

Jan Mallett
Via Email

Sent by e-mail: jan.catbells@gmail.com

1 April 2022

Dear Mrs Mallett

Ref No: [WECAFOI0215]

Thank you for your e-mail to the Western Gateway Sub-national Transport Body on 4 March 2022 requesting the following information. The West of England Combined Authority acts as secretariat for this body and has thus provided the response set out below.

- 1) I am requesting a copy of the Council's response to the DfT's review of the LLM/MRN programme in light of the 2021 Spending Review and changes to Government policy. Specifically I wish to see their response in respect of the M5 Junction 9 and A46 (Ashchurch) Transport scheme. I attach the DfT's letter dated 18th January 2022 for your information;
- 2) I would also like a copy of any supporting documents provided to DfT in the Council's response.

I am treating your correspondence as a request for information under the Freedom of Information Act.

A copy of the letter to the DfT dated 1 March 2022 is set out below. There were no additional supporting documents. Names of officers have been removed where appropriate.

Western Gateway STB
3 Rivergate
Bristol
BS1 6EW

By email to: Head of Road Investment, Policy and Pipeline Development
Department for Transport

1 March 2022

Dear x

Western Gateway Sub-national Transport Body Major Road Network and Large Local Major Schemes

Thank you for your letter of 18 January 2022 concerning the Western Gateway Sub-national Transport Body's (STB) position on its Major Road Network (MRN) / Large Local Major (LLM) schemes.

Along with our constituent local authorities we have reviewed our current programme of schemes and with one exception, A338 Southern Salisbury Improvements, we consider them as regional priorities to be taken forward to delivery as part of the national MRN/LLM programme. This position is in line with our approved Strategic Transport Plan (2020-25). In undertaking our review we have revisited the original objectives of the MRN programme and taken into account value for money, progress made with developing the schemes through the business case process, local support, active travel, bus improvements and decarbonisation. A summary position for each scheme is set out below.

A350 Chippenham Bypass (Phases 4 & 5) - MRN

Wiltshire Council scheme already approved at Outline Business Case (OBC) stage and the Department for Transport (DfT) have indicated that such schemes would not normally be considered for removal. Work is progressing on this project and the scheme has not changed since the OBC was approved. The scheme still conforms to the latest local authority, STB and Government objectives and should therefore remain in the programme

A350 M4 Junction 17 Improvements - MRN & A350 Melksham Bypass – LLM

Wiltshire Council schemes with the OBCs for both approaching completion. The OBCs will be submitted to the DfT in July 2022. Both schemes are considered to conform to the latest local authority, STB and Government objectives. They are high priorities for Wiltshire Council because of their position on the strategically important A350 north - south route and should remain in the MRN/LLM programme.

A338 Southern Salisbury Improvements

Wiltshire Council has developed proposals for the A338 junctions in Salisbury, but it is considered that there is potential for a better scheme which could be progressed using existing developer contributions and Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding and potentially in conjunction with National Highways. This would provide an improvement that represents better value for money, reduces delays, and reflects the results of the public consultation held on the proposals last year. To this end Wiltshire Council and the STB have no objection to the A338 Southern Salisbury Improvements scheme being removed from the MRN programme.

M5 Junction 9 and A46 (Ashchurch) Transport Scheme - LLM

This Gloucestershire County Council scheme for Junction 9 of the M5 is progressing through the Strategic Outline Case (SOC) stage and has recently benefitted from approval from the Roads Minister Baroness Vere for National Highways to work in a more collaborative working arrangement with Gloucestershire County Council. The scheme has a strong fit with national, regional and local policies and studies. Current programme includes submitting drafts of all (SOC) dimensions to DfT by 18 February 2022. The SOC submission will be followed by an OBC for submission by December 2023.

