

High Speed Rail (London – West Midlands)

Supplementary environmental information report

Footpath SBH27 and Bridleway SBH19

November 2023



Department
for Transport

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1 Introduction

1.1 Background to High Speed Two

- 1.1.1 The hybrid Bill for High Speed Rail between London and the West Midlands ('the Bill') was submitted to Parliament together with an Environmental Statement (ES) in November 2013 ('the main ES'). The Bill was amended a number of times following its submission resulting in five Additional Provisions (APs) which were each accompanied by Supplementary Environmental Statements (SES).
- 1.1.2 Any new or different significant effects that were likely to result from changes to the design which did not require amendments to the Bill; changes to construction assumptions, new environmental baseline information and corrections to the main ES were reported in Supplementary Environmental Statements (SEs). These were deposited alongside the APs.
- 1.1.3 The Bill was enacted in February 2017 to become the High Speed Rail (London – West Midlands) Act 2017 ('the HS2 Act'). The HS2 Act confers the necessary powers required to construct, maintain and operate the HS2 railway from London to the West Midlands.
- 1.1.4 HS2 comprises the construction of a new railway approximately 230km (143 miles) in length between London and the West Midlands. Passenger services will be provided by new high speed trains from 2026, which will travel at speeds of up to 360kph (225 mph).

1.2 Introduction to this SEI and its purpose

- 1.2.1 This Supplementary Environmental Information (SEI) report describes new or different likely significant effects at Aylesbury (within Community Forum Area 11) arising from changes to construction methodology and that exceed those reported in the ES (as amended). Despite the implementation of the controls set out in the Environmental Minimum Requirements (EMRs), these effects are predicted to remain as new significant effects (NSE).

1.3 The Environmental Minimum Requirements

- 1.3.1 The HS2 EMRs set out the high-level environmental and sustainability commitments that the Government has entered into through the hybrid Bill process.
- 1.3.2 The EMRs consist of a suite of framework documents which: (i) define the mechanisms by which the nominated undertaker will engage with communities and other key stakeholders; and (ii) implement environmental and sustainability management measures designed to protect communities and the environment during detailed design development and construction. The nominated undertaker is

the body, appointed by the Secretary of State for Transport (SoS), responsible for delivering Phase One of HS2.

- 1.3.3 The nominated undertaker, taking forward the detailed design and implementation of Phase One of HS2, is required by the SoS to comply with the EMRs. The components of the EMRs are described in the EMR General Principles (CS755 02/17, February 2017).
- 1.3.4 The controls contained in the EMRs, along with powers contained in the HS2 Act and the Undertakings given by the Secretary of State, will ensure that impacts which have been assessed in the ES (as amended) will not be exceeded, unless any new impact or impacts in excess of those assessed in the ES:
- results from a change in circumstances which was not likely at the time of the ES¹;
 - would not be likely to do be environmentally significant²;
 - results from a change or extension to the project, where that change or extension does not itself require environmental impact assessment (EIA) under either (i) article 4(1) of and paragraph 24 of Annex 1 to the EIA Directive³ ; or (ii) article 4(2) of and paragraph 13 of Annex 2 to the EIA Directive⁴; or
 - would be considered as part of a separate consent process (and therefore further EIA if required).

¹ In addition, Supplementary Environmental Statements and Additional Provision Environmental Statements were published and tabled by the Promoter in July 2015, September 2015, October 2015 and December 2015

² i.e. a situation that could not reasonably have been anticipated at the time of the Environmental Statement. This covers all effects (both positive and negative)

³ 2011 consolidated EIA Directive (2011/92/EU)

⁴ Broadly, this would not allow those changes or extensions to the project (once it has received Royal Assent) which would give rise to adverse environmental effects within the EIA

