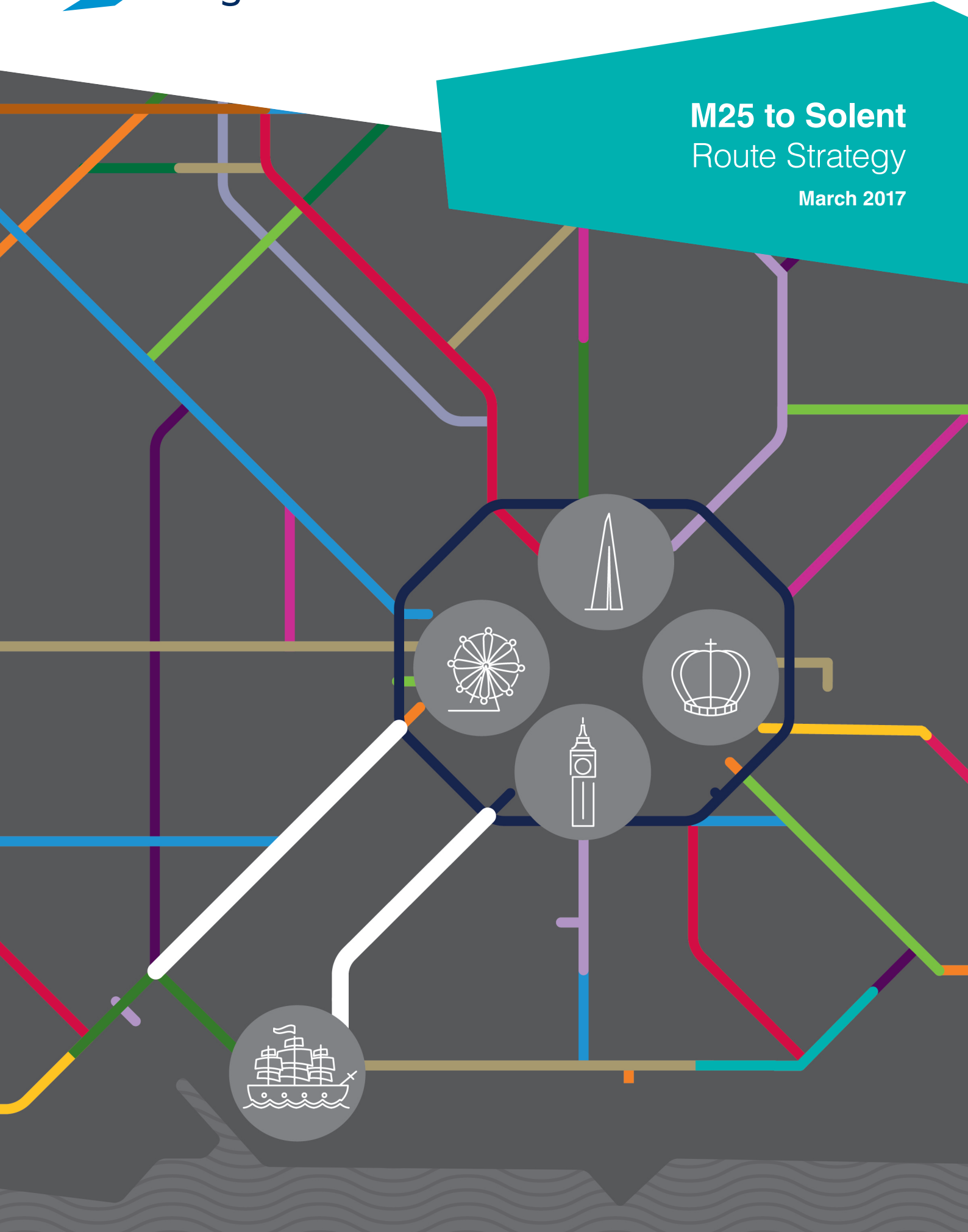


# M25 to Solent Route Strategy

March 2017



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# 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 M25 to Solent (A3 and M3) 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

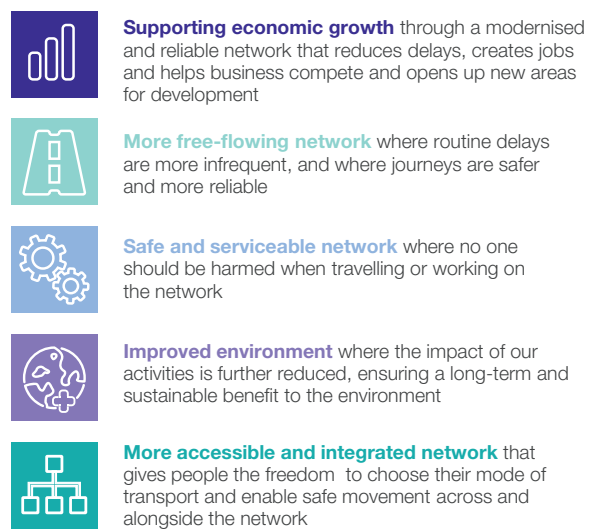


Figure 1.2 - Highways England strategic outcomes

<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.