A38 - MRN

North Somerset Council and Somerset County Council scheme which as of 31 January 2022 has secured support from National Highways and the OBC is ready for submission to DfT along with letters of endorsement. North Somerset Council and Somerset County Council have considered the A38 MRN scheme and are confident that it still has a place in the current programme given progress made to date, current estimated scheme costs and scheme fit with North Somerset Council's transport objectives. The scheme has made timely progress since it was added to the programme in 2019 and is currently

programmed to start construction in November 2023, ahead of the end of the forthcoming Spending Review period in March 2025. The scheme has local support from local MPs and the wider community, as evidenced by community feedback received during the scheme's engagement exercise undertaken in Summer 2021.

A4174 Ring road capacity improvements - MRN

South Gloucestershire Council scheme for which the OBC has been prepared. Submission has been delayed to make a decision in late 2022 following public consultation in 2021 and to monitor the impact of a similar 'Throughabout' junction at Wraxall Road on the A4174. Timescales are delayed by a year. All proposed works are within adopted highway or on South Gloucestershire Council land and can be delivered under permitted highway rights. Without intervention queueing and delay will become more prevalent. The increase in journey times and the poor journey time reliability and network resilience resulting from this will increase costs to businesses and travellers. Furthermore, a lack of intervention is likely to further delay bus services, impacting on bus reliability, going against local and regional policy aspirations. Scheme to remain in the programme.

A4174 MOD Roundabout Improvements - MRN

South Gloucestershire Council scheme which will be progressed for submission in late 2022. The DfT have noted the deliverability of the scheme requiring no land consents and its relatively low estimated cost compared to other MRN submissions. The scheme offers an opportunity to respond quickly to the build back better agenda and economic restart following the impacts of the covid pandemic. The Concorde Way, a major arterial cycle route, crosses the ring road at this location so there is a significant opportunity to overcome severance issues for walking and cycling as part of this scheme. Following feedback from the DfT to the pre SOBC and Appraisal Summary Report the Council are considering proceeding directly to OBC. Resources have focused to date on completing the OBC/FBC for A4174 junction improvements and on approval utilising local funds to progress this scheme. Scheme to remain in the programme.

Update letters from each of the promoting authorities containing more detail on their respective schemes are attached below for your information.

I trust you will be reassured that the Western Gateway's programme of MRN and LLM schemes is progressing well. Should you require any further information please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours Sincerely



CLlr Mike Greene

Portfolio Holder for Transport and Sustainability at Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council
On behalf of The Western Gateway Sub-national Transport body

Please see attached letters below from –
Gloucestershire County Council
North Somerset Council
Wiltshire Council
South Gloucestershire Council

To: [REDACTED]
Western Gateway STB
3 Rivergate,
Temple Quay,
Bristol BS1 6EW

[REDACTED]
Executive Director:
Economy, Environment & Infrastructure
Shire Hall
Westgate Street
Gloucester

Via email:

[REDACTED]@WestOfEngland-CA.gov.uk ;
WesternGatewaySTB@westofengland-ca.gov.uk

GL1 2TG

email:

[REDACTED]@gloucestershire.gov.uk

Phone: 01452 [REDACTED]

Our Ref: [REDACTED]

Your Ref:

Date: 11 February 2022

Dear [REDACTED]

M5 Junction 9 and A46 (Ashchurch) Transport Scheme

Thank you for your email dated 20th January 2022 containing the letter from [REDACTED] at the Department for Transport (DfT). Further to our recent meetings with the DfT regarding the M5 Junction 9 and A46 (Ashchurch) Transport Scheme, I am pleased to give you an update on the progress of the scheme.

You will see from the detail set out below that the J9 scheme is progressing through the Strategic Outline Case (SOC) stage and has recently benefitted from approval from the Roads Minister Baroness Vere for National Highways (NH) to work in a more collaborative working arrangement with Gloucestershire County Council, including dedicated funding of the NH team. The M5 J9 Programme Board continues to meet every 6 weeks, and includes members from not only the DfT, but Homes England, National Highways and the Local Planning Authorities, strengthening this collaborative working approach.