2 Scope

- 2.1.1 Section 63(3) of the High Speed Rail (London – West Midlands) Act 2017 Act (“the Act”) amends Regulation 9 (relating to subsequent applications) of the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations. In particular Regulation 9, paragraph (1)(b)(ii) of the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations is amended to specifically reference the Act.
- 2.1.2 Regulation 9(3) allows the relevant planning authority to request further environmental information (under Regulation 25) where they believe environmental information currently provided is deemed not adequate to assess the significant effects of the development on the environment.
- 2.1.3 This Supplementary Environmental Information Report (SEI) provides further environmental information to the ES (as amended) so as to satisfy any requests under paragraphs 9 and 25 of the EIA Regs by the relevant planning authorities, Buckinghamshire Council when considering any relevant subsequent applications.
- 2.1.4 Additionally, Paragraph 1.1.3 of the High Speed Rail (London – West Midlands) Environmental Minimum Requirements (EMR) General Principles states that:
“The controls contained within the Environmental Minimum Requirements (EMRs) [...] will ensure that impacts which have been assessed in the ES will not be exceeded, unless any new impact in excess of those assessed in the ES results from a change in circumstances which was not likely at the time of the ES...”
- 2.1.5 Furthermore paragraph 3.1.8 states:
“In the circumstances in the first bullet point of paragraph 1.1.3, if the significant adverse impacts identified in the ES are likely to be exceeded, the nominated undertaker will take all reasonable steps to minimise or eliminate those additional impacts. If despite these reasonable steps, significant impacts remain the nominated undertaker will report them.”
- 2.1.6 Consequently, this document also provides a report to meet the requirements of paragraph 3.1.8 of the EMR General Principles.

3 Site and works description

- 3.1.1 The site is located in Community Forum Area (CFA) 11, south of Aylesbury in Buckinghamshire.
- 3.1.2 In this area, there are four Public Rights of Way (PRoW) routes that cross the HS2 line. These PRoWs play a crucial role in connecting the villages of Stoke Mandeville, Aylesbury, Stone, and Bishopstone and the wider PRoW network in rural Buckinghamshire.
- 3.1.3 Two of the four PRoW in the Aylesbury area that cross the HS2 line are Bridleway SBH/19 and Footpath SBH/27. Bridleway SBH/19 crosses the HS2 line at chainage point 60+300, and Footpath SBH/27 crosses at chainage point 61+100, as shown below in Figure 1. In the ES (as amended), Bridleway SBH/19 has an average of 35 daily users, while Footpath SBH/27 has an average of 19 daily users.