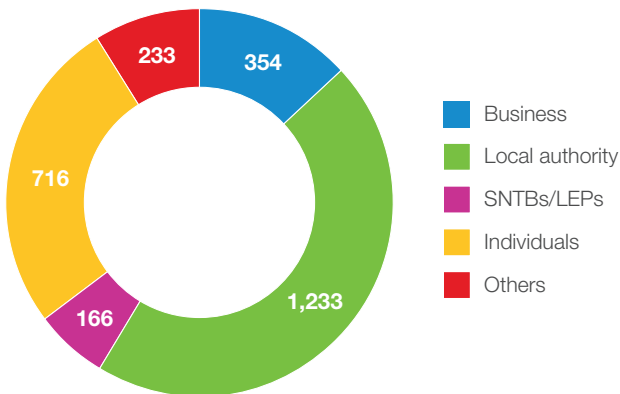


Figure 1.3 - External stakeholder responses

We are increasingly working with subnational transport bodies (SNTBs), 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 there was a difference in how users rated the motorway and A road sections of the M25 to Solent route, with only 45% of users rating their experience of the motorway sections as either extremely good or fairly good, but 83% giving the same rating to the A road sections. As Table 1.1 shows, 61% of users experience problems using the route, the worst performing of all 18 routes, with congestion and roadworks being 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		
27%	London to Wales		
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 M25 to Solent route connects the south-coast port cities of Southampton and Portsmouth to south-west London and Heathrow Airport, and serves numerous urban centres that are identified as focal points for economic growth. It comprises the parallel M3 and A3/A3(M) corridors running through Hampshire and Surrey from inside the M25 London Orbital to the M27 in the Solent sub-region, passing through the South Downs National Park.

The route caters for traffic between the M25 London Orbital and the Solent sub-region and serves international gateways with Heathrow to the north and the Port of Southampton, Southampton Airport and Portsmouth International Port to the south, as well as TAG Farnborough Airport in the Blackwater Valley in Hampshire.

The M3 is about 59 miles long and is dual 3-lane motorway for most of its length, with the exception of a 2-lane section between junctions 8 (A303) and 9 (A34). The M3 connects the A34 to the M27 for the Solent to Midlands route and is designated as a part of the Trans-European Network-Transport (TEN-T), which follows the M25 to Solent route from Southampton to London. It also connects with the A303 at junction 8, forming the eastern end of the South West Peninsula route.

The A3 is approximately 67 miles long and for much of its length is classified as a trunk road. It connects to the M25 and at the southern end it forms the A3(M) connecting to the A27 north of Portsmouth.

The A3 and M3 are connected by the A31 between Guildford and Winchester (M3 junctions 9–10) and Farnborough (M3 junction 4 via the A331 Blackwater Valley),

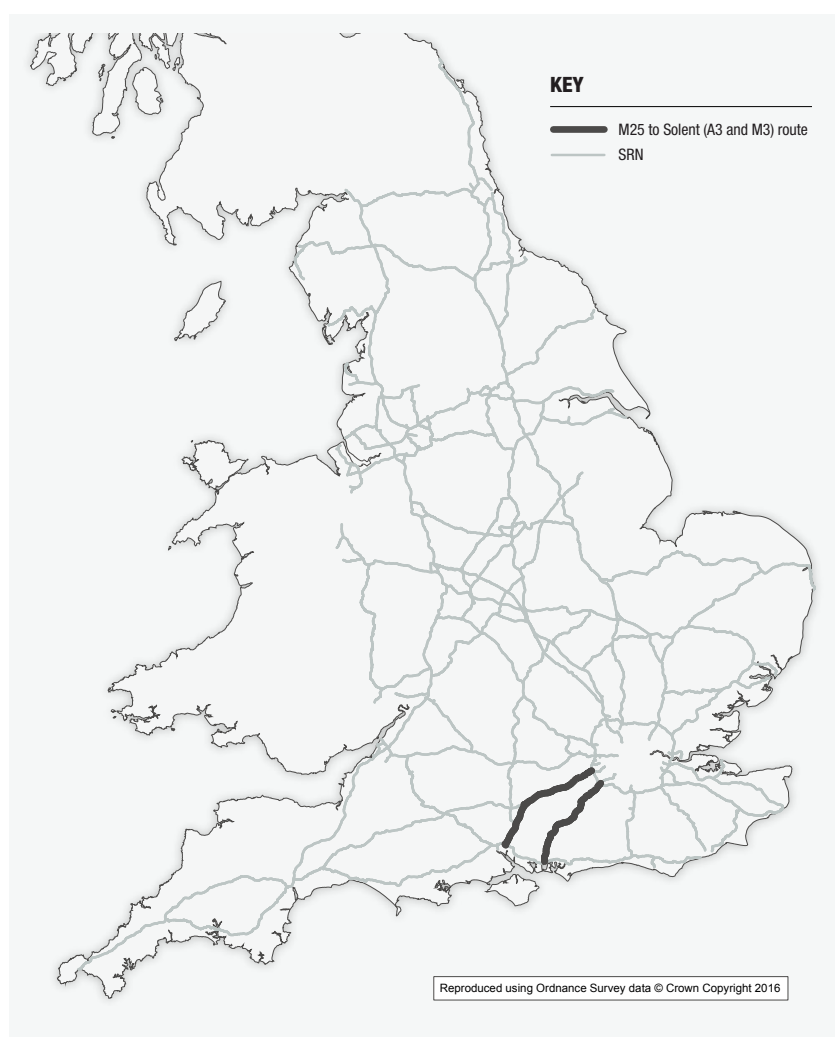


Figure 2.1 - Route overview map

providing alternative non-SRN routes.

Some sections of the route currently work well (based on average speed and delay incurred), including the M3 between Farnborough and Basingstoke, A3 south of Milford and the A3(M) south of the South Downs National Park. However, congestion persists on the northern section of the M3 between the M25 and Blackwater Valley, the southern section of the M3 between Basingstoke and Southampton, the A3 at Guildford and on the approach to the M25.

The route links manufacturing centres to the north and London with south-coast ports, and as a result there is a significant proportion of goods vehicle traffic. The route is especially popular for all road users during summer months, highlighting its importance as a gateway to the south coast via the M27/A31 at Southampton, and the South West via the A303 south of Basingstoke.

