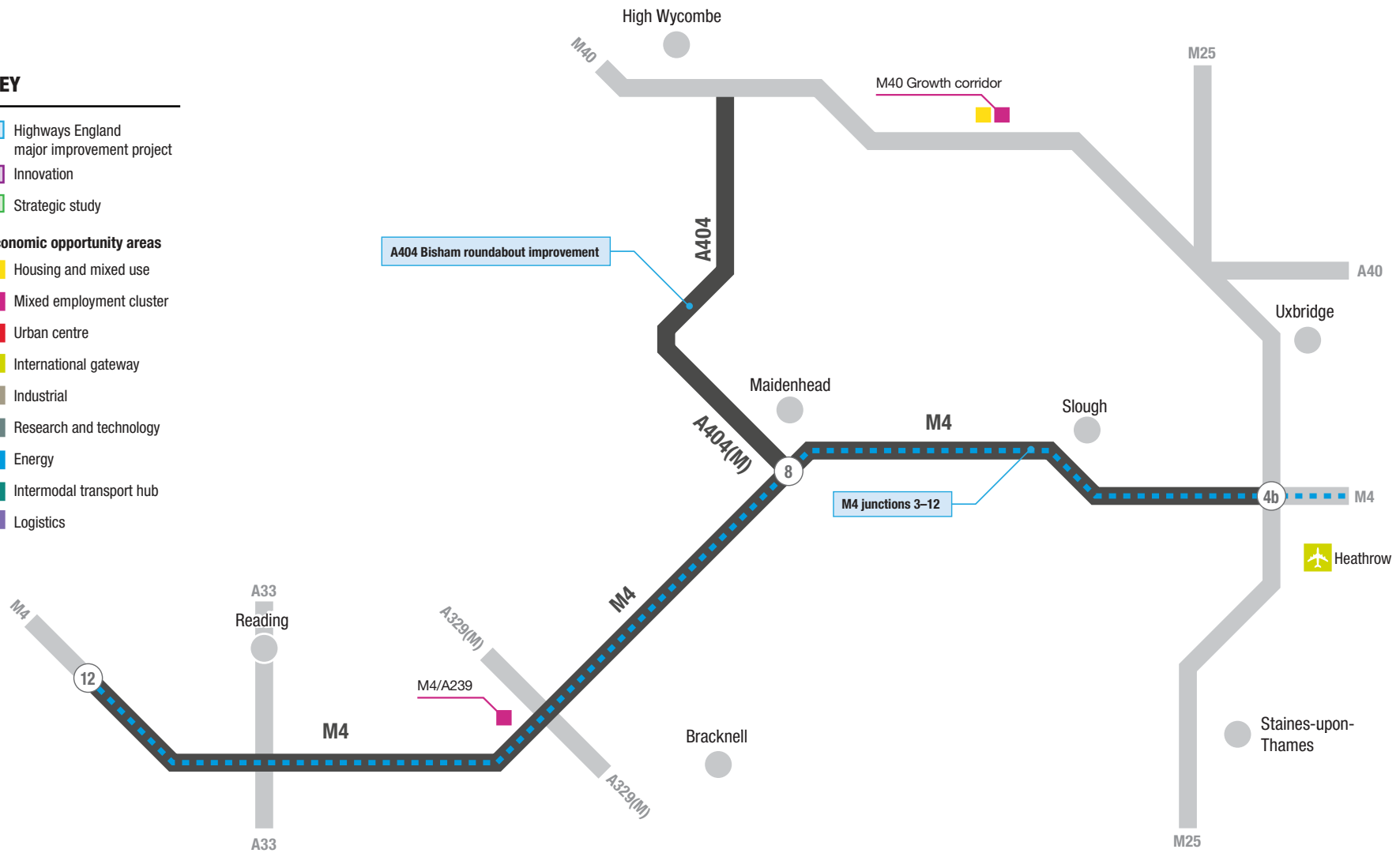


Figure 4.3 - Investment plans and economic opportunity areas



# 5. Future challenges and opportunities

Route Strategies have identified study areas on the strategic road network which require further investigation of the issues raised by stakeholders and identified through Highways England intelligence. These study areas will now be assessed further as part of our development for RIS2.