Our programme currently includes submitting drafts of all (SOC) dimensions to DfT by 18th February 2022. We are working closely with National Highways in the development of the SOC and through National Highways' Project Control Framework (PCF) Stage 0. As requested in your follow up email please see below our outline Programme for the scheme:

Milestone	Programme Date
Submission of final Strategic Outline Case to DfT 'SOC V4'	Jul-2022
Non-Statutory Consultation	Sep-2022
Approval of Strategic Outline Case by DfT	Jan-2023
Submission of Outline Business Case to DfT	Dec-2023

Approval of Outline Business Case by DfT	Jun-2024
Statutory Public Consultation	Jun-2025
Submission of DCO to PINs	Jan-2026
Determination of DCO	Jun-2027
Submission of Full Business Case to DfT	Aug-2027
Approval of Full Business Case by DfT	Jan-2028
Start of Construction	Jan-2028
Completion of Works	Jul-2030
Opening Date	Jul-2030

Timely progress

The Western Gateway Sub-National Transport Body (WG STB) prioritised the scheme for Large Local Major (LLM) funding as part of its submission of the Regional Evidence Base to the DfT in July 2019, alongside a Pre-Strategic Outline Business Case (SOBC, now SOC) for the scheme. An SOBC was submitted to DfT in January 2020 but this was withdrawn due to the need to investigate further options for National Highways. In March 2020, the government announced that the scheme could proceed to the next stage of scheme development (SOC stage) under the LLM funding programme.

The project team have been engaging with National Highways on the development of evidence through the National Highways PCF. National Highways carried out a Risk Review in March 2021 resulting in additional technical work to be undertaken which is presented in the SOC. The SOC submission will be followed by an Outline Business Case (OBC) for submission by December 2023. The start of construction is planned for January 2028.

Strategic fit and objectives

The scheme has a strong fit with national, regional and local policies and studies, including (this is not an exhaustive list):

- The scheme supports the **DfT's MRN/LLM objectives** of reducing congestion and supporting the SRN by improving journeys on the southern section of the A46. It contributes to economic growth and rebalancing by improving highway capacity to unlock housing and employment land near M5 Junction 9, providing a key route to the Midlands and supporting economic growth in the region. The scheme contributes to rebalancing of the economy by widening markets and connecting people to jobs. It will also support housing delivery by enabling growth in Gloucestershire particularly the Tewkesbury Garden Town (TGT).
- **Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC)** awarded Tewkesbury Garden Town (TGT) status in March 2019 to deliver over 10,195 homes and 120 hectares of employment land on land to the east of M5 Junction 9 at Ashchurch. Whilst the TGT is under consideration in the Joint Core Strategy Review there is already a significant level of market interest for delivering housing in Ashchurch. Also, Tewkesbury Borough Council (TBC) has highlighted that in terms of employment provision, it is unlikely that there would be many other strategic sites (and allocations in due course) in the County that would be able to offer the same, reasonably unconstrained, development potential. It is possible, subject to testing,

that the J9 scheme could enable far greater development opportunities in the longer term in addition to the currently proposed 10,195 homes.

- **Western Gateway STB** has identified the scheme as one of the LLM schemes to improve north-south connectivity and enable significant growth in Gloucestershire. **Midlands Connect STB** recognises the A46 as a priority - the Long Term Midlands Motorway Hub Study (2018) recommends upgrading the A46 as an alternative to the Birmingham Box and the Trans Midland Trade Corridor identifies the scheme as a priority to improve the A46 from Tewkesbury all the way to the Port of Immingham in the north east. Evidence produced by Midlands Connect identifies that the A46 corridor could provide £7BN for the national economy from transport benefits along with land availability for upwards of 190,000 additional jobs generating £7.5BN GVA per year.
- Two **National Highways Route Strategies** (2017) highlight issues at M5 Junction 9 and the A46 Scoping Study recommended that the scheme is needed by 2026 (all precede the TGT). Mainline queuing during peak hours frequently occurs, often resulting in collisions,
- Finally, the scheme has a strong fit with local policy including the adopted **Gloucestershire** Local Transport Plan (LTP), supporting sustainable economic growth and enabling safe and affordable community connectivity.

A range of overarching local and regional scheme objectives in transport terms have been identified for the M5 Junction 9 and A46 (Ashchurch) Transport Scheme.

