



TAAG

Teddington & Alstone A46 Advisory Group

A46 EXPANSION – AUGUST UPDATE (NEWSLETTER #2)

While far less detail than expected has been announced since our first newsletter, we wanted to provide an update.

Initial TAAG Report

This report was formally endorsed by the Teddington & Alstone Parish Council (TAPC) at their meeting in July.

Local Constituents surgery 23rd June

Ahead of the recent 'drop in' session hosted by Councillor Smith we were made aware that details from the Midlands Connect studies would be available. A member of the TAAG attended and was able to view a copy of the Midlands Connect draft report but wasn't allowed to photograph or duplicate. This was a lengthy report covering the entire A46/M69 corridor with limited local content.

Within a list of issues, reference was made to the adverse impact caused by mixing local and strategic traffic flows around J9 M5 and the eastern approach through Ashchurch. Noise and air pollution caused by HGV traffic was also highlighted together with road safety concerns and constraints on new residential and retail development.

Of eleven potential development options for the A46/M69 corridor, two had local relevance: firstly, a bypass to the south of Beckford and secondly, a new road to bypass Ashchurch to join with a new junction south of the existing M5 J9. A preference for a Beckford bypass was highlighted by the Beckford Parish Council in their March 2017 local transport plan. A potential bypass to the existing road through Ashchurch is not unexpected but we would stress that there was no detail on possible route options or any drawings. Councillor Smith did display the 1993 Department for Transport (DfT) plans, simply because nothing else was available, and we don't believe we should read anything into this.

Chris Grayling announcement, 9th July

This was rather less than expected as he was unable to attend the launch due to other priorities with the announcement itself primarily concerned with the railway hub. Disappointingly, the expected final A46 corridors report (as seen in draft at Councillor's Smith's surgery) wasn't published.

What was published at the launch was a "Routes to Growth" report, produced by Midlands Connect (a link to this can be accessed through our website).



TAAG

Teddington & Alstone A46 Advisory Group

The report sets out transport priorities for the whole of the Midlands area, rail and road, with the A46/M69 road corridor one small element. In connection with the Midlands Motorway Hub there is a recommendation to create an A46 expressway* as an alternative to journeys along the M5 & M42. Additionally, the A46 section supports this with a recommendation for a strategic study for making the A46 an expressway between the M5 and M40.

As far as we're aware, this report has been produced for lobbying purposes to obtain funding from the government to move to the second stage of the study.

**Defined in the report as upgraded A roads of two or three lanes with grade-separated junctions.*

Meeting with Councillor Smith 12th July

This was pre-arranged to follow the 9th July launch. While the expected A46 report wasn't published, Councillor Smith advised he had the latest version but was still unable to share this until it is.

We were able to establish some facts around the roles of interested parties and the planning process:

- All motorways and major roads are managed by Highways England (HE); therefore, they are responsible for any development of the A46.
- Midlands Connect will commission studies and develop strategies that they hope will influence government funding decisions. Once these are published (dates unknown) there will follow a period of public consultation (to include the TAPC).
- To set investment levels, the government publishes a multi-year road investment strategy (RIS). The next cycle RIS (RIS 2) starting in September will cover financial years 2020/21 through 2024/25.
- Gloucestershire County Council is working on an economic business case to feed into the RIS2 process.
- The next public communication on funding, and possibly road priorities, is likely to be in the government's Autumn Statement in November.

Next steps

With government process and many interested parties, it's hard to predict how things will progress. However, while we don't have any concrete proposals or timelines, TAAG intend to keep a watch on events and undertake background activities (e.g approach bodies such as the Campaign for Protection of Rural England) to prepare for an eventual consultation.

In an attempt to reduce our costs and save trees, we have set-up the ability for you to receive these newsletters by email in future. Please go to our website <http://taagroup.co.uk> to register