The Solent local enterprise partnership (LEP) Strategic Economic Plan (2014) details the creation of an additional 15,500 new jobs and 24,000 new homes in the Solent by 2020. The Enterprise M3 LEP Strategic Economic Plan (2014) details the provision of 11,500 new homes and 30,700 new jobs by 2020. Focal areas for growth include the urban centres of Guildford, Basingstoke and Winchester. Further growth is expected along the Blackwater Valley, and at Woking, Whitehill and Bordon 'eco-town' and Eastleigh, where associated traffic joins the route.

Sections of the route are currently being upgraded to smart motorway, with all-lane running between M3 junctions 2 and 4a covering the M25 to the A327 south of the Blackwater Valley, scheduled for completion in 2017.



“

*There are nationally important gateways at either end of the route, with seaports and airports in the Solent to the south and Heathrow Airport to the north*

”

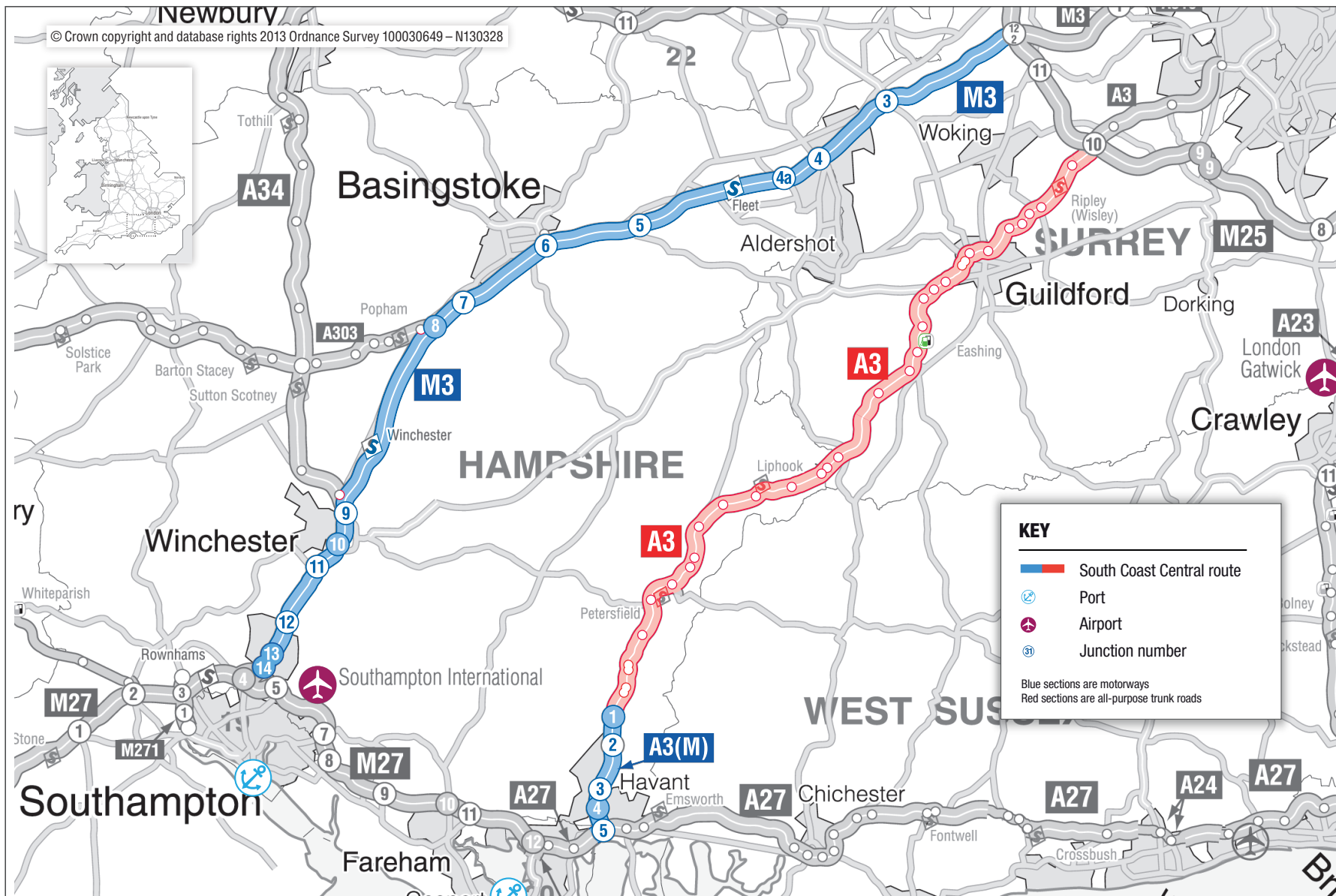


Figure 2.2 - Route Strategy overview map



## 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 on the M25 to Solent route, particularly on

- the A3 around Guildford
- the M25 junction 10
- the M3 junction 9

There is also a lack of technology to guide drivers on the route on the A3 and on the M3 between junctions 4a to 9. This affects the ability of the route to cope with incidents when accidents occur, however minor. The A3 is also not on the core routes patrolled by the Highways England Traffic Officer Service.

Some operational resilience is provided by virtue of the A3 and M3 connecting via the A31/A331 from Guildford to Blackwater Valley to the east and Winchester to the south. However, this can lead to issues occurring on local roads as a result.



### More free-flowing network

Congestion is an issue on many sections of the route, particularly on the approaches to the M25 and M3, which are amongst some of the most heavily congested sections of the SRN. Congestion is also an issue on the A3 on the approach to the M25 and through the urban centre of Guildford.

The northern section of the M3 at junctions 2 to 4a is used by more than 130,000 vehicles a day and sees higher than normal levels of congestion during weekday peak periods, with knock-on effects on the local road network. This section of the M3 is currently being upgraded to smart motorway, with estimated completion during 2017. This will deliver technology and all-lane running in order to increase capacity, help make journey times more reliable, and relieve congestion while also maintaining safety levels.

