

Questions Raised by Monkton and Cotleigh Residents

Background: This document provides a record of the series of questions and answers which were raised at the public meetings in Monkton (18/08/2016) and Cotleigh (06/09/2016). No new information is provided in this document. All questions documented were answered by Devon County Council during the meeting.

Schedule of Amendments to Original Responses Provided by Devon County Council			
Date	Section and Page No.	Question	Amendment
10/10/16	Route Selection, Construct, Analysis – Page 21	18	Response amended to correct and clarify the nature of the engagement with The National Trust.

AONB/ Environmental Queries

- 1. The proposal appears to disregard the fact that we are all in an AONB and fails to take into account the noise, tranquillity and landscape. (C+M)**

The sensitivity of the Blackdown Hills AONB prompted Devon County Council (DCC) to adopt an environment led approach to option development. This has involved very extensive consideration of the potential implications of the scheme proposals upon the character and special qualities of the AONB. The detail relating to this assessment process is documented in the Environmental Assessment Report (EAR). Most specific consideration is given to the AONB within Section 7 of the EAR, relating to Landscape interests, which include tranquillity. However, other sections of the EAR also make appropriate reference to the AONB. Specific consideration is given to noise issues through Section 11 of the EAR, which has been used to inform the tranquillity assessment in Section 7.

- 2. Why is there no real budget for sound attenuation/mitigation, given the roads cannot be placed economically in cuttings because of the greensand ecology? Why does DCC feel this is acceptable? (C)**

Financial provision for the implementation of noise mitigation has been included within the scheme estimates. Section 11.7 of the Environmental Assessment Report sets out a series of noise mitigation measures which will be applied as relevant for each of the scheme options, addressing anticipated noise issues during construction and the subsequent operation of the road. Many of these measures are already illustrated on the consultation scheme plans. However, the detailed approaches to the delivery of such mitigation would be reviewed and refined through the detailed scheme design process, in the event of these proposals being taken forward.

- 3. There doesn't appear to be any real consideration of the noise pollution on the AONB. Why is this given that tranquillity is a "special" quality of the Blackdown Hills AONB as described by the AONB in their paper on noise pollution? (C)**

Consideration has been given to this issue, as noted in response to Question 1 above. As indicated through the consultation documents, further work is currently being undertaken to

refine the assessment of noise and tranquillity issues as they relate to Cotleigh. This updated information will be used in the selection of the preferred route in due course.

4. Has the cost of protecting the badgers, deer and other wildlife been factored into the costs of proposals? (C)

The approach to the ecological mitigation is described in Section 8.7 of the EAR, with many of these measures illustrated on the scheme plans. The current cost estimates allow for such measures.

5. There are also a multitude of bats that reside in this area, the existence of which has been omitted from DCC's environmental report, why is this? (C)

The presence of and implications of the scheme proposals for bat species is considered through Section 8 of the EAR. This work has been undertaken in line with national guidance. The EAR sets out initial conclusions for bats based on pre-existing data and new fieldwork. However, additional survey work has been undertaken across the entire summer period, in line with national guidelines, so that the accuracy of these initial conclusions might be tested and refined if/ as necessary. This updated information will be used through the final selection of a preferred route.

6. Has light pollution- from car headlights and also the roads been assessed for impact on the orange route given it is a dark skies environment? (C)

The effects of light pollution have been carefully assessed with reference to published datasets and more detailed consideration based on fieldwork and viewpoint analysis. Judgements regarding the effects on tranquillity have been described and drawn upon throughout the EAR and relevant technical appendices. The manner in which this has been done is explained in Section 7.4.33 to 7.4.40 of the EAR.

7. How has the project team considered the enormous impact of the footprint across the AONB? (C)

The implications of the route options for the AONB are considered in detail through the EAR, particularly through Section 7 of the EAR and its technical appendices. Natural England and the Blackdown Hills AONB Partnership have been closely involved in this process through their role as key stakeholders and their attendance at and input to Value Management workshops.

8. Have dormice been considered in these proposals as there are several sightings around the Old Chard Road and Viney Lane areas? (C)

Yes, the presence of dormice and the implications of the scheme proposals for this species is given specific consideration through Section 8 (Ecology) of the EAR.

9. How does DCC deem that this scheme is exemplar? (C)

The Blackdown Hills AONB is a highly sensitive and significant environmental area, so DCC took a decision to use an environment-led approach to option development. Environmental

risks were identified and assessed. At the same time, a range of environmental bodies, particularly statutory agencies, were identified as 'key stakeholders' and engaged in the scoping of the environmental work.

Extensive desk and field-based studies were started and used to plot a wide range of environmental constraints. These data were used by the project team as the starting point in the selection of potential route alignments. This work was conducted through a series of design meetings, involving a wide range of environmental specialists.

The next stage in option development was to build a comprehensive range of mitigation strategies to avoid or minimise conflicts with environmental interests and to compensate for any unavoidable impacts. This has included detailed work to optimise the precise route alignments, which will be further refined following comments received during the extensive Public Consultation process.

10. What is your view as to whether this is a dangerous precedent for building a major project on virgin land within an AONB? (C)

No precedent would be established, as there are pre-existing examples of significant development which have had to be located within AONBs. All such proposals have to be tested against national policy considerations, as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework and, in relation to trunk road schemes, the National Policy Statement for National Networks. For the current scheme proposals, this process is documented through the Environmental Assessment Report, but also has to be considered in the light of the justification for the scheme as presented in the Technical Appraisal Report and others documents provided through the consultation web pages.

11. Do DCC council consider that there is a conflict of interest given their representation on the AONB board, and why hasn't this been declared? (C)

There has been no conflict of interest. Devon County Council's lead role in the development of the current proposals for A30 has been made clear on each occasion that it has been discussed within the Blackdown Hills AONB Partnership Management Group or Officer Support Group. DCC representatives have acted in accordance with the governance arrangements for the AONB as set out in its Terms of Reference.

