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9 May 2017

Dear [REDACTED]

FOI REQUEST, A358 TAUNTON TO SOUTHFIELDS

I am writing to confirm that we do hold the information you requested on 13 April 2017 but have decided that some of this information cannot be disclosed. As your request relates to a new road, your request has been considered under the Environmental Information Regulations 2004.

The information that can be released is:

Q1. Did you consult SCC (the Highways Authority) over this scheme? If so, please provide the dates and copies of all of their responses.

There has been consultation with SCC about the proposed scheme in the following ways:

- Highways England and SCC at Project Steering Group meetings (copies of the minutes Highways England hold are attached)
- Meetings of Scheme Statutory Stakeholder Group which includes SCC officers (4.12.15, 22.3.16, 13.7.16, 11.11.16)
- Meetings of Scheme Communications Group which includes SCC officers (14.1.16, 22.3.16, 26.5.16)
- Meetings between Mott MacDonald Sweco JV (MMSJV) Design Consultants Highways Design team with SCC officers (11.1.16, 29.9.16, 28.11.16, 20.1.17, 3.3.17, 6.3.17)
- Scheme Value Management workshops attended by SCC officers (29.1.16)

Feedback was provided during discussions at all meetings.

Q2. Did you consult TDBC (the Local Planning Authority) over this scheme? If so, please provide the dates and copies of all of their responses.

There has been consultation with TDBC about the proposed scheme in the following ways:

- Highways England and TDBC at Project Steering Group meetings (copies of the minutes Highways England hold are attached)
- Meetings of Scheme Statutory Stakeholder Group which includes TDBC officers (4.12.15, 22.3.16, 13.7.16, 11.11.16)
- Meetings of Scheme Communications Group which includes TDBC officers (14.1.16, 22.3.16, 26.5.16)
- Scheme Value Management workshops attended by TDBC officers (29.1.16)

Feedback was provided during discussions at all meetings.

Q4. The proposed new M5 junction (25A) at South Road/Shorefields is being consulted on as a "closed" junction without local access. Are there any plans (from you or SCC or any other party) to allow for local access as a future development? Note: The local Shoreditch/South Road (B3170) is a small, local B-road with queuing at Billetfield for incoming traffic to join the A38 in Taunton and would not cope with the extra traffic generated by local access to the proposed new M5 junction.

Highways England has no plans to connect a new M5 motorway junction with local roads in the Shoreditch area.

Q5. The location for the proposed new M5 Junction (25A) at Killams Avenue/Shoreditch would fall inside the existing urban boundary and conurbation of Taunton South (where the urban boundary was moved West after the planning permission in 2013 for the development now known as Killam's Park). Why has Highways England planned for a busy and complex junction with many negative impacts to be located within the existing conurbation and housing at Killam's? What alternative location/s for this junction were considered and why were they discounted?

The proposed junction location has been identified because it is situated south of existing urban housing conurbations in the Killams and Blackbrook areas of Taunton that would curtail or restrict construction of an appropriate new M5 motorway junction.

Q6. What other routes for the A358 dualling were considered, in addition to the current proposed route (with an intrusive new dual carriageway running past the village of Stoke St Mary and with the M5 access within the Taunton South conurbation)? Please supply maps and overviews of the routes and the reasons for their exclusion from the consultation.

Details of discounted route options are publicly available to view, print and download in the scheme's Technical Assessment Report which can be accessed online at the

scheme's consultation webpage at <https://highwaysengland.citizenspace.com/he/a358-taunton-to-southfields/>

Q7a. What proportion of traffic from the current natural route to Devon and Cornwall via the A303/A30 is forecast to be diverted on to this proposed scheme?

It is expected that between 14-19% of traffic would divert from the A303/A30 route.

Q7b. At peak holiday periods, what is the expected daily maximum volume of through traffic (from the diverted A303/A30 traffic) past Stoke St Mary and on to the proposed new M5 junction?

For the next stage of scheme development further traffic modelling is being undertaken to represent traffic during peak holiday periods. Until this work is completed it is not possible to accurately answer this question.

A copy of the above information to be released is enclosed.

The following information is being withheld under the exemption(s) in section(s) [12 (4) (d) Request for unfinished documents of the Environmental Information Regulation 2004:

Q3. During a recent local consultation, it was impossible to fully determine all of the impacts of the proposed new M5 junction (25A) as there were no plans provided at the consultation event (just a large red blob to show location). Are there any draft plans or drawings showing the possible configuration/s or this proposed new M5 junction. If so, please disclose all versions of drawings, plans, layouts etc.

In applying this exemption we have had to balance the public interest in withholding the information against the public interest in disclosure. The key public interest factors for and against disclosure are attached.

If you are unhappy with the way we have handled your request you may ask for an internal review. Our internal review process is available at:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/highways-england/about/complaints-procedure>

If you require a print copy, please phone the Information Line on 0300 123 5000; or e-mail info@highwaysengland.co.uk You should contact me if you wish to complain.