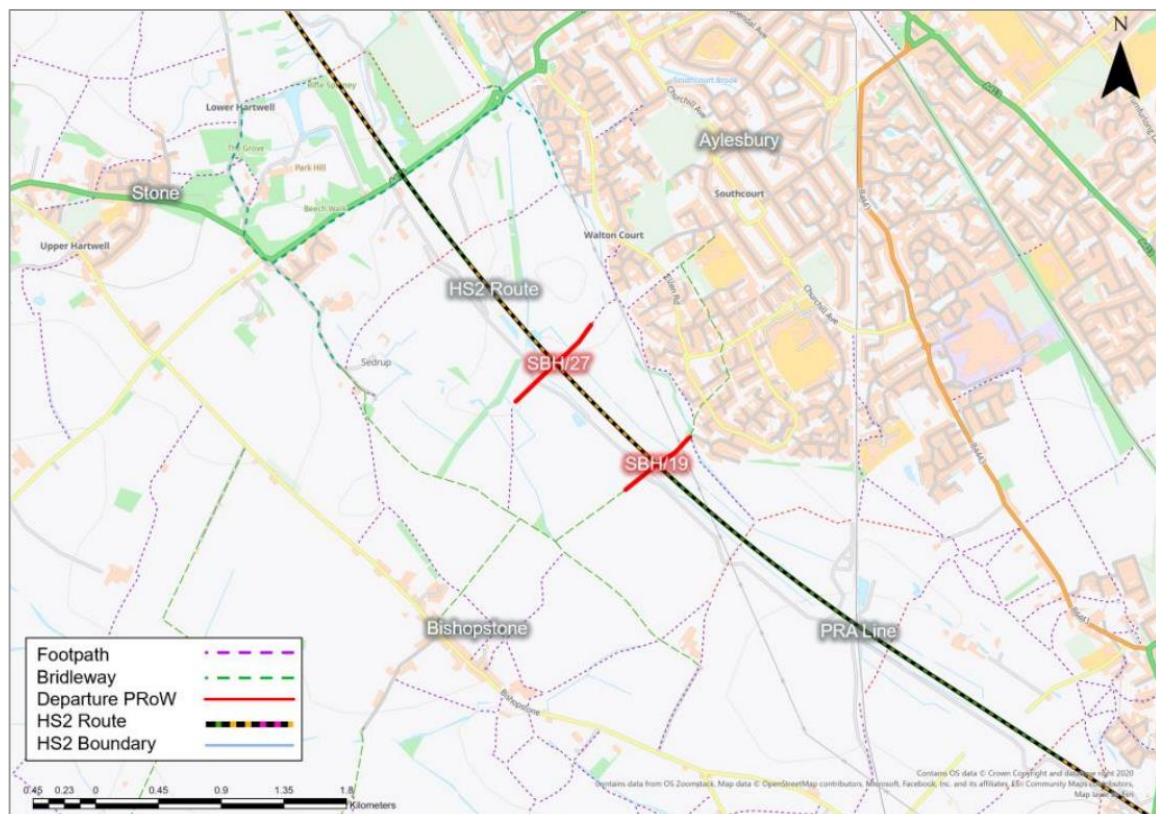


Figure 1. ES (as amended) Proposed Scheme Mapbook

- 3.1.4 The works assessed in this report include:
- The permanent diversion of Bridleway SBH/19 by approximately 1,550m via the SBH/19 Overbridge; and
 - The permanent diversion of Footpath SBH/27 by approximately 950m via the SBH/19 Overbridge.
- 3.1.5 The works are illustrated in Figure 2 below.

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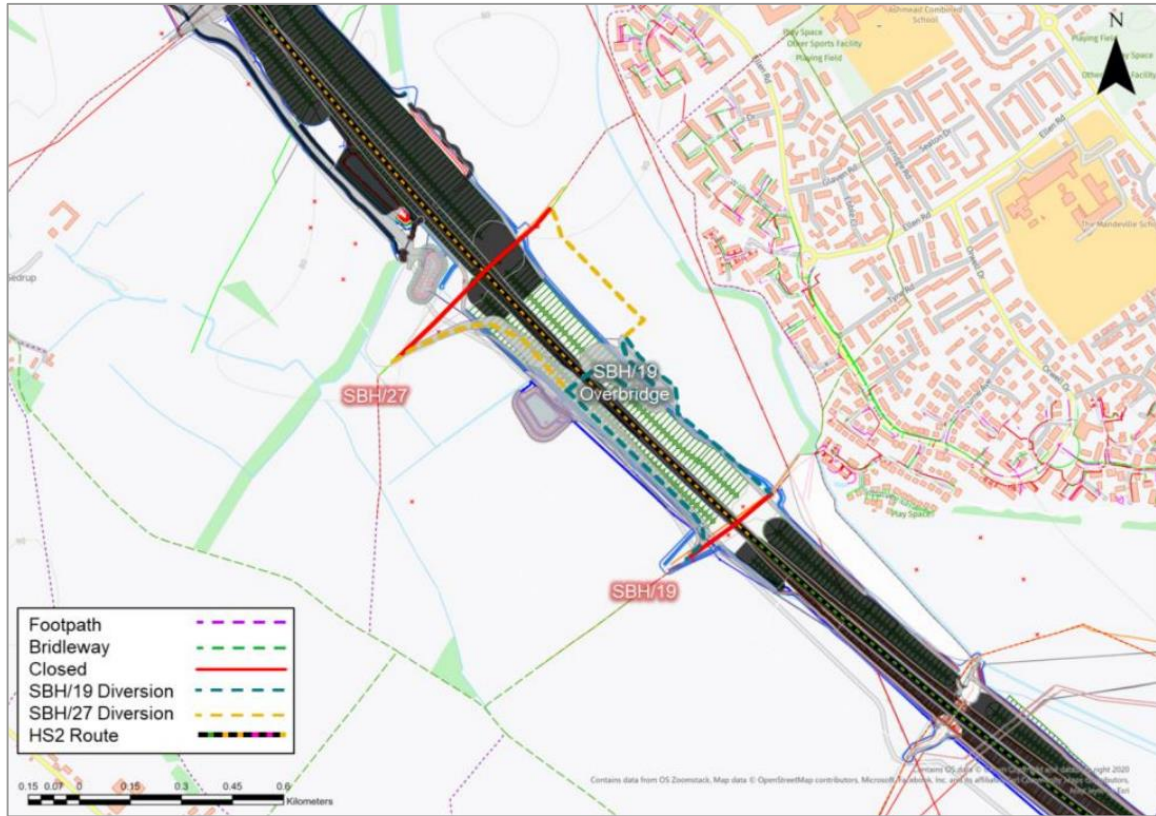