12. If either blue route is chosen the village of Monkton will be severed into two. If the blue route south is chosen, we will also lose homes and a business. How does this comply with the scheme objective "to ensure the unavoidable impacts on the character and special qualities of the Blackdown Hills AONB"? Also, as it is an AONB will the speed limit be reduced to 50mph (the same speed we are currently trying to reduce as the road is very dangerous)? (M)

All route options contribute towards the reduction of severance caused by the existing road in the village of Monkton, with the majority of houses unsevered from the trunk road. The road running through the middle of the village of Monkton would be declassified and therefore enhance the village setting and enable easier local travel, particularly on foot. The blue route options sever Tovehayne Farm and directly adjoining properties from the main

Monkton village where the route curves east to bypass Monkton to the south and east. However, this will remain accessible via the proposed underbridge which connects to the declassified current A30.

The speed limit on the proposed A30 will be 60mph, in line with national speed limit for single carriageways. The road will be designed to this speed and the removal of many existing accesses and inclusion of overtaking lanes will help to improve the safety of the road compared to the current 50mph A30.

13. There will be increased noise levels on both potential routes (as road speed is being increased and when large lorries and cars are accelerating to climb the flyovers/steep inclines in Monkton) How will this be alleviated? (M)

Section 11.7 of the Environmental Assessment Report sets out a series of noise mitigation measures which will be applied as relevant for each of the scheme options, addressing anticipated noise issues during construction and the subsequent operation of the road. Many of these measures are already illustrated on the consultation scheme plans. However, the detailed approaches to the delivery of such mitigation would be reviewed and refined through the detailed scheme design process, in the event of these proposals being taken forward.

14. From the comparison of options on page 12, “the Blue South route offers greater opportunity to enhance the AONB western gateway than either Blue North or Orange”. What does this mean? Please enlarge on this statement. (M)

A comparison between the landscape implications of the route options is provided through Chapter 7 of the EAR, with paragraphs 7.11.13 to 7.11.17 summarising the difference between the Blue North and Blue South routes. An example of enhancement to the western gateway of the AONB linked to the Blue Route South is shown on the consultation plans, where new woodland establishment is proposed in two locations affected by property demolition.

15. With any new route what is the proposed speed limit and what impact would this, and other factors, impose on the Blackdown Hills character and special qualities. (M)

The design specification for each of consultation options is for a 60 mph road, as per the national speed limit for single carriageways. As part of the design specification, all elements of the environmental assessment have taken account of this, with information on how this affects the character and special qualities of the Blackdown Hills set out within relevant parts of the Environmental Assessment Report (EAR). For example, the assessment of noise takes account of this design speed, with this informing the assessment of tranquillity set out in the landscape section of the EAR.

16. The air quality is being monitored at the present time along the main stretch of the village on behalf of Highways England by Parsons Brinckerhoff. EU directives for air quality is a maximum of 40mg per cubic metre. Moving the road 400 yards to the blue route according to the employees carrying out the survey will have very little impact on air quality. Does this mean that the Blue route will be scrapped if standards are not met or exceeded? Bearing in mind the Government are working towards improving air quality. When will the results of the survey be made public? (M)

The monitoring of the air quality through Monkton has been undertaken by WSP|Parsons Brinckerhoff on behalf of Devon County Council for the A30 Honiton to Devonshire Inn scheme. The results of the air quality assessment can be found in Chapter 5 of the EAR. This states that neither option causes any new exceedances of any air quality objectives to occur, nor does either option exacerbate an existing exceedance. All routes would improve air quality for more properties than would suffer poorer air quality, with clear benefits for the village of Monkton. The Orange route would result in a slightly greater overall benefit than the Blue routes.

17. Have a detailed investigation been carried out as to the impact of route on water supplies and flooding including Zone 2 floodplain on the Blue route? (M)

Water Environmental consultants have been working on the scheme as part of the design team. They have assessed the potential effects of all scheme options on road drainage and the water environment. Their assessment considered, in particular, the potential effects of the scheme on flood risk, water quality and the water resource attributes of surface water and groundwater receptors related to the construction and operational phases.

For further information on the Water Environment and in particular the impact of the Blue route on the flood plain, please refer to Section 13 of the EAR.

18. Some have received a lot of assurance at the drop in sessions from Parson Brinkerhoff and Devon County Council around environmental considerations. One of these is minimum mitigation standards re: the noise levels. We have been given assurance that for all routes the road surface will not be concrete and it will be a minimum of -3 decibel tarmac. Is this correct and how will it be assured? There is a -7 decibel tarmac available – can this be factored into design? (M)

There are strict regulations and design guides in place governing the design of new carriageways and in particular, the road surface construction types.

The current proposals have been designed using a low noise road surface material. Devon County Council would not support the use of a concrete surface being used on this road within this important landscape.

The assessment methodology has assumed a road surface material with a -2.5dB characteristic, in accordance with guidance.

Whilst there are quieter road surface materials and construction types, these also have disadvantages in terms of increased installation cost and an increase in maintenance requirement for these quieter surfaces. These issues would be looked at in more depth through the detailed design stage, in the event of a scheme being progressed by Highways England. Final decisions would be taken in the context of the same policy and design considerations already applied by Devon County Council.

19. What will be the impact of the orange route on the water supply to the wells that sit the Monkton side of the tree line up Hedgend Road on Hedgend Plantation (the wells provides water for approx. 8 properties)? How will you ensure continuation of this supply and what protection will there be against ground water pollution? As a

mitigation measure will it be possible to connect these houses to mains water at no cost to them? Will road salt be used on the orange route? (M)

The impact of the Orange route on groundwater resources is explained in Section 13 of the Environmental assessment Report. At the next stage in the design process, detailed hydrogeological models will be built to understand the impacts of the new road drainage system on existing wells and springs. Where possible, mitigation measures will be designed to maintain existing supplies. Such mitigation measures would, where necessary, include drilling of deeper boreholes to provide domestic water supplies. Where such measures are not feasible, then mains water supplies would be provided as a replacement to well / spring supplies. The cost of such mitigation / replacement measures would be part of the scheme costs.