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review, you have the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House

Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF

If you have any queries about this letter, please contact me. Please remember to quote reference number [REDACTED] in any future communications.

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

A358 Taunton to Southfields Public Interest Test

Request for Draft plans or drawings showing the possible configuration/s or this proposed new M5 junction.

EIR exemption 12(4)(d) Request for unfinished documents

<i>Factors supporting disclosure</i>	<i>Factors supporting non-disclosure</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Could generate a wider public understanding of the scheme by providing more information to support high level plans published in the TAR;• Could support organisational transparency• Allow more detail comments from the public during public consultation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Releasing the requested data could adversely impact the next stage of engagement when more accurate data becomes available• Members of the public feeling they haven't had an equal and ample opportunity to give a response to the public consultation• Cause confusion amongst the general public and lead them to think the plans are more developed than they are• Adversely impact on individuals and their properties before full and detailed assessments of impacts have been undertaken• Could cause unnecessary emotional stress to potentially affected individuals• Drawings requested are incomplete so would not provide a full picture if viewed at this stage

Conclusion: there are compelling arguments which support withholding the information which outweigh those supporting release.

PIT Members: [REDACTED]

Date of PIT: 08/05/2017

SCC Engagement	Date	Feedback received
Scheme Statutory Stakeholder Workshop	04/12/2015	SCC enquired for additional information about scheme planning processes and timelines.
Scheme Statutory Stakeholder Workshop	22/03/2016	SCC enquired about status of archaeological studies; SCC enquired about sifting methodology; SCC enquired about feasibility study into M5 J25 connection; SCC enquired about environmental studies.
Scheme Statutory Stakeholder Workshop	13/07/2016	
Scheme Statutory Stakeholder Workshop	11/11/2016	SCC enquired about HE plans to consult with parish councils;
		SCC offered to make comms channels available to publicise the scheme; SCC highlighted importance of involving parish councils; SCC stated importance of explaining scheme planning processes; SCC stated importance of explaining different issues between local J25 improvements and HE A358 upgrade.
Scheme Communications Group	14/01/2016	SCC enquired about details of proposed options consultation; SCC enquired about 'hard to reach' groups comms strategy; SCC agreed to contribute to scheme Statement of Community Consultation.
Scheme Communications Group	22/03/2016	
Scheme Communications Group	26/05/2016	SCC enquired about public consultation organisational details. SCC offered to approach user groups to try and encourage applications for the A303 / A358 corridors; SCC offered to advise MMGJV how to do a thorough search of existing unrecorded routes; SCC advised NMU route between Taunton and Southfields under consideration.
Highways Design Meetings - Non Motorised User and loc	11/01/2016	
	29/09/2016	SCC enquired about side road and junction strategy development; SCC enquired about offline route not linking to Taunton; SCC enquired about future use of existing A358; SCC enquired about scheme budget; SCC enquired about RIS; SCC enquired about junction lighting requirements; SCC enquired about side road strategy.
Highways Design Meetings - Scheme Update		
	28/11/2016	SCC identified the desire to provide a multi-user link between the Blackdown Hills and Quantock Hills AONBs; SCC stated importance of the Herepath (a 13 mile circular route to south of existing A358) that currently connects to Hatch Beauchamp via a permissive RoW through an agricultural underpass alongside Fivehead River; SCC enquired about the possibility to accommodate crossings over the proposed route to the south of Rapps.
Highways Design Meetings - Non Motorised User provisio	20/01/2017	SCC enquired about traffic flows; SCC enquired about junction strategies.
Highways Design Meetings - Engineering – Junction Strat	03/03/2017	SCC enquired about traffic flows; SCC enquired about junction strategies.
Highways Design Meetings - Engineering – Junction Strat	06/03/2017	Request to supply updated traffic modelling information
Highways Design Meetings – Stage 1 Forecast Traffic flow	23/03/2017	Request to supply updated traffic modelling information
Scheme Update Meetings - Public Consultation Update		
Value Management Workshop	29/01/2016	Email response stating no comments about VM Report issued
A303/A30/A358 Corridor Group		
TDBC Engagement	Date	Feedback received
		TDBC enquired about assurance that scheme would go ahead; TDBC enquired about likelihood of use of local resources.
Scheme Statutory Stakeholder Workshop	04/12/2015	
		TDBC enquired about consultation timelines; TDBC enquired about inclusion of businesses within public consultation.
Scheme Statutory Stakeholder Workshop	22/03/2016	
Scheme Statutory Stakeholder Workshop	13/07/2016	See SCC entry.
Scheme Statutory Stakeholder Workshop	11/11/2016	TDBC enquired about role of proposed technical working groups.
Scheme Communications Group	14/01/2016	None
		TDBC enquired about comms strategy for road users; TDBC agreed to feed into scheme Statement of Community Consultation.
Scheme Communications Group	22/03/2016	
Scheme Communications Group	26/05/2016	TDBC enquired about public consultation organisational details. Request to supply updated traffic modelling information
Scheme Update Meetings - Public Consultation Update		
A303/A30/A358 Corridor Group		