These are mapped below against the original objectives of the MRN Programme showing which M5 Junction 9 objectives meet the MRN objectives:

MRN Objectives	M5J9 objectives
Reducing congestion	Maintain reliable access to the M5 and improve journey times and reliability on the local highway network Improve north-south connectivity between the Midlands and the South West Maintain safety and ensure no net increase in accidents on the M5 and improve safety on the A46 through Ashchurch Reduce through traffic on the A46 through Ashchurch to facilitate sustainable transport movements and active modes to support the TGT
Supporting economic growth and rebalancing	Improve north-south connectivity between the Midlands and the South West Enable the delivery of future housing and employment growth (including the Tewkesbury Garden Town)
Supporting housing delivery	Enable the delivery of future housing and employment growth (including the Tewkesbury Garden Town)
Supporting all road users	Maintain reliable access to the M5 and improve journey times and reliability on the local highway network Improve north-south connectivity between the Midlands and the South West
	Reduce through traffic on the A46 through Ashchurch to facilitate sustainable transport movements and active modes to support the TGT

Supporting the Strategic Road Network	Maintain reliable access to the M5 and improve journey times and reliability on the local highway network
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Note that the above scheme objectives are currently being refined for use in PCF Stage 1 onwards. A workshop to review the scheme objectives was held on the 28th January 2022. Refinement to objectives are likely to include more of a focus towards supporting sustainable travel and active modes and clarifying the scheme's north-south connectivity role with more of a focus on the immediate study area since the scheme is an early phase in Midlands Connect's programme.

Value for money (VfM)

From current analysis based on committed growth, the single carriageway variants are forecast to provide Medium to High VfM for three of the four alignment options. By comparison the dual carriageway variants are forecast to provide Low to Medium VfM. The inclusion of dependent development is expected to significantly improve the VfM for all options and may also impact on the relative performance of intervention and alignment options. Furthermore it is expected that the BCRs and VfM of hybrid variants (part dual, part single) would lie somewhere in between the results from single and dual options.

Carbon

As part of appraising the scheme's VfM, a greenhouse gas appraisal will be undertaken in line with TAG using the DEFRA emissions toolkit. In addition, a Carbon Management Plan will form part of the SOC submitted to DfT in May 2022 which will consider carbon emissions over the entire life of the asset. The Carbon Management Plan will be refined at every design stage and it will identify hotspots in carbon output to inform a carbon reduction strategy and set carbon reductions targets against a baseline.

Local support

The scheme is still at an early stage in terms of stakeholder engagement; we are working towards non-statutory consultation in September 2022. In the meantime, GCC and the project team are working closely with Tewkesbury Borough Council and National Highways as key stakeholders to develop the scheme. The scheme has also received letters of support from Lawrence Robertson (MP for Tewkesbury), Tewkesbury Borough Council, Wychavon District Council, GFirst LEP and several local businesses. The stakeholder engagement and communications team are keeping all key stakeholders (including MPs and district and parish councils) informed through regular scheme updates and respond to all stakeholder queries.

Finally, I would like to state that Gloucestershire County Council, as scheme promoter of the M5 Junction 9 and A46 (Ashchurch) Transport Scheme, strongly supports retaining the scheme in the DfT's LLM programme. This is further borne out by the Council committing over £8M of funding to date on developing the Pre-

SOBC and SOC, alongside funding last year from the then Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government investing £1.5M to bring forward the scheme to enable the Tewkesbury Garden Town. A further bid has been made to the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities for additional support funding in 2022.

Please get back to me if I can provide any further information.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Executive Director: Economy, Environment & Infrastructure

NORTH SOMERSET COUNCIL:

North Somerset Council
Town Hall
Walliscote Grove Road
Weston-super-Mare
BS23 1UJ

Date: 09/02/2022

For the attention of the Western Gateway STB:

Please find below a statement from North Somerset Council in relation to the A38 MRN Outline Business Case (OBC) in response to DfT's letter dated 18/01/2022 regarding their position on the Major Road Network (MRN) / Large Local Major (LLM) programme following the Spending Review.