Road salt, would if necessary, be applied to the road surface in accordance with routine winter measures.

Process

1. Why was Cotleigh not included in the 'Consultation' Events? (C)

There was no deliberate intent in not showing Cotleigh on the plans. It is simply that the scale of the plans limited the extent of mapping we could accommodate. With regards to the exhibition venues and notification about the public consultation, Devon County Council can assure you that it was not our intention to avoid Cotleigh. Organisations were emailed including Cotleigh Parish on the 21st June, 2016 giving advanced notice that DCC would be holding a public consultation on the proposals and then again on the 26th July, 2016 listing the exhibition venues and providing links to the online consultation materials and scheme website. Posters displaying this information were also sent to your Parish Clerk on the 19th July and the consultation leaflets were sent on the 3rd August. There are no minutes for why Cotleigh hall was not used. We initially chose Upton as it was a suitable venue for holding the exhibitions and available at the times envisaged. Following the email that was sent out on the 21/06/16 to all organisations and Parishes (including Cotleigh) about the start date, only Monkton asked if they could have an exhibition in their village, which we arranged. In order to cater for all other parishes and residents in the area we organised an additional exhibition at the Mackarness Hall on the 20th August as we felt this was a venue people could easily attend. We also offered to attend Parish Council meetings and attended the Cotleigh Parish council meeting on the 6th September, where we also held an exhibition between 4pm and 8pm prior to the meeting.

2. Why weren't people of the affected areas notified by mail? (C)

During preparation for the consultation, consideration was given to a letter drop to all properties within a particular distance, but experience has shown this is fraught with difficulties and as a result it was not taken forward, given that there were to be press releases, notices to Parishes, exhibitions and likely media reports. In the event, the publicity around the consultation will have alerted people to the consultation.

3. Why were individuals directly affected not ALL contacted prior to the announcement of the consultation and also why were they not provided with detailed maps of the land that was proposed to be compulsory purchased until they repeatedly requested the information? (C)

We attempted to contact all directly affected landowners i.e. those whose land is within the proposed highway boundary prior to the start of the public consultation. Those that could be contacted had meetings arranged to discuss how their land would be affected. Once the consultation period started, we sent plans to those landowners that had requested them.

Throughout the consultation period, we have continued to try and contact the remaining directly affected landowners who we were not able to reach prior to the start of the consultation.

4. What is Highways England involvement with respect to this scheme? (C)

Highways England has attended Value Management Workshops as a key stakeholder and has provided some historical data regarding the existing trunk road.

5. The orange route will have a very steep hill and I advised them (dcc) that, at a minimum there should be 3 lanes up to provide a crawler lane for slow vehicles. However, whatever is proposed there will still be a major congestion at the top of the hill when the road reduces to one lane. I was advised that this hill is no steeper than Haldon Hill. I seem to remember several issues with Haldon Hill in inclement weather which has resulted in an emergency team being put in place to ensure the road remains driveable. Will DCC do the same for the routes suggested? (C)

The gradient of the Orange route reaches a maximum of 8% over a length of 800m. The length between points where the gradient is relatively flat (i.e. 2%) is 1.8km. The gradient of Haldon Hill is 6% and Telegraph Hill is 8%. The length of Telegraph Hill where it is 8% is approximately 1.3km.

The two lane to one lane merges including the top of the climbing lane has a capacity of the peak hour flow.

Once the road is delivered, the operation of the road during inclement weather will be the responsibility of Highways England who have considerable experience in managing these situations.

6. Why has Cotleigh Village been 'chopped off' of the maps used at the consultations etc? (C)

There was no deliberate intent in not showing Cotleigh on the plans. It is simply that the scale of the plans limited the extent of mapping we could accommodate.

7. Please can DCC provide full contour detail profiling of the routes proposed? (C)

Long sections are provided in the Technical Appraisal Report at Annexes 11-14,

8. Why has there been little/no mention of the noise and its impact on tranquillity in the displays at the consultation events, is this major issue being hidden? (C)

A DCC representative has been available specifically to discuss noise concerns at three of the consultation exhibitions. In addition, he has been in contact with numerous landowners to discuss the noise implications of the scheme. For all additional information please see Sections 7 and 11 of the EAR.

9. Is there an obligation for DCC to answer questions raised? (C)

DCC will do its utmost to answer any queries raised throughout the consultation.

10. How will you guarantee that the mitigations and assurances that DCC and Parsons Brinkerhoff have given will be delivered and honoured by Highways England, if they deliver the scheme? (M)

It is intended that DCC will submit an Outline Business Case to the Department for Transport in December 2016. If the bid for funding is successful, it is assumed Highways England would be instructed by the DfT to progress the scheme, and importantly, with reference to the commitments described in the Outline Business Case.

11. When DCC decide on the preferred route what factors will be used and what weighting will they have? For example, will you use?

- **The opinion of local residents?**
- **Technical Factors (how easy it is to build the respective routes)**
- **Costs?**
- **What other factors will be considered? (M)**

DCC will take account of all comments received at Public Consultation and will seek to improve the scheme layouts for each of the three routes presented at consultation. Taking account of the views of local people, cost, environmental impacts, safety, economics, DCC will then determine a preferred route by reference to the particular route's impacts on national and local policies and plans.

12. What is the sequence of events once the preferred route is decided? (M)

The recommendation for a preferred route will be presented to Devon County Council in late 2016 for confirmation and decision before making the submission to the Department for Transport.

If the bid to DfT is successful and the funding becomes available in 2017, the programme could be:

Government Announce RIS2: Autumn 2017

Commence next design stage: February 2018

Start advance works: March 2022

Complete works: September 2024

13. Once the route is decided what are the compensation/compulsory purchase arrangements including criteria for blighted properties. This will be of great importance to the people affected. (M)

Blight:

Decision to proceed with a scheme will be taken by Secretary of State/Highways England not DCC as the A30 is a trunk road. The timing is therefore out of DCC control. DCC will give recommendation of the preferred route in December 2016, but Highways England / Secretary of State has to issue a route protection order.