Figure 2. Bridleway SBH/19 and Footpath SBH/27 permanent realignment routes.

4 Summary of changes from the ES (as amended)

4.1 Changes to the engineering design and construction methodology from the ES (as amended)

4.1.1 Since the submission of the ES (as amended), it has been necessary to make changes to engineering design and construction methodology for works along the HS2 line southwest of Aylesbury. These changes have resulted in the permanent realignment of Bridleway SBH/19 and Footpath SBH/27 to allow for a single overbridge crossing of the HS2 line. These changes are described below.

Engineered Design and Construction Methodology as described in the ES (as amended)

4.1.2 The scheme as assessed by the ES (as amended) assumed individual overbridges for Bridleway SBH/19 and Footpath SBH/27. The overbridges would be constructed across the HS2 line while not diverting the existing bridleway and footpath alignment.

Engineering and design changes since the time of the ES (as amended)

4.1.3 During the development of the detailed design, a decision was made to realign Bridleway SBH/19 and Footpath SBH/27 so that these two PRowS would converge and cross the HS2 line at a single crossing point. Since the ES (as amended), several factors influenced the design change. These are described below.

Aylesbury Garden Town

4.1.4 The Aylesbury Garden Town project was announced in 2017, with its masterplan approved in 2020. The project includes an 18 km orbital park encircling Aylesbury, which incorporates housing, recreational spaces, and new link roads connecting new developments as part of the project.

4.1.5 The section of the Aylesbury Garden Town project relevant to the HS2 Phase One interface is the development area AGT2, shown below in Figure 3. This development area has been allocated approximately 1,500 dwellings, green infrastructure, and the new South West Aylesbury Link Road (SWALR) between the Stoke Mandeville A4010 realignment and the A418 Oxford Road.

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Figure 3. Development area AGT2 - Aylesbury Garden Town project

4.1.6 The Aylesbury Garden Town project 2020 Masterplan describes the fundamental role of transport in how towns and cities are formed and how they work on a day-to-day basis. The Masterplan reinforces the importance of connectivity and the ease of movement by creating walkable and cyclable neighbourhoods with PRoWs an integral aspect of planning and design.

4.1.7 The planning application for this project was submitted in 2018 and, therefore, was not considered in the ES (as amended).

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4.1.8 In 2016, an agreement was made between HS2 and Buckinghamshire Council for the HS2 to financially support the Council in creating a new public path between the A4010 and the A418 as part of the work undertaken in Development Area AGT2. This new public path will connect to the four existing PRoWs that cross the HS2 line south of Aylesbury, including Bridleway SBH/19 and Footpath SBH/27.