On the southern section of the M3, junction 9, which connects routes between the Solent and the Midlands experiences a high level of congestion, partly caused by the high proportion of heavy goods vehicles (HGVs) travelling between the M27, M3 and A34. Congestion between Winchester and Southampton can be exacerbated by seasonal travel.

On the A3, capacity issues are concentrated at Guildford, which drops from 3 to 2 lanes between the A31 and the A320, and north of Send on the approaches to the M25 at junction 10. These are particularly predominant during weekday peak periods. Further south, there is some localised congestion experienced on the A3 between the A325 and A272 caused by the A3 Ham Barn roundabout which remains the only at-grade roundabout on the A3 between London and Portsmouth.



## Supporting economic growth

The route is a critical strategic road link between the south-coast ports and the rest of the country. It is therefore significant for the national economy, and provides local access to a number of urban centres on the route that are focal points for regional economic growth ambitions.

The evidence base identifies a large number of current and proposed development opportunities. There are a number of economic opportunity areas very near to, and directly impacted by, the performance of the route. These include:

- the international gateway at Southampton Port
- proposed housing east of Southampton on the M27 corridor, notably in and around Botley and Fareham
- mixed employment development at Eastleigh and Southampton Airport in the Solent

Further north there is also growth potential arising from proposals for a 'sci-tech corridor' comprising Farnborough, Guildford, Aldershot and other growing towns.

Future growth is also identified around the urban centres of Winchester and Basingstoke. The Farnborough Growth Package is being developed by Hampshire County Council, Surrey County Council, Bracknell Forest Council and other transport delivery partners, including Highways England.

Housing on the route is expected to increase by 22% between 2016 and 2025. New developments include:

- Blackwell Farm
- Slyfield
- Gosdon Hill Farm
- Wisley

Further residential growth is planned in Whitehill and Bordon 'eco-town', Manydown, Aldershot Urban Extension, Dunsfold Park and Woking, with the bulk of current growth having an impact on the A3 in Guildford.

Strategic traffic and local traffic compete for road space across much of the route, which has a significant impact on the economies of adjacent towns and local businesses and their access to the SRN. This is particularly prevalent on:

- the northern and southern sections of the M3 on the approaches to the M27 and M25
- at junction 9 of the M3, which both locally serves Winchester and connects with the Solent to Midlands route

Growth in and around Guildford also relies on the A3 which plays a vital role in connecting its urban centre and provides a network for strategic journeys to other regional economic hubs.



## An improved environment

The route passes through both urban and rural environments that present a number of different environmental challenges, most notably:

- A large section of the A3 from the south of Liphook to the A3(M) and the M3 south of Winchester passes through the South Downs National Park. This includes junction 9 of the M3, which is located between high-quality landscape areas within the Itchen Valley, South Downs and at Twyford Down.
- The M3 runs adjacent to numerous other SSSIs, notably to the north, where it passes through Runnymede and Surrey Heath. Much of the A3 is also close to SSSI sites within the South Downs National Park and between Milford and Liphook.
- There are a number of Noise Important Areas (NIAs) on the route through urban areas, notably along the A3 at Guildford, A3(M) at Horndean and Havant and along the M3 at Surrey Heath, Basingstoke, Winchester and Eastleigh. Parts of Surrey Heath and Eastleigh are also identified as Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs).
- There are locations susceptible to flooding because of road drainage capacity issues. The A335 underpass (by Monks Brook) of the M3 at junction 13 is notable, and other flood warning areas include the M3 at junction 11, and between junctions 8 and 9, and 2 and 3. The A3 at Guildford is also notable as a flood warning area between the junctions of the A3100 and A320 at Riverside Park.



## A more accessible and integrated network

Locations where walking and cycling can be most affected include the M3 at junctions 5 and 9 and Twyford Gap to the south of Winchester.

On the A3 issues that affect walking and cycling have been identified at Guildford and between Liphook and Petersfield.

The evidence review also highlights locations where consultees see opportunities to open up new points of access to the SRN. This could include alterations to existing junctions or the need to provide additional junctions.