The blight notice procedure is intended to help people (generally owner occupiers) who want to sell their property and have made reasonable endeavours to do so but cannot sell "except at a price substantially lower than could have been reasonable expected in the absence of the scheme".

Blight notices must be in respect of the whole of the claimant's property.

The acquiring authority can serve a counter notice if they do not consider that the property is blighted.

Blight notices cannot be served prior to the adoption of a scheme by the acquiring authority.

The ability to serve a blight notice ends when a Notice to Treat is served from which date the material detriment provisions apply.

There are certain qualifying criteria for the service of a blight notice:

- *Land in a development plan on which a highway is to be constructed or improved*
- *Land on or adjacent to the line of a highway proposed to be constructed or improved under an order or scheme under Part II Highways Act 1980*
- *Land shown on plans approved by resolution of the local highway authority as land on which highway is to be constructed or improved or where the Secretary of State has given written notice of the proposal and plans*
- *Land which the local highway authority or the Secretary of State has resolved to CPO*
- *Land prescribed in a New Street Order*

If accepted, the affected owner is entitled to receive the market value plus a loss payment of 10% (up to a threshold figure) and certain disturbance items associated with the costs of acquiring and moving to an alternative property.

Currently there is no development plan, no approved scheme or even preferred route and no resolution by the highway authority to carry out any works or to CPO the land. At this stage it is considered that no blight notice could be served.

If a route is agreed and Highways England resolve to take one of the proposals forward the Secretary of State for Transport would need to approve the scheme and to use CPO powers to acquire the necessary land.

Secretary of State for Transport issues a route protection notice which means that EDDC cannot grant planning within 200ft either side of the highway boundary line.

At that stage a blight notice could be served on the “appropriate authority” which, as this is a trunk road, would be the Secretary of State rather than Devon County Council.

If the funding application is successful, the progress of the scheme would follow procedures for a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP). NSIPs are major infrastructure developments in England and Wales.

An application for consent to undertake a NSIP would be made under a Development Consent Order (DCO) to the Planning Inspectorate who will consider the application and make a recommendation to the Secretary of State, who will decide on whether development consent should be granted for the proposed scheme. The procedure to purchase land would be part of the DCO process.

Compensation:

Typically, there may be three potential elements to the compensation:

- *Market value for the land taken*
- *Injurious affection caused to the retained land*
- *Possible disturbance to the owner’s business during the construction phase*

The material detriment provisions may apply if it is demonstrable that the part of the land required for the scheme cannot be taken without causing material detriment or serious loss of amenity to the retained land or in the case of agricultural land, the area remaining is not economically viable and in such cases the authority can be required to purchase the whole.

Market value is payable and there may be certain additional heads of claim as in blight notice cases.

Owners affected by compulsory purchase are also entitled to reimbursement of their reasonable surveyors’ fees in negotiating compensation and their proper legal costs on transferring the land required for the scheme.

The provisions of the statutory compensation code are intended to ensure that affected owners receive market value for land taken and fair and reasonable compensation for the effects of the scheme on their retained land plus some supplementary payments as above.

In the case of the A30, any scheme would be carried forward by the Secretary of State/Highways England. At this stage, the date when any acquisition procedures would be initiated is uncertain and there are no provisions in the legislation that would provide a right for landowners to claim compensation at this point in time.

Please also refer to the guidance published by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister in October 2014 and available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications>

and search on ‘compulsory purchase compensation’ in ‘key words’

Strategy

1. Why is such a large scheme being proposed given, when the A358 expressway is completed, volumes are likely to decrease? (C)

The proposed A358 improvement, as detailed in the RIS, will not solve the problems and will not improve connections and resilience to Exeter and the South West, which is why we believe the A30 improvement scheme, is needed.

The M5/A358 route between Southfields and Exeter is 14km longer than the 47km A30/A303 route. In addition, the A30/A303 is dual carriageway between Honiton and Exeter, and improved single carriageway between Southfields and Broadway. As a result, it is likely that traffic will use this route during non-peak periods. During peak periods, traffic forecasts show the M5 would be approaching capacity and would not be an attractive route between Southfields and Exeter.

The A30 and A358 currently serve very different trip purposes. The A30 currently carries longer distance traffic, with the A358 serving more local traffic around Taunton. Of the vehicles currently travelling from east of Southfields to Exeter and beyond, 85% currently remain on the A303/A30 corridor, with only 15% switching to the A358. This is largely due to the additional mileage and deteriorating conditions on the M5. The M5 is predicted to approach capacity in the peak hours and therefore will be unable to accommodate a large transfer of traffic away from the A30. The A30 improvements are necessary to ensure acceptable levels of service under the additional pressure placed by higher future demand.

The A358 improvement is a critical scheme for Taunton, northern Somerset and northern Devon. The A30 and A358 routes complement each other, serving different, but equally vital needs. The A303/A30/A358 Corridor Feasibility Study Stage 2 Report prepared for The Highways Agency in February 2015 recognised and confirmed this.

2. What is the point of doing the size of upgrade on this section IF the rest of the Broadway to Honiton improvements identified are NOT done? (C)

The Honiton to Devonshire Inn scheme forms part of a longer term strategy to improve the whole route between Honiton and Broadway. The assessment work for public consultation has demonstrated that the scheme is good value for money and will improve the reliability of the whole route. If the funding bid to DfT is successful, then further work on the next sections will commence.