South West Aylesbury Link Road (SWALR)

4.1.9 The South West Aylesbury Link Road (SWALR) is proposed as part of the Aylesbury Garden Town project and will connect the A4010 to the A418, running parallel to the HS2 line, as shown in Appendix A.

4.1.10 The four PRoWs that cross the HS2 line, including Bridleway SBH/19 and Footpath SBH/27, will need safe crossing points across the SWALR to maintain connectivity with the PRoW network.

- 4.1.11 The proposed SWALR has been designed to accommodate three formal crossing points for existing PRoWs. Unsafe crossing points across the SWALR may create informal paths or crossings and pose safety risks along the SWALR. An informal crossing point is most likely to occur where Bridleway SBH/19 and Footpath SBH/27 intersect the proposed SWALR, as they currently do not cross the SWALR at a nearby roundabout or junction. In contrast, Footpath SMA/6 and Footpath SBH/34 cross the SWALR at or near junctions, where formal crossings are safer to implement.

Buckinghamshire Council Agreement

- 4.1.12 Between September 2020 and August 2021, EKFB (Eiffage, Kier, Ferrovial Construction and BAM Nuttall) and Buckinghamshire Council held discussions to ensure safe and suitable PRoW provisions along the HS2 line and SWALR interface, providing appropriate access and connectivity for the wider area.
- 4.1.13 Buckinghamshire Council requested and agreed to a design change to merge Footpath SBH/27 and Bridleway SBH/19 at the SBH/19 Overbridge, allowing them to cross the SWALR safely and addressing safety concerns.

Resultant Design Changes

- 4.1.14 As a result of the factors outlined above, the overbridge crossings for Footpath SBH/27 and Bridleway SBH/19 will be merged into a single crossing at the SBH/19 Overbridge. This single crossing will be positioned so users travelling east towards Aylesbury Town will intersect the SWALR near the middle roundabout, as shown above in Figure 3. This will provide a safe crossing over the SWALR and maintain connectivity with the PRoW network.

4.2 Topics impacted

- 4.2.1 Following a review of the combined changes in circumstances detailed in the preceding paragraphs, new significant effects have been identified with respect to Traffic and Transport.
- 4.2.2 The effects for other environmental topics assessed in the ES (as amended) because of the changes are not assessed to be significant and are not considered further in this report.
- 4.2.3 A review of impacts relating to traffic and transport is reported in Chapter 5.
- 4.2.4 None of the other environmental topics reported in the ES (as amended) will experience additional environmental impacts as a consequence of these changes that result in new or different significant environmental effects when assessed in line with the methodologies specified in the Scope and Methodology Report (SMR) and Addendum.
- 4.2.5 It should be noted that the SMR specifies that effects to local communities relating to the severance of public rights of way (PRoWs) (public footpaths and bridleways) and highway and pedestrian diversions, are assessed under the Traffic and Transport

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topic except where PRowWs are a "promoted" destination in their own right as a recreational resource. None of the PRowW closures considered in this report comprises a "promoted" destination and therefore the potential for impacts to the local community are therefore included within Section 5 (ES Volume 5, Appendix CT-001-000/2).

- 4.2.6 As stated in Section 1.2, the purpose of this document is to report new or different likely significant effects that exceed those reported in the ES (as amended). Environmental topics that have been assessed as not experiencing NSE are not considered further in this report.

5 Assessment of changes

5.1 Traffic and transport

Introduction

- 5.1.1 This section of the report describes the environmental baseline in relation to traffic and transport that is relevant to the assessment. It then identifies any new or different likely significant environmental effects as a result of the changes introduced in Section 4, compared to the ES (as amended).

Scope, assumptions and limitations

Methodology

- 5.1.2 The assessment scope, key assumptions and limitations for traffic and transport are as set out in Volume 1, the Scope and Methodology Report (SMR) (Volume 5: Appendix CT-001-000/1) and the SMR Addendum (Volume 5: Appendix CT-001-000/2). This report follows the standard assessment methodology.
- 5.1.3 Definitions as defined in the Scope and Methodology Report Addendum (CT-001-000/2), Annex I, Section 3.