M25 to Solent (A3 and M3) - Route Strategy: Map 1 of 2

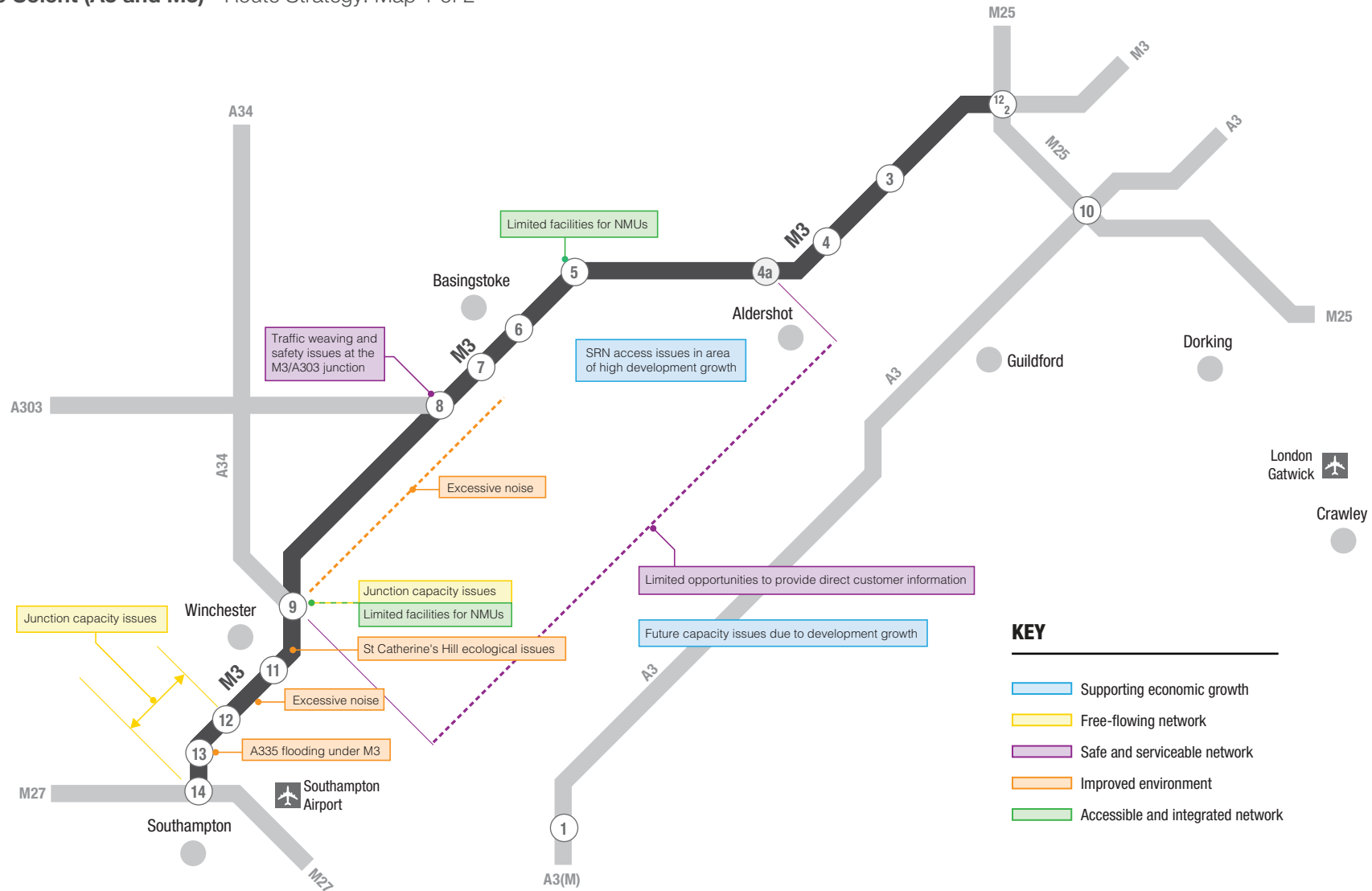


Figure 3.1 - Key challenges for the route

M25 to Solent (A3 and M3) - Route Strategy: Map 2 of 2

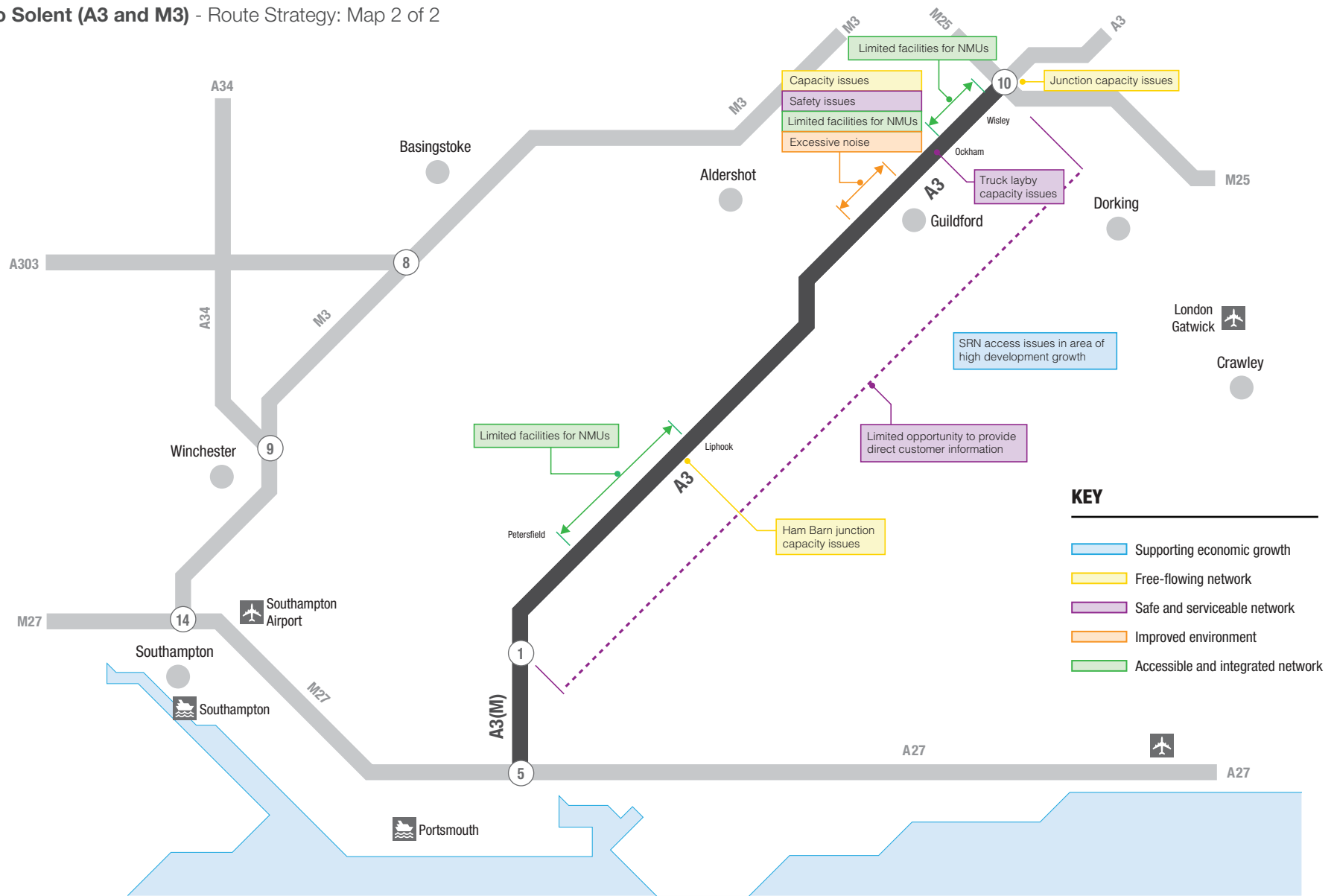


Figure 3.2 - Key challenges for the route





### Diversionary 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 3.3 - M25 to Solent (A3 and M3) 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 inspection 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, 75% of linear assets have been assessed as having no defects or only superficial defects, while over 80% of non-linear assets fall in the same categories.

### Earthworks

The geotechnical earthworks across the route are considered to be in very good condition with the total length of earthworks that require further investigation amounting to less than 4%.

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.