3. Why has the DCC chosen to complete one of the easy 'green' designated schemes for upgrade on the Honiton to Broadway section before a 'red' graded scheme on which the overall Honiton to Broadway efficiencies depend? Is this a political move so that certain individuals can show that they have achieved something during their tenure? (C)

The 'A30/A303 Honiton to Broadway Study – Executive Summary' leaflet identifies 6 route sections between Honiton and Broadway. These sections are all colour coded based on their relative difficulties. The A30 Honiton to Devonshire Inn scheme comprises of Sections 1, 2 and

part of 3. Sections 1 and 3 are 'green' easier sections whilst section 2 is a 'red' section which means it is difficult due to topography, geology and landscape. Despite the red Rawridge Hill section, during a meeting with the then Secretary of State for Transport it was concluded that the Honiton to Devonshire Inn section is completed first due to this section carrying the highest traffic flows of all the sections between Honiton and Broadway.

4. Can DCC update us as to the wider set of improvements to the A303 along its length from M3 to Exeter? What confirmed and fully funded proposals have been agreed by the Government and what are their timescales? (C)

The Road Investment Strategy committed funding to three sections on the wider A30/A303/A358 corridor; dualling at Amesbury to Berwick Down, Sparkford to Ilchester and Taunton to Southfields. DCC has not been informed of funding and programme for these individual schemes.

For further information on timescales and updates, please check the Highways England website (<http://www.highways.gov.uk/roads?projectregion=south-west&projecttype=major-scheme>)

5. Can you confirm that the Governments preferred second strategic route for the SW is the A303 as far as Ilminster and then the A358, and that is why the A358 improvements have been agreed? (C)

The Roads Investment Strategy (RIS 1) does state on page 49 of Part 1 that the A303/A358 route between the M3 and the M5 at Junction 25 (via Southfields) is to be an Expressway. Similarly, the A30 between Honiton and Exeter is also to be an Expressway. Page 17 of Part 2 explains the RIS 1 investment strategy, which includes the A303 Amesbury to Berwick down dualling, the A303 Sparkford to Ilchester dualling and the A358 Taunton to Southfields dualling, which emerged from the route feasibility study referred to on page 55 of Part 1 of RIS 1. Page 17 of Part 2 of RIS 1 also explains the government's commitment in respect of improvements to the A30/A303 through the Blackdown Hills. The 'smaller scale' improvements referred to in RIS 1 are also referred to on page 10-3 of the Feasibility Study Stage 2 Report, i.e. recommended to be carried forward for assessment in Stage 3 of the Feasibility Study.

Page 2-6 of Part 3 of the Feasibility Study clearly describes at paragraph 2.2.5 the 'three smaller scale improvements', namely: Honiton to Rawridge, Rawridge to Stopgate Cross and Eagle Tavern to Broadway, so it is concluded that the references on page 17 of Part 2 of RIS 1 to the setting aside of funding for 'smaller-scale improvements to the A303/A30 section between Southfields and Honiton' are one in the same.

Devon County Council believes that in order to ensure that the South West Peninsula is served by two strategic corridors, the A30 improvements are needed. The dualling of the A358 will not solve the problems experienced by those travellers on the A30/A303. The M5/A358 route between Southfields and Exeter is 14 km longer than the 47km A30/A303 route. The A30 and A358 currently serve very different trip purposes. The A30 currently carries longer distance traffic, with the A358 serving more local traffic giving access to the M5 and the North Devon Link.

6. Can you confirm that after Highway England Feasibility studies of 2015 that there are no plans to dual the A303 between Illminster and Honiton, due to the scale of the environmental impact on the AONB an offline road improvement scheme would have and lack of projected traffic flows? (C)

Correct.

7. Give the Strategic Link to the South West is A303 A358 M5; Can you please confirm the strategic rationale of these proposals to improve this stretch actually is? Given the consultation material states there are insufficient traffic flow to warrant duelling, can you confirm therefore that the principle rationale is to reduce accidents? What other options have been considered to achieve the same desired outcome? (C)

The strategic rationale for the scheme is explained in both the 'Introduction' and the 'Why is the improvement scheme needed?' sections of the consultation leaflet. The principal rationale is to boost the South West Economy, in line with government policies for the strategic road network.

8. Why would you consider the blue route south when that requires the demolition of homes whereas the blue route north only requires the demolition of a hedge? Land on the north side is owned by DCC. Do you consider hedges to be more important than homes? (M)

Please refer to Chapter 7, paragraph 7.11.13 to 7.11.17 of the EAR.

9. If the blue route (north or South) is adopted then traffic travelling at 70mph from the Honiton Bypass will be funnelled down at Langford junction to 60mph in to what is effectively a single lane road in both directions for 1.25 miles from the end of the bypass to the new Hedgend underbridge because of the necessity of providing the 3 right turn lanes. How will this blue route plan solve the congestion that regularly happens here? This will not happen on the orange route as two lanes of traffic continue eastbound uninterrupted from the bypass. (M)

The current road consists of one lane in each direction. The proposed blue route will continue to provide just one lane in each direction, but with the addition of a ghost islands for right turners. This will ensure that any right turning traffic is not holding up traffic in the eastbound direction, as it does currently when it stops to wait for a suitable gap to cross in. This will not only reduce the congestion that is experienced on this stretch, but will also make it safer for right turners and through traffic.

10. Should the blue route be chosen (north or south), where will local traffic using the existing A30 be diverted whilst works take place, and how will residents whose driveways join the existing A30 access the road whilst works take place? (M)

The current options include some sections on line of the existing road, so there would be some disruption to users of the A30. There would also be some disruption where local roads would be diverted. Specific arrangements to minimise disturbance would be developed should the scheme progress beyond preferred route stage.

- 11. Who will be responsible for the prompt removal of dead wildlife at the roadside? Deer colliding with vehicles (we currently have a large family of deer on the southern side of Monkton) and other various rotting carcasses are surely not a welcome sight for the gateway to the South West. (M)**

The removal of dead animals will be the responsibility of Highways England.