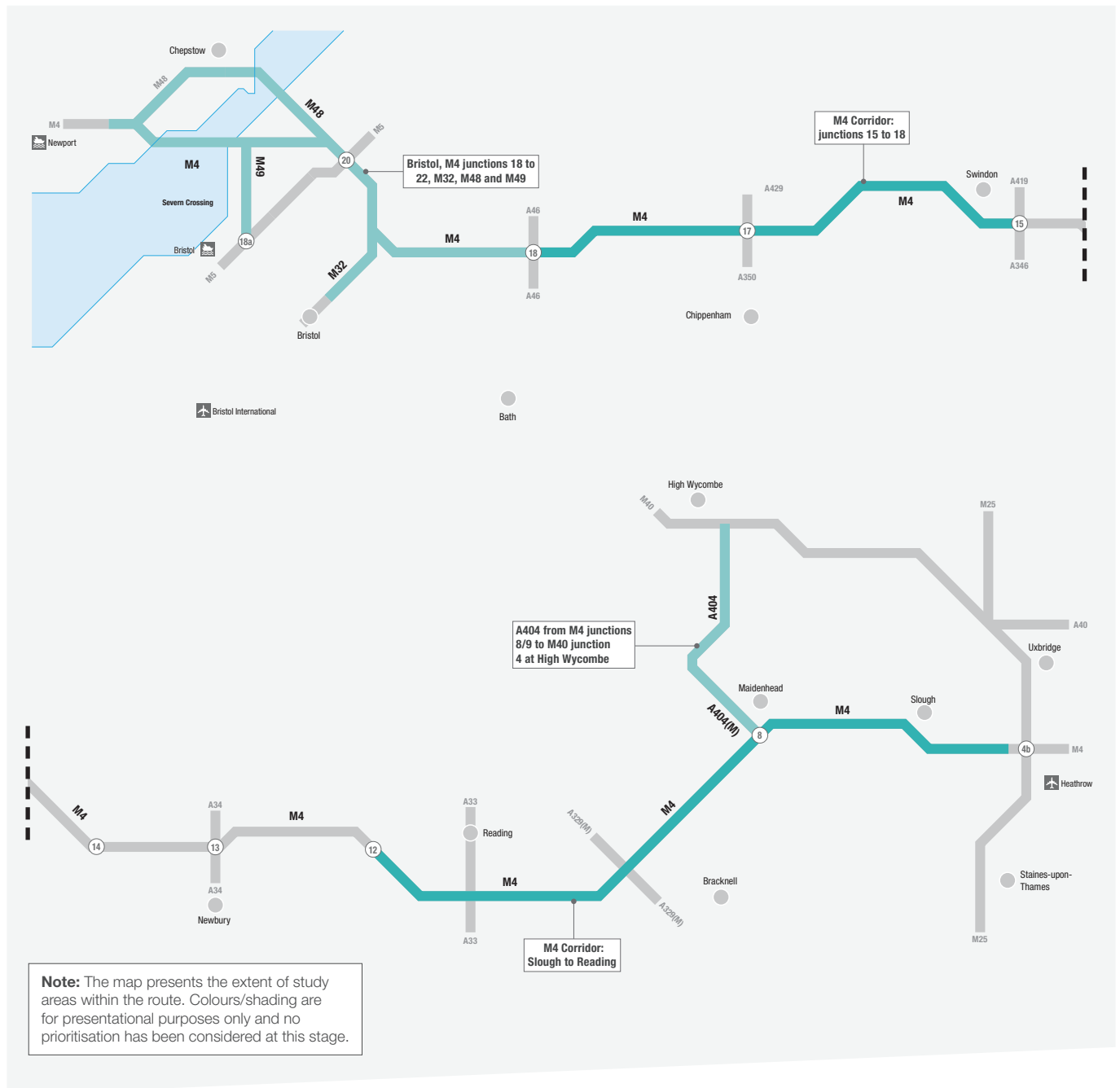


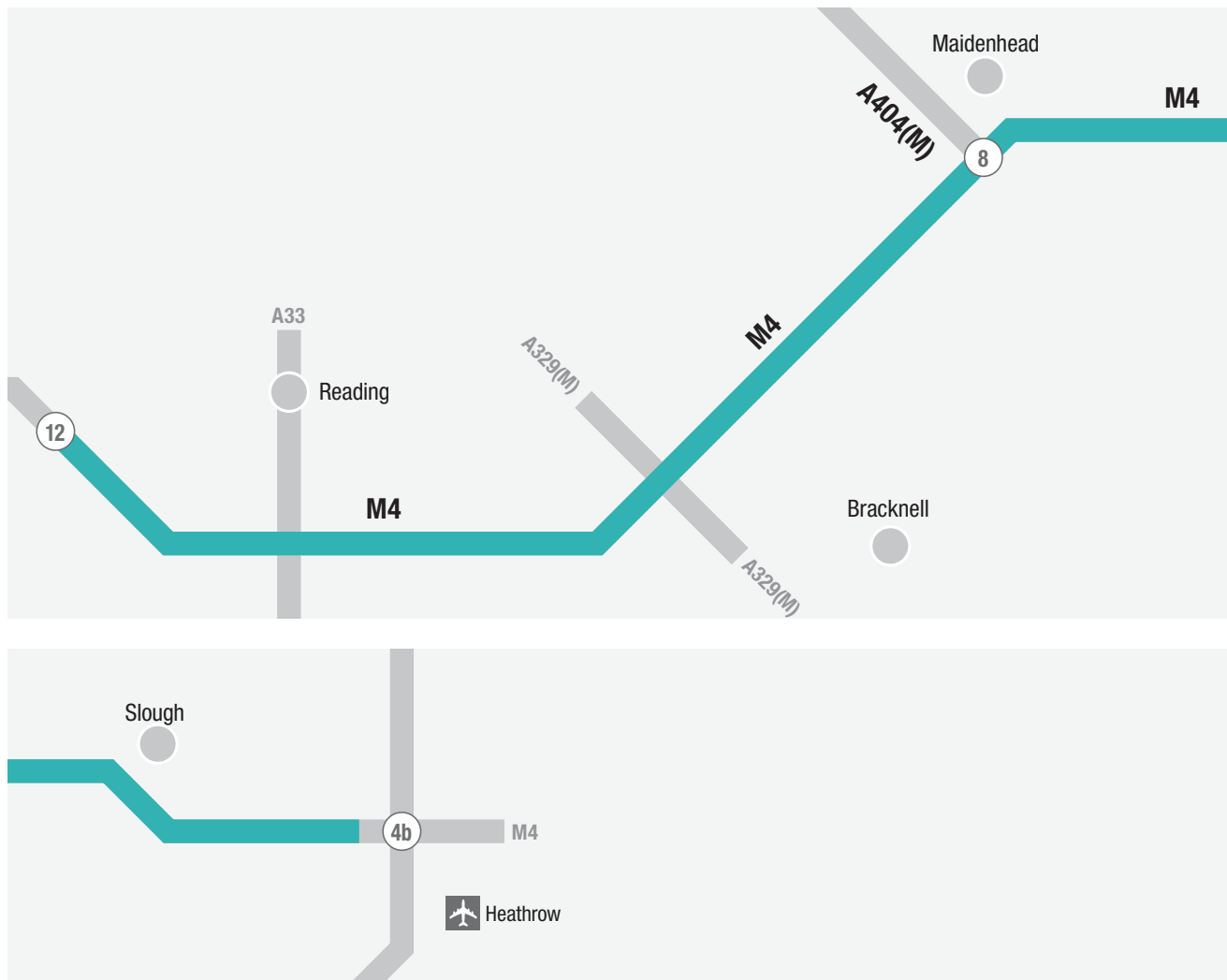
Figure 5.1 - Map of all study areas

## A404 from M4 junctions 8/9 to M40 junction 4 at High Wycombe



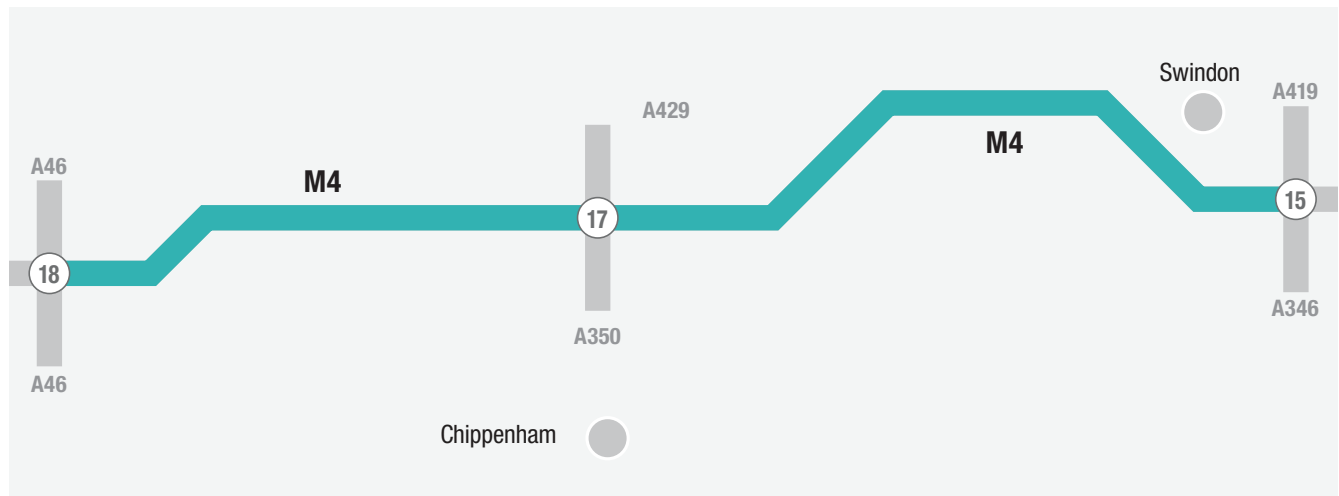
- There are challenges of improved access for employment areas, longer-term housing growth, providing relief for M40 junction 4 (Handy Cross) and safe and efficient operation of the SRN between M40 junctions 2 and 4.
- Growth in Buckinghamshire and Northamptonshire and along the M40 Corridor may also affect travel demand on this link, as will mixed employment clusters such as at the M4/A239.
- Traffic congestion on the A404 is likely to increase as a result of all these growth pressures.