Assumptions and limitations

- 5.1.4 Local assumptions and limitations for traffic and transport are set out in the main ES (Volume 2, CFA11, Section 12).

Environmental baseline

- 5.1.5 The existing baseline for traffic and transport is as set out in Volume 2, CFA11, Section 12 of the main ES, updated by the additional traffic surveys.

Effects arising during construction

Avoidance and mitigation measures

- 5.1.6 The Code of Construction Practice (CoCP) (see Volume 5: Appendix CT-003-000/1) will be implemented to minimise disruption to PRow users. This includes installing appropriate signage indicating all temporary and permanent diversions of PRow, and the use of high perimeter fencing or hoarding where necessary for site security and public safety, ensuring that PRow are maintained or appropriately diverted.

Assessment of significant effects

Bridleway SBH/19 & Footpath SBH/27

Severance – Diversion Distance

- 5.1.7 The ES (as amended) did not consider the design changes outlined in Section 4. The ES (as amended) assumed there would be individual overbridges for both Bridleway SBH/19 and Footpath SBH/27 across the HS2 line. The location of the overbridges

would allow the PRoWs to maintain their existing alignment while crossing the HS2 line.

- 5.1.8 With consideration of the Aylesbury Garden Town project and the agreement made between HS2 and Buckinghamshire Council to ensure safe and suitable PRoW provisions along the HS2 line and SWALR interface, design changes since the ES (as amended) have been made to permanently divert Bridleway SBH/19 and Footpath SBH/27 and merge the PRoWs into a single crossing point at the SBH/19 Overbridge (approximate chainage 61+925). Moving north from the overbridge, the merged PRoW will intersect the SWALR at a roundabout, providing a safe crossing opportunity and connectivity to the wider PRoW network.
- 5.1.9 The permanent diversion will increase the length of Bridleway SBH/19 by approximately 1,550 m and Footpath SBH/27 by approximately 950 m. As a result, Bridleway SBH/19 and Footpath SBH/27 will experience adverse effects of Moderate and Minor significance, respectively, on non-motorised users due to Severance, which were not previously identified in the ES (as amended).
- 5.1.10 There are no new or different significant effects during the construction phase.

Other mitigation measures

- 5.1.11 Mitigation measures will be implemented to minimise disruption to PRoW users, including installing appropriate signage for all temporary and permanent PRoW diversions, and the use of high perimeter fencing or hoarding where necessary for site security and public safety. These measures will ensure that PRoWs are maintained or appropriately diverted.

6 Conclusions

Table 1 provides a summary of the new significant effects anticipated because of the changes described in Section 4.

Table 1 Summary of new significant effects

Environmental Discipline/Category	Effect
Traffic & Transport - Severance	<p><u>No effect in the ES to Moderate (New Significant Effect)</u></p>
	<p>The permanent diversion will add approximately 1,550 m to the original route of Bridleway SBH/19. As a result, there will be a new moderate significant effect during the operational phase of HS2.</p>
	<p><u>No effect in the ES to Minor (New Significant Effect)</u></p>
	<p>The permanent diversion will add approximately 950 m to the original route of Footpath SBH/27. As a result, there will be a new minor significant effect during the operational phase of HS2.</p>

7 List of acronyms and abbreviations

Table 2 Acronyms and abbreviations

Acronym	Description
AGT	Aylesbury Garden Town
AP	Additional Provisions
BPM	Best Practical Means
CFA	Community Forum Area
CoCP	Code of Construction Practice (Annex 1 of the EMRs)
CoPA	Control of Pollution Act
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
EKFB	Eiffage, Kier, Ferrovial Construction and BAM Nuttall
EMR	Environmental Minimum Requirements
ES	Environmental Statement
NSE	New Significant Effect
SES	Supplementary Environmental Statement
SoS	Secretary of State for Transport
SWALR	South West Aylesbury Link Road
PRoW	Public Right of Way