- 12. Is the rationale to bring more traffic this way or improve the road safety standards on this stretch of the current A30 with the new road? (M)**

The rationale is to provide a road to modern standards so that journey times are reduced, journey reliability is improved and resilience of the strategic road network is improved. In providing a new road to modern standards, road safety will also be improved and some traffic that currently uses the A38/M5 route between Southfields and Exeter would switch to the A30/A303 route.

- 13. What considerations have been taken into account to future proof the preferred route in particular the joining of the A30 to the A35? (M)**

The predicted forecast traffic flows demonstrate that upgrading the A30 between Honiton and Devonshire Inn to a WS2+1 would be sufficient to meet the needs of future traffic flows. There is no current plan to make a connection to the A35. Any connection to the Blue route or the Orange route would encounter difficult constraints including the steep topography and potential junction provisions.

Business Case/ Figures

- 1. Why has DCC used council tax-payers money to put forward these proposals when the A30 is the responsibility of Highways England(C)**

Devon County Council approved the funding of the initial design work to make the case to government that improvements to the A30/A303 corridor are essential to deliver economic, safety and resilience benefits to the South West. Once a preferred option is determined, an application will be made to the Department for Transport for funding. If successful, it is expected that the scheme will be funded by central government and delivered by Highways England.

- 2. Why have smaller road improvement schemes not been considered? On what basis have the smaller improvements/alterations to the existing road been rejected? If financial please provide the BCR figures. (C)**

Smaller road improvements would not solve the issues experienced along the corridor in order to provide sufficient additional capacity, safety at junctions and provision for local traffic.

Online improvements would need complex engineering solutions, in particular along Reddick's Hill, in forming earth retaining structures in unstable ground and in constructing the widened road alongside live traffic. Additionally, there would be negative impact on the landscape and wildlife interests.

3. On what basis has DCC assumed that traffic levels will remain unchanged post the duelling of the A358(C)

Traffic modelling for the scheme constructed two alternative future scenarios; one without the A358 improvements and one with the improvements. There is little change in forecast flows along the A30 in both scenarios. Please see the Forecasting and Economics Reports for further details.

4. How do economic benefits outweigh the irreversible damage proposed to the AONB? (C)

DCC recognised the challenge of developing proposals to improve the A30, given it is located in a nationally protected landscape. On this basis, the scheme has been developed in an environmentally-led manner. The ultimate acceptability of a preferred route option, selected after this consultation process, will be judged by government in line with its policy for national networks. This weighs environmental concerns against other policy objectives, relating to transportation, the economy and public safety.

5. What is the BCR of this scheme in isolation? How does this compare with other options such as speed restrictions through this section? (C)

BCR can be seen in the Economics Report. Smaller road improvements and speed restrictions would not solve the issues experienced along the corridor in order to provide sufficient additional capacity, safety at junctions and provision for local traffic.

6. Why haven't all costings such as mitigation and compensation been included in DCC's figures? Is it to make the BCR look better and supportive of the scheme? (C)

Costings for mitigation and compensation have been included in the cost estimate. The items included in the cost estimate are standard for a scheme at this stage. Full details of the detailed cost estimates and the components that were used to calculate them can be found in Annex 5 of the Technical Appraisal Report.

7. What cost factors have NOT been included in your estimated out turn costs of each route? For example, drainage? This will be significant for the blue routes, both flood regularly and numerous culverts/rivers run under the current A30 and there are numerous springs in that vicinity. Junction costs? Laybys/Hard Shoulders? Access roads? Footpaths/ cycleway? Compensation (include blight, land and property purchase and all incidentals related to compensating all those affected per route) please specify additional costs per route. (M)

There are many elements of the scheme cost estimate including drainage, junction costs, laybys/hard strips and compensation. All of these elements are included in the cost estimate. Full details of the detailed cost estimates and the components that were used to calculate them can be found in Annex 5 of the Technical Appraisal Report.

- 8. The blue route (north/south) does not show paths. Once footpaths and cycle ways are added to the plan to enable the severed section of Monkton safely access the centre of the village and vice versa- How much additional funding will be required? Please cost this. How much additional land will be taken and who will this impact? (M)**

See below

- 9. Have you considered/costed the impacts on footpaths and public ways with each route?**

The detailed design of the scheme has not yet been undertaken. Provision for all non-motorised users will be incorporated in the design process. However, allowances for uncertain items, such as the extent of any footways, is included in the cost estimates.

With the new road in place, there will be opportunities for greater and safer pedestrian, cycling and equestrian journeys, particularly associated with the lengths of the former A30 'bypassed' by the new road, as well as along new connector roads. These will maintain the integrity of the existing minor roads and help to improve movement across the A30.

There are relatively few public rights of way in the vicinity of the route options. There should be no significant impact upon those that are present, as a result of re-routing and signage. There will be some effect upon the minor road network used by pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders, but any severance issues will be addressed through the network of new connector roads and underbridges.

Resilience

- 1. Has the extreme/high wind conditions been considered on the impact of vehicles (especially high sided vehicles) using the proposed route. (C)**

Please see EAR section 5.3.8

- 2. The Cotleigh Plateau often experiences localised extreme weather conditions such as snow and ice that Honiton and the Valleys do not experience- has this been factored into the road resilience analysis? (C)**

There are many roads within the network which are on high ground and experience localised weather conditions. There is technology available to monitor and predict weather patterns and a bespoke maintenance strategy will be developed.

- 3. How will the orange route improve resilience when, if there is an accident on that section, there will be no exit points for traffic to Divert off of between Devonshire Inn and Honiton? (C)**

The road will be 13.5 metres wide. Unless the accident is very serious there will be an opportunity to allow two streams of traffic to pass the specific accident location under traffic control.

Other

- 1. Why is there a proposal to use good agricultural land which would effectively put some farms out of business? (C)**

In order to bypass Monkton and create a new improved link along the A30, some farm land will be severed as a result of land take.

- 2. Why are a few trees more important than prime farm land? (C)**

All landscape issues are important and it is a complex process to balance the need of the different aspects

- 3. How would dust be kept down when building the road and this would affect operations? (C)**

Please see EAR section 5.8.1

- 4. Compensation vis a vis blight and loss of house values along the route- what provision has DCC made in this respect? (C)**

Please refer to question 13, page 8.