## M4 Corridor: Slough to Reading



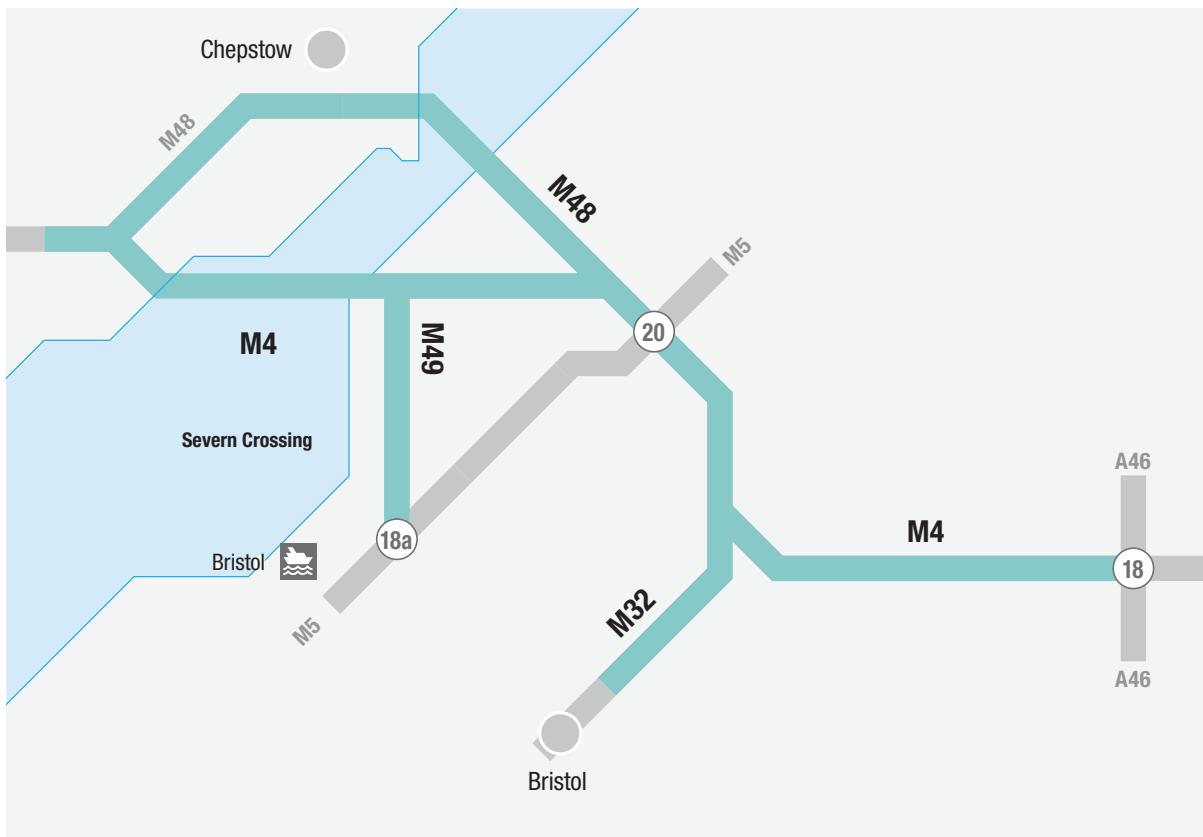
- All lane running smart motorway scheme is to be introduced on the M4 between junctions 3 and 12, which is likely to improve journey time reliability on this stretch of the route.
- Ease of access/regress for local traffic joining the network will require further investigation. This is particularly from junction 5 for Langley, junction 6 for Slough and Windsor, junctions 8/9 for Maidenhead and junction 10 for Reading and Wokingham, which are seeing expansive growth plans.
- There are significant development aspirations along this section of the route, in addition to the expansion of Heathrow airport, will increase demand.