As of 31/01/2022, support has been secured from National Highways and the A38 MRN OBC is ready for submission to DfT along with letters of endorsement which include the Western Gateway STB. However, the outcome of the Bristol Airport planning appeal saw a decision published on 03/02/2022 to grant Bristol Airport permission to expand from 10mppa to 12mppa, and the OBC is currently being reviewed in light of this to ensure it best reflects the current situation ahead of submission. Please note that this work is being carried out to deadline and our intention is still to submit the Outline Business Case in the coming month.

Following the recent letter from DfT, North Somerset Council and Somerset County Council have considered the A38 MRN scheme and are confident that it still has a place in the current programme given progress made to date, current estimated scheme costs and scheme fit with North Somerset Council's transport objectives.

The scheme objectives also meet the original objectives of the MRN programme as demonstrated by the following:

- Reducing congestion through the inclusion of traffic congestion reduction measures on the A38 section between West Lane junction and the Airport Terminal roundabout, via provision of additional carriageway lanes; and at the Edithmead (J22) roundabout via provision of additional carriageway capacity and signalisation.
- Supporting economic growth and rebalancing through improved journey reliability times from traffic congestion reduction measures on the A38 and from alternative travel modes provided by additional active travel infrastructure.
- Supporting housing delivery through improvements to the existing Edithmead (J22) roundabout near to where new housing developments are taking place.
- Supporting all road users through additional active travel infrastructure inclusion within each of the scheme elements and bus travel infrastructure improvements comprising of designated bus lane provision on the A38 section between the Airport Terminal and Silver Zone roundabouts and improvements to the existing bus stop lay-by at A38/Barrow Street junction.
- Supporting the Strategic Road Network through reduction in traffic congestion on the A38 running parallel with the M5 motorway and reduction in traffic congestion on the SRN for traffic exiting J22.

Regarding the more recent, wider objectives of Government transport investment, the A38 MRN scheme supports these as follows:

- The scheme provides value for money as evidenced through a BCR of 2.62 which provides good value for money (VfM). Given the BCR sits comfortably above 2.00, any cost overruns would need to be significant in order for the VfM category to change.
- The scheme has made timely progress since it was added to the programme in 2019 and is currently programmed to start construction in November 2023, ahead of the end of the forthcoming Spending Review period in March 2025.
- The scheme has local support from local MPs and the wider community, as evidenced by community feedback received during the scheme's engagement exercise undertaken in Summer 2021 and letters of support received from John Penrose MP, James Heap MP, Western Gateway STB, West of England LEP and Heart of the South West LEP.

Given the current national climate emergency, the scheme has sought to prioritise decarbonisation through provision of traffic congestion reduction measures, alternative travel modes from inclusion of additional active travel infrastructure and improvements to bus infrastructure. These aspects will contribute to the reduction in carbon generation, and furthermore, during the scheme's construction phase there will be emphasis in reducing carbon otherwise generated from associated operations.

We are happy to provide any further details required for the review process and hope to count on the continued support of the Western Gateway STB in the promotion of this scheme.



Head of Major Infrastructure Projects
North Somerset Council

SOUTH GLOUCESTERSHIRE COUNCIL:

Western Gateway STB3
Rivergate
Temple Quay
Bristol
BS1 6EW

Via email: [\[REDACTED\]@WestOfEngland-CA.gov.uk](mailto:[REDACTED]@WestOfEngland-CA.gov.uk);
WesternGatewaySTB@WestOfEngland-CA.gov.uk

Date: 18 February 2022

Reference: [REDACTED]

Contact: [REDACTED] [\[REDACTED\]@SouthGlos.gov.uk](mailto:[REDACTED]@SouthGlos.gov.uk)

Tel: 01454 [REDACTED]

Dear [REDACTED]

MRN SCHEMES: A4174 JUNCTION IMPROVEMENTS AND A4174 MOD ROUNDABOUT

I am writing in response to your email of 20th January 2022, following the letter from [REDACTED] at the Department for Transport (DfT) about reviewing the LLM/MRN programme. South Gloucestershire Council has two schemes within the MRN programme, A4174 Ring Road Junction Improvements and A4174 Ring Road MOD. South Gloucestershire, as scheme promoter, strongly supports retaining both schemes in the MRN programme. We have had a series of update meetings with the DfT over the last year and the following information summarises the current position.