- 5. If one of the main issues appears to be safety, why haven't other road calming measures been considered? (C)**

The road is subject to speed restrictions and has been the subject of numerous studies in the past.

- 6. Given both routes adversely affect both Monkton and Cotleigh residents; environmentally, quality of life, increased noise/light pollution levels, loss of privacy, loss of visual amenity, considerable land taken- Why hasn't the 2004 proposal not been seriously considered? (C)**

Please see Value Management Workshop Report March 2016, section 3.3.3, page 12.

A route to the north of Monkton would adversely affect the floodplain, the setting of the church and buried remains of a medieval village. Please see Value Management Workshop Report March 2016, section 3.3.3, page 12.

- 7. Why is it more acceptable to demolish houses than to removed and replant hedgerow which can be replanted? (C)**

Please refer to Chapter 7, paragraph 7.11.13 to 7.11.17 of the EAR.

- 8. How will you ensure that fencing levels are appropriate to prevent deer and other wildlife approaching the carriageway i.e. from field on blue route at Monkton Cutting (M)**

Fencing is designed as necessary for the mitigation levels required. If badgers are present badger proof fencing is incorporated.

- 9. Given that a leak of information last year revealed the blue route to be, and I quote “the preferred route” are we all performing a tick box exercise now? (M)**

These routes did not exist last year and there were no routes from which to select a preferred route. The routes were developed from scratch over the past year through a series of design team meetings. There is currently no preferred route with each evenly weighted.

- 4. To ensure Monkton remains a sustainable village it would seem important that properties within this village are easily contactable and accessible in particular the new road should not dissect the village. Which route maintains the integrity of the village, and why? (M)**

Available online in the EAR: All route options contribute towards the removal of severance in the village of Monkton, with the majority of houses unsevered from the trunk road. The road running through the middle of the village of Monkton would be declassified and therefore enhance the village setting and enable easier local travel, particularly on foot. The blue route options sever Tovehayne Farm from the main Monkton village where the route curves east to bypass Monkton to the south and east. However, this will remain accessible via the proposed underbridge which connects to the declassified current A30.

Route Selection/Construct/Analysis

- 1. Why is the orange route so close to many of the main farm building setups (C)**

The alignment of the Orange route has been determined through an environment-led approach. Comments received during the consultation will allow refinements of the alignment to be considered.

- 2. What Happened to the original North of Monkton Route, the land had already been purchased and most people are in agreement with this route option? (C)**

It is assumed that this question is referring to the previous proposal for a dual carriageway scheme which was progressed by the (then) Highways Agency and, following a public inquiry, approved in 1995. This scheme, subsequently, was abandoned, along with the other elements of the road investment programme, following the election of a new Government. Through the current study, a link option was considered to the north of Monkton. This alignment was rejected following the initial stages of the environmental assessment process and following consultation with key stakeholders through a Value Management workshop, largely based on anticipated impacts and policy considerations relating to flood risk and the historic environment.

- 3. Why do the DCC say that the original route north of Monkton cannot be used because it is on a flood plain, but other road developments in the RIS are going ahead despite this? Also Cranbrook, Seaton Pebble Beach are built on flood plains. This does not make sense. (C)**

There are strong planning policies which steer development away from areas of highest flood risk, particularly within floodplains, other than where other options are not feasible and there are exceptional reasons which justify such an approach. There are also environmental sensitivity issues to consider, particularly those relating to the biodiversity interest of the River Otter and the heritage interests linked to the floodplain and the historic setting of Monkton. It is these factors which led to rejection of a potential route location to the north of Monkton.

- 4. Is Orange route going to be HIGHER than Viney Lane? (C)**

The elevation of the Orange route would, in some locations, be higher than that of Viney Lane. This is because the existing contours at the location of the Orange route are higher than at Viney lane. If the Orange route were selected as the preferred route, further detailed design would be undertaken to mitigate impacts as far as reasonably possible. Such mitigation would include the examination of the effects of lowering the alignment.

- 5. Why hasn't the study area been extended out equidistant from the proposed routes, given the initial noise study results? Why has further broader study not been completed before the options were selected? (C)**

The study area of the schemes consists of 500m from each of the proposed routes. This is generally considered to be a sufficiently large study area.

- 6. Why has Cotleigh not been included for the noise levels/ impact assessment? Is it based purely on the model and therefore budget rather than need? Do the projections consider the increased traffic along some roads (especially Old Chard road) post implementation of the routes? What are the noise levels forecast for the routes? (C)**

Future traffic flows have been used to model the expected noise levels in 2025 and 2040 scenarios.

The noise contours follow the methodology set out in the DMRB which allows for an assessment area up to 600m from the existing or proposed carriageway. Calculations further than this start to reduce in the accuracy as other environmental conditions (such as wind, temperature, additional ground features etc) start to have a greater effect within the calculation of the noise levels.

Please see sections 11 of EAR (Page 163 onwards) for an in depth noise appraisal.

- 7. What is the longevity and sound absorption efficacy over time for the "low" noise surface? And why is an even more efficient surface not being factored in? (C)**

Refer to Question 18, page 5.

- 8. Does the road surface reduce/ have any impact on the car engine noises too? (C)**

Road surface will make no difference on the noise a car engine will generate.

9. Can there be a ban on HGV vehicles using the route? (C)

No.

10. The sound analysis appears to assume a maximum speed of 60mph- why hasn't further analysis been done at higher speeds? (C)

As the speed limit is set for 60mph it would be unrepresentative of average noise levels if we were to model at higher speeds.

11. If the orange route is selected Plateau residents will only have one readily accessible exit from the plateau in extreme weather conditions via Tower Cross, but they would still have to negotiate the A35 descent into Honiton- has this been considered when removing the Cotleigh Cross onto A30 access route? (C)

Side road and underbridge proposals as presented at public consultation will be further developed following receipt of comments.