M25 to Solent (A3 and M3) - Route Strategy: Map 1 of 2

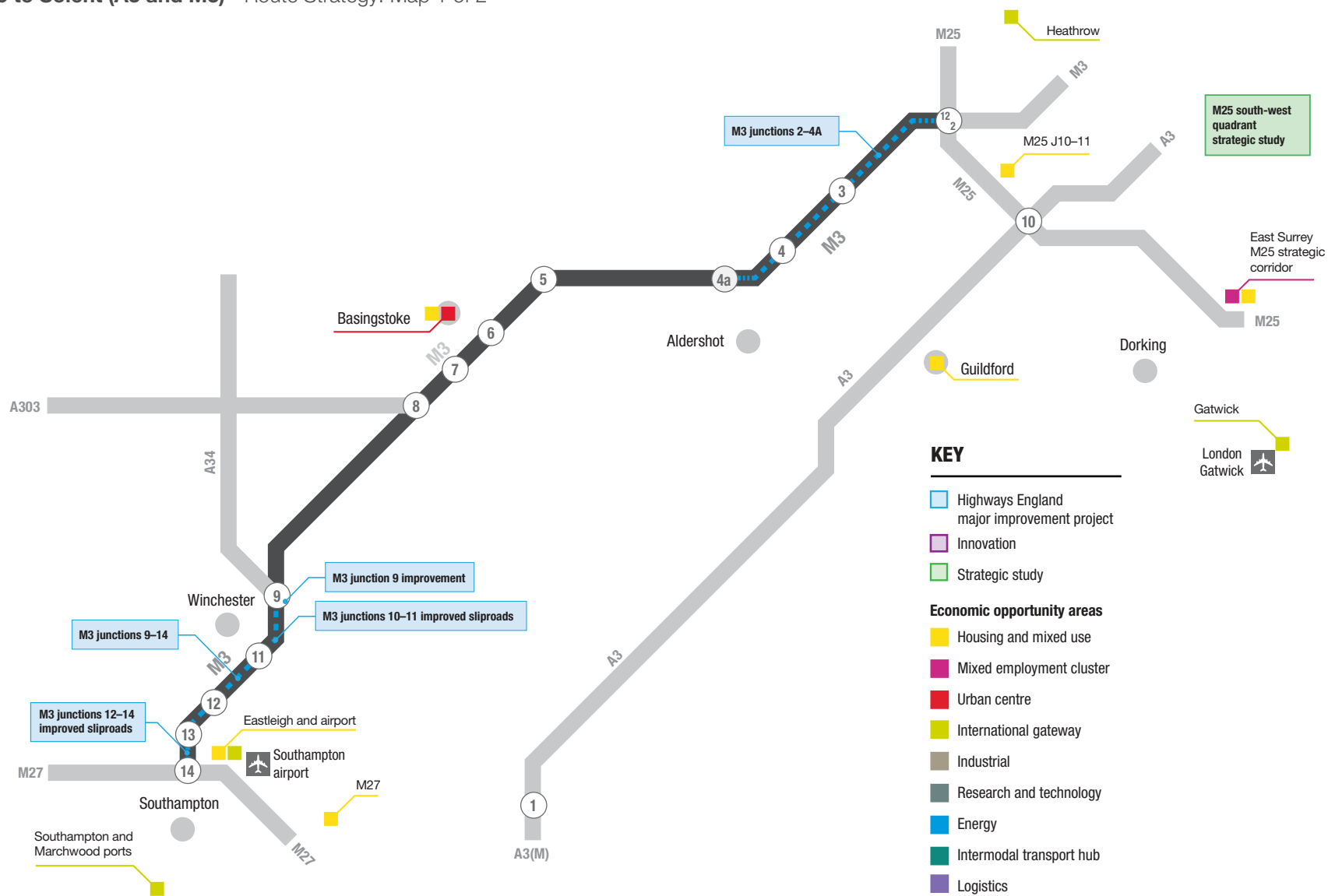


Figure 4.1 - Investment plans and economic opportunity areas

M25 to Solent (A3 and M3) - Route Strategy: Map 2 of 2



**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 4.2 - 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.

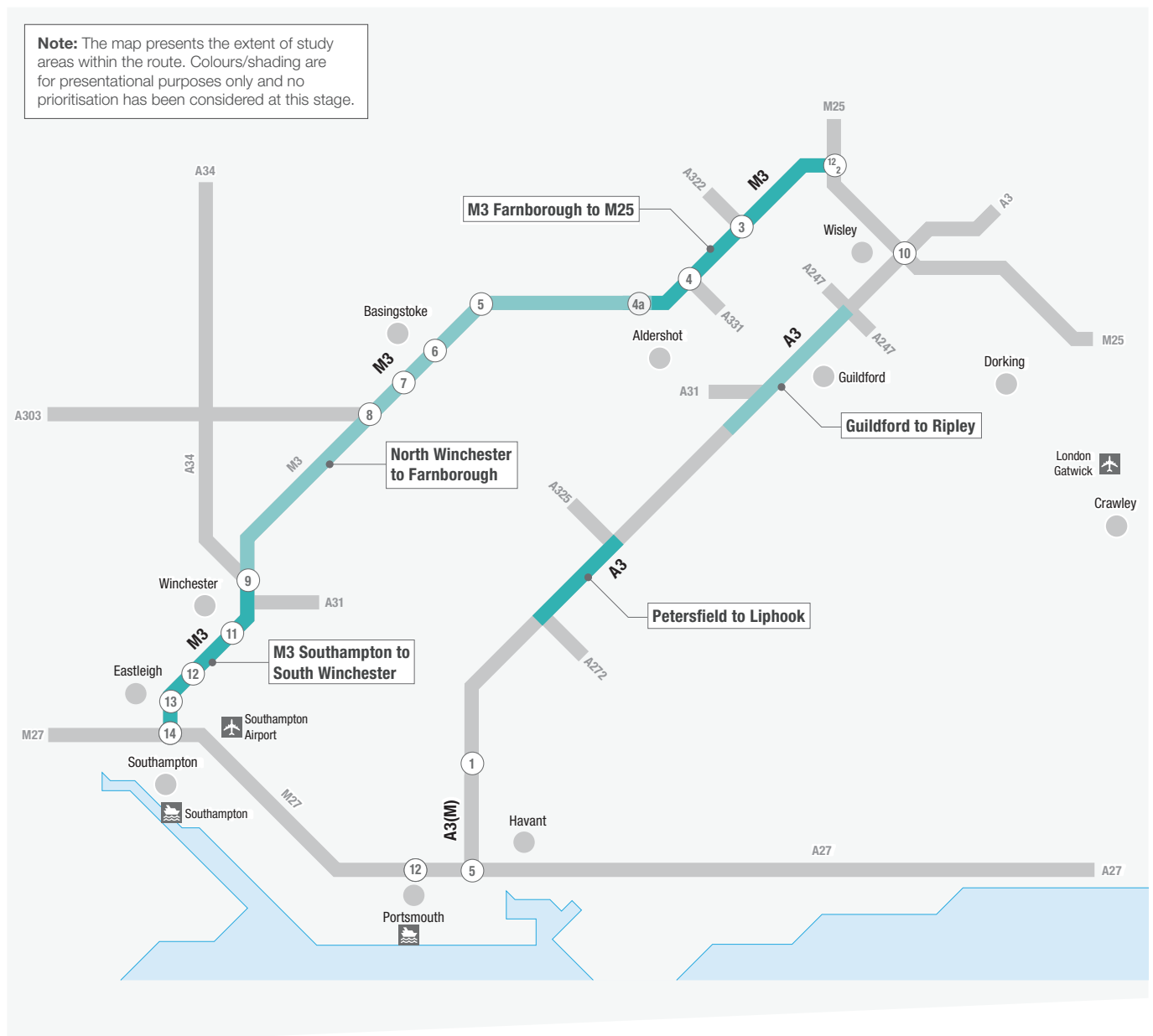


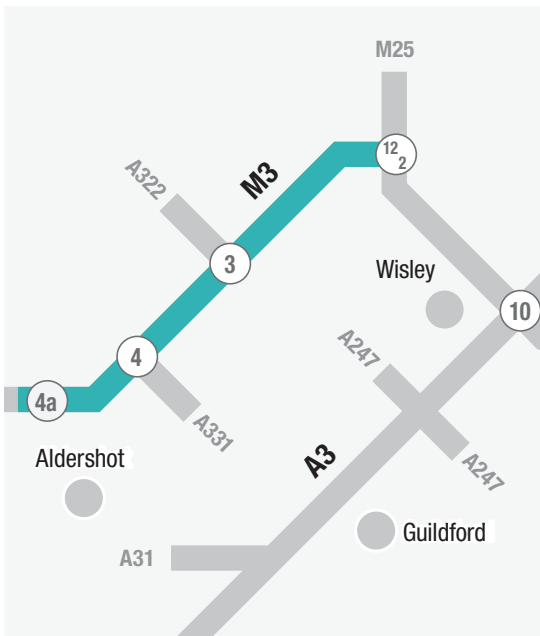
Figure 5.1 - Map of all study areas

## M3 Southampton to South Winchester



- Proximity to the ports leads to a high proportion of goods traffic. This, combined with local traffic, results in congestion issues.
- RIS1 smart motorway improvements will add capacity on the M3 between junctions 9 and 14. Supplemented by slip enhancements at junctions 11–10 and an additional lane of traffic between junctions 13 and 12, this will improve traffic flow in this study area.
- There is an opportunity to further engage with rail providers over rail enhancements, to offer alternative modes of goods transportation between the Midlands and the ports.