## M4 Corridor: junctions 15 to 18



- This section of the route includes some of the worst parts of the network for journey delays.
- Development around Swindon, Bristol and Chippenham is likely to increase travel demand along the M4 motorway corridor.
- Growth in Swindon town centre, Wichelstowe and the New Eastern Villages will also increase travel demand in the M4 corridor.
- Improvements to the intersection of the M4 junction 15 and the A419 near Swindon aim to unlock one of the largest housing and commercial developments in the country.

## M4 Corridor: junctions 18 to 22



- The section of the M4 between junctions 18 and 19 is one of the worst parts of the network for journey delays.
- Development around Swindon and Bristol may increase travel demand on the M4 motorway corridor. There is a projected 23% increase in population and 5,000 dwellings in the northern fringe by 2026.
- Development at Severnside and Avonmouth will also lead to traffic growth in the area.



# 6. Next steps

Our findings from this and other Route Strategies, as well as other research, will inform our first Strategic Road Network Initial Report which is to be published later this year. This will form the basis of a public consultation, which in turn will feed into decision-making on the next Road Investment Strategy (RIS2).

We are looking ahead to the next RIS and how we can support the Secretary of State in ensuring that value for money investments are made in the road network. The process for developing RIS2 is set out in our licence, and is in 3 phases: research, decision and mobilisation.

We are currently in the first phase – **research phase** – where we are gathering wide-ranging evidence on the state of the network and how we can ensure that improvements have maximum impact. The series of Route Strategies, of which this is one, is an important part of this phase alongside the outcomes of strategic studies which looked at particularly complicated problems on parts of the network and how to tackle them. Another key source of evidence is the Strategic Economic Growth Plan (*The Road to Growth*), which examines where and how the SRN can help support economic growth. This will emphasise that sectors dependent on the road network employ 7.4 million people, that we are already doing a great deal to support growth and that we want to do even more.

Now that this series of Route Strategies is published, we will continue our engagement with stakeholders, including other transport providers and authorities, on how best to address problems and maximise opportunities. For example, in working towards seamless end-to-end journeys for our customers, we will be focussing on how the strategic road network links with local roads and other modes of transport.

Findings from the research phase will feed into Highways England’s Strategic Road Network Initial Report, expected to be published later this year, which will outline Highways England’s ambitions for the network across 2020–2025 and beyond. The Initial Report will be the subject of public consultation.

In the **decision phase**, the consultation feedback will assist the Department for Transport in developing RIS2. In turn we will develop a Strategic Business Plan (SBP) setting out how we will deliver RIS2 as a business. Both the RIS and SBP will be reviewed by the regulator of roads, the Office of Rail and Road, to ensure that we have made the most efficient decisions. The final documents are to be published in 2019.



Figure 6.1 - RIS2 high-level process

In the final **mobilisation phase**, we will set out a Delivery Plan with a detailed programme of investment to be carried out in 2020 to 2025 on the basis of the commitments in RIS2.

Continued investment in modernisation, maintenance and operation will further improve the road network on top of the measures and schemes currently being undertaken, and will allow us to further support users of the strategic road network and the UK's economy. The rigorous process of developing RIS2 should ensure that the best use is made of taxpayers' money and that investments have the maximum impact.

The views and perspectives of different stakeholders, including motorists, are important to us. Stakeholders may also wish to contact one of the partner organisations. For example, stakeholders can keep up to date with Transport Focus' work, by signing up to their monthly electronic newsletter *Road User Voice*. Alternatively, stakeholders may prefer to make their views known through one of the many organisations involved in RIS2. They include the AA, RAC, RAC Foundation, Road Haulage Association, Freight Transport Association, Campaign for Better Transport, Confederation of British Industry and many others.

We will provide information about the process and emerging findings at events for representative organisations in spring 2017. At the same time, we are developing the dialogue with emerging STBs, local government, LEPs, business groups and environmental organisations. We want to align our analysis, and eventually our decision-making, with that of other organisations, so that we can maximise the benefit of investment, for example focusing on improving the interconnectivity between different modes and between the strategic and local road networks. This should lead to a richer discussion during public consultation on the Strategic Road Network Initial Report.







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