12. Post completion of the scheme if it is found that the residents of Monkton experience greater adverse effects than have been indicated i.e. road noise, flooding or any part of the project is found to be 'not fit for service' what assurances can be given that a solution will be sought and acted upon promptly? When all additional financial compensation be awarded? (M)

The detailed design for the scheme will draw on much more detailed survey work, which will allow a greater refinement of predictions of effects than for the current stage. The extent of these effects would be presented in documents contained in an application for a Development Consent Order, and which, the design for construction would comply with. Post opening project appraisals are required for such schemes and would identify where predicted effects are different than actual effects. Where appropriate, compensation for such effects, e.g. noise, will be determined based on actual effects.

13. The blue route (north and south) includes a number of entry/exit points making this route particularly dangerous, generally 3 lanes (2+1 suicide lane) roads are notoriously dangerous. What safety statistics are available for existing three lane roads? (M)

DCC recognise the contrast in number of entry/exit points between routes. Although the blue route includes a number of entry/exit points at the Honiton end of the scheme, the majority of the road has no accesses, which is necessary to ensure that the design speed of 60mph can be achieved. In order to cater for these accesses between Honiton and Monkton, right turn lanes will be provided instead of an overtaking lane. This represents an improvement in the safety provision than is currently available. Through traffic heading eastbound will not be forced to wait behind the stationary right turners and there will be less pressure on the right turners to make risky manoeuvres as they will be in a segregated turning lane. Highways England have an approved standard for 2+1 carriageway roads, further analysis of the safety statistics is being undertaken.

- 14. Please assure residents on the blue north route approved circa 1997 that this route will not now be resurrected and confirm the route is not currently an option nor will it be in the future. (M)**

A route to the north of Monkton was considered but was rejected as it does not meet the scheme objectives. This route would adversely affect the floodplain, the setting of the church and buried remains of a medieval village.

There are three options being considered; Blue Route North, Blue Route South or Orange Route. These have been developed from scratch through a series of design team meetings. The route proposed in 1997 is not currently being considered.

- 15. From an environmental perspective the blue routes will affect more mature trees than the orange route causing more likelihood of local flooding and landslides. Should of the blue routes be chosen, please describe how these problems would be alleviated? (M)**

If either of the blue routes is taken forward, any impacts (such as the potential impact of any tree or vegetation removal) on the existing drainage and surface water flow routes will be taken into account and incorporated into a drainage strategy for the scheme. This drainage scheme will ensure that there is no increase to any flood risk. Whilst it is recognised that the blue routes do affect more mature trees than the orange route, at this scale there would be a negligible effect on flood risk and on ground stability.

- 16. Can we be assured that the suggested routes will not be altered and will remain as they are? If not will we be made aware/ re consulted on any changes to route/design following this initial consultation i.e. it may not be an objection now but if route is changed we may wish to raise an objection. (M)**

Some design alterations will be expected to be made following the results of the consultation. Should there be any significant changes, there may be a need to reconsult.

- 17. At this stage of the consultation can the following individuals please state their preferred route and explain why? (M)**

Neil Parish (MP)
Paul Diviani (EDDC)
David Key (EDDC)
Andrew Leadbetter (DCC)
David Black (DCC)
Linda Bennet (AONB)

The decision on preferred route will be based on a range of factors see question 11

- 18. David Black - At this point in the consultation, which routes do the following organisations support:**

- The Environment Agency?
- Historic England?
- Natural England?
- The National Trust?

- **Blackdown Hills AONB?**
- **The Police/Various Services?**
- **Highways England? (M)**

The above key stakeholders, apart from the Police/emergency services and The National Trust, were engaged with from the start of the scheme including commenting on the level and methodology of assessment of environmental implications at the options selection stage; maintaining dialogue with our specialist DCC staff / consultants on specific issues; and attending and participating at Value Management Workshops. Two VM workshops were held prior to the Public Consultation period to ensure that the options developed were suitable, to confirm objectives and to engage with and brief stakeholders. At the second VM workshop the key stakeholders confirmed their support for all the options to be taken forward to Public Consultation. No show stoppers were identified.

The Police/emergency services and The National Trust have been contacted as part of this public consultation. There was, also, earlier engagement with The National Trust in April 2016 on the approach to the development of the scheme options.

- 19. David Black - DCC have talked in terms of any road improvements being no more than 50 metres from existing, and previously detailed investigations, (possibly including an inquiry), 15 plus years ago and land acquisitions. The consulted people of Monkton have not been offered the option of the route to the north behind the church thereby minimising costly and distressing CPO s of businesses and homes. Why is this? (M)**

Please refer to Question 3, page 22.

- 20. The cost of Blue North and Orange are similar but Blue South is £4-5m plus compensation more expensive. Excluding other factors in particular not to demolish house which route is preferred. (M)**

Compensation has been included in all the cost estimates. There is no preferred route currently with each route evenly weighted.

- 21. How are you going to decide on a route, what factors are you going to take into account e.g. cost, resident opinion, safety, environmental etc. Are there any additional feature that would improve the route preferred? (M)**

A consultation report will be published once the consultation has closed in September. This report will summarise the views and opinions expressed during this consultation and make recommendations for further work, including development of responses to alternative alignments / side road strategies and refining of the Assessments. A variety of factors will be considered and weighted in the decision of which route is preferred. Resident opinion will be one of these factors however, this consultation is not a referendum and therefore other factors will also be influential.

- 22. What are the arrangements during construction to ensure access, disturbances etc are being minimised for Monkton residents and businesses? (M)**

The current options include some sections on line of the existing road, so there would be some disruption to users of the A30. There would also be some disruption where local roads

would be diverted. Specific arrangements to minimise disturbance would be consider once the scheme has progressed to a stage closer to construction.

23. If the preferred route chosen is changed will there be another public consultation?

There will be a further consultation based on the route chosen.