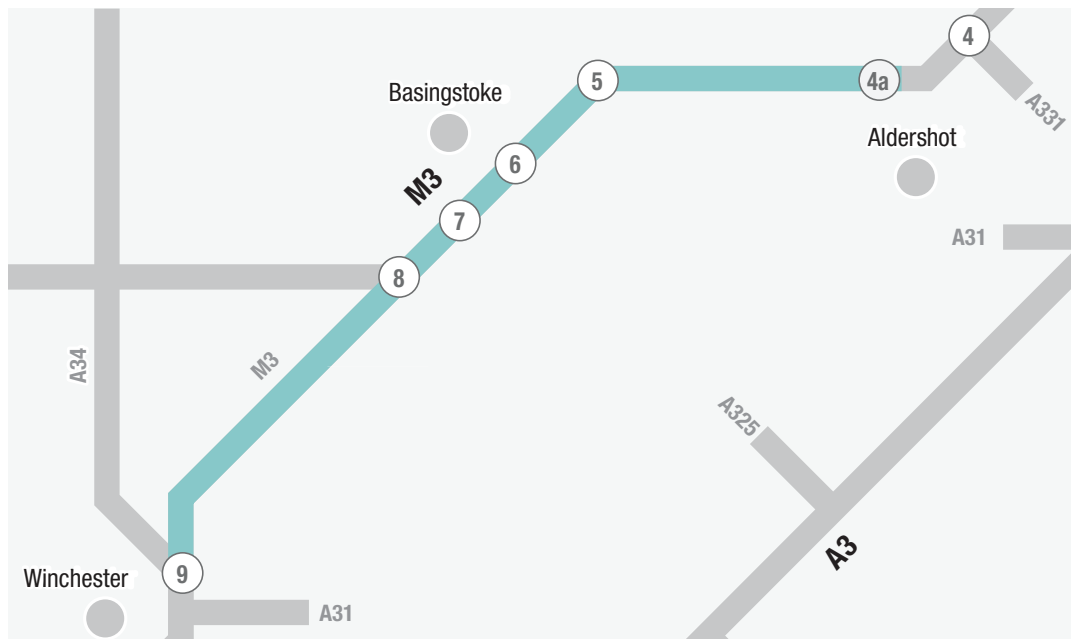
## M3 Farnborough to M25



- The study area suffers from significant levels of congestion and as a result M3 junctions 2 to 4 are currently being upgraded to smart motorway.
- The route passes through SSSIs in Surrey Heath and an opportunity has been identified to address existing concerns for drainage and pollution and filtration systems on this section of the route.
- Adjoining the M3 at junction 3, the A322 links Bracknell, Wokingham and via the A329(M) provides an important and direct sub-SRN connection between the M3 and M4.

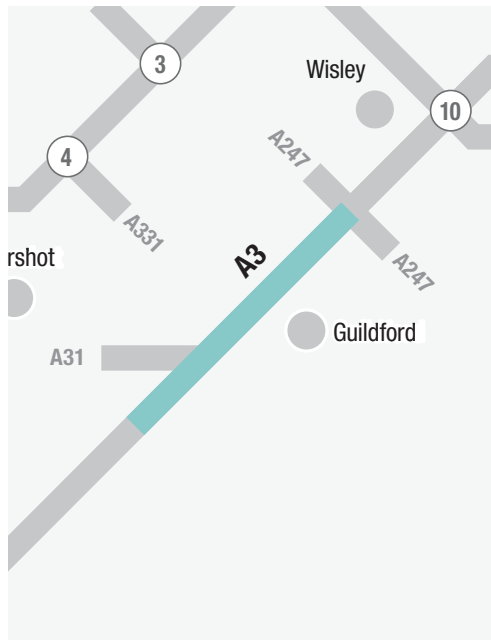


## M3 North Winchester to Farnborough



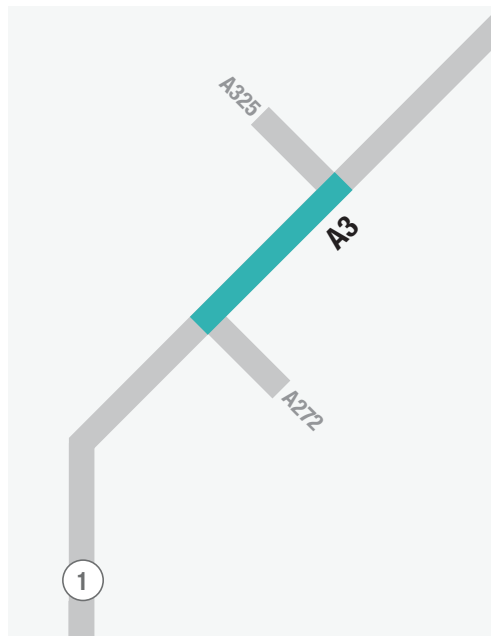
- Substantial growth is expected in Basingstoke which will affect demand for M3 junctions 6 and 7.
- RIS improvements to M3 junction 9 will provide free movements from the A34 to the M3 that is seen as a barrier to future growth, and will seek to improve capacity and safety issues at the junction. Improvements should also provide strategic connectivity for traffic routing to/from the south coast, notably for freight from the ports.
- The study area is generally seen to perform well from M3 junctions 4a to 7, and recent improvements have been delivered to the Black Dam roundabout that will assist movement of traffic coming off the SRN at M3 junction 6.
- The M3 junctions 7 and 8 between Basingstoke and the A303 present seasonal capacity and safety challenges.
- There is a lack of technology to inform and influence road users, and this section will fall between 2 smart motorway schemes.

## A3 Guildford to Ripley



- Additional traffic joins the A3 from the A31 Hog's Back, making this section a hotspot for both network capacity and safety issues.
- Multi-modal schemes have been identified including rail capacity schemes (Network Rail) and Sustainable Transport Movement Corridor (Guildford Borough Council) that would reduce demand and improve conditions for all users of the A3 corridor through the urban extent of Guildford.
- Opportunities have also been identified to the north of Guildford for including enhanced capacity of truck laybys at Ripley and the introduction of north-facing slips at the A3/A247 at Ripley to support local plan aspirations and relieve some pressure on local roads accessing the A3 at Guildford.

## Petersfield to Liphook



- Ham Barn roundabout, at the A3/B3006 junction, is the only at-grade roundabout on the A3 outside London, which means that it sees some localised congestion issues that make it a network pinch point.

# 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 SNTBs, 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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