8 References

- HS2 Environmental Statement, Volume 5: Appendix CT-001-000/1); Scope and Methodology Report (SMR).
- HS2 Environmental Statement, Volume 5: Appendix CT-001-000/2); Scope and Methodology Report (SMR) Addendum.
- HS2 Environmental Statement, Volume 2, Community Forum Area Report: CFA11 I Stoke Mandeville and Aylesbury
- HS2 Environmental Statement, Volume 2, Community Forum Area Mapbook: CFA11 I Stoke Mandeville and Aylesbury
- High Speed Rail (London West Midlands), Environmental Minimum Requirements General Principal

Appendix A

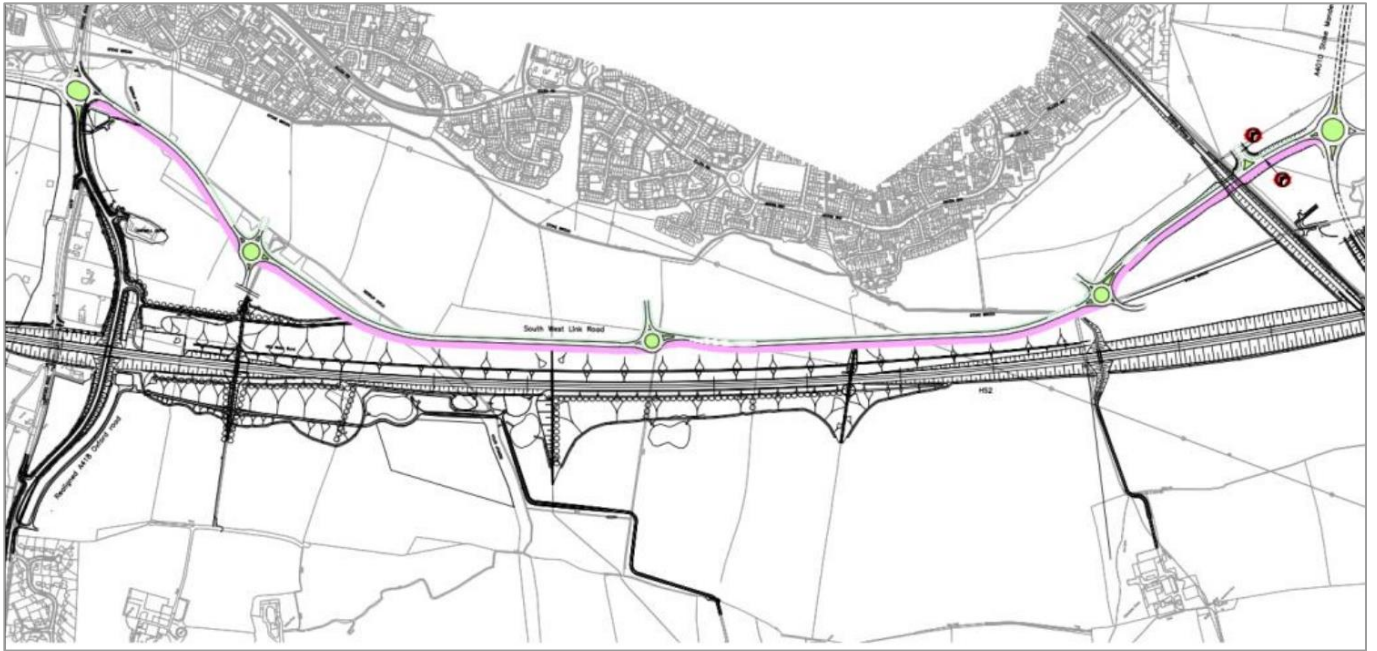


Figure A.1 South West Aylesbury Link Road (SWALR)

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