Strategic Fit and Objectives of both schemes

The A4174 is a strategically important road for the West of England region connecting key A roads to the M4, M32 and M5. The interventions along the A4174 are required for both schemes to tackle the existing congestion and journey time reliability issues experienced at the junctions during peak periods. This congestion has resultant impacts on the surrounding environment, such as local Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs), and local bus routes which operate across the A4174.

The West of England faces serious transport challenges, and these will become more acute with the anticipated scale of growth coming forward in the region. The forecast numbers of people living and working in the area will increase demands on the transport system, which will have significant economic, social and environmental impacts. Whilst the West of England has benefited from a strong economy over the last decade, the sub-region's economic prosperity is beginning to be constrained by its transport network. As demand on the transport network increases because of economic and population growth, further investment is required to ensure the transport network is sufficiently accessible and has enough capacity and resilience to continue to meet the sub-region's needs. As such, in the future, issues are anticipated to be exacerbated as housing and employment in the locality grows through locally consented development and aspirations outlined in local policy. Severe queueing and delay will become more prevalent without intervention. The increase in journey times and poor journey time reliability and network resilience resulting from this will increase costs to businesses and travellers. Furthermore, a lack of intervention is likely to further delay bus services, impacting on bus reliability, going against local and regional policy aspirations.

Within the West of England Joint Local Transport Plan (JLTP4), it is stated that without transport interventions, CO2 emissions within the West of England region will increase 22%. Specifically, without the A4174 Junction Improvement schemes, CO2 emissions will likely rise due to the increased congestion and stationary traffic on this network.

Delivering a scheme to tackle the drivers of the issues along the corridor is supported by national, regional and local policies. The JLTP4 has outlined the need for the schemes noting the impacts of rerouting and resilience issues along the corridor. The schemes will support growth, outlined as aims in the Local Industrial Strategy (LIS) and SGC Core Strategy. Reducing congestion and improving network reliability, particularly for the public transport utilising the network and junctions will help support aims to reduce carbon emissions, in line with the climate emergency, Bus Back Better, the Decarbonisation Strategy and Levelling Up.

The scheme objectives, summarised below, closely align with the MRN objectives:

- Relieve congestion on the A4174 corridor
- Minimise the impact of traffic/infrastructure to the natural environment and, where possible deliver opportunities for environmental enhancement
- Unlock the economic potential in the north and east Bristol Fringe
- Protect and enhance access for non-car modes
- Improve safety
- Improve network resilience and journey time reliability
- Reduce carbon emissions

A4174 Ring Road Junction Improvements

The Western Gateway Sub-National Transport Body (WG STB) prioritised the scheme for MRN funding as part of its submission of the Regional Evidence Base to the DfT in July 2019, alongside an Outline Business Case (OBC) for the scheme. The submission included a series of six junction improvements and committed to delivering one of the six, Wraxall Road, in its entirety through local funds as the match contribution. The scheme proposes 'throughabout' junctions which are a new concept to the region. The 6 roundabouts are:

- Kingsfield - 'throughabout' junction
- Wraxall Road - 'throughabout' junction (delivered through local match contribution)
- Deanery Road - 'throughabout' junction
- Siston Hill - 'throughabout' junction
- Rosary roundabout - signal control
- Lyde Green - signal control

Unfortunately, Wraxall Road (the match funded element) and the OBC programmes slipped out of alignment following submission to the MRN programme. Full funding for Wraxall Road was secured in April 2020, the works commenced in August 2020 and were completed in September 2021.

In agreement with DfT an Outline/Full Business Case (O/FBC) was progressed for submission in September 2021 ahead of Wraxall Road being completed and opened. A 12-week consultation took place from May to August 2021. The consultation feedback expressed strong concerns about progressing with three additional new 'throughabout' junctions without first completing and understanding the impacts of the Wraxall Road (the first through about in the region). In addition, the impact of the construction of the Wraxall Road scheme at the time of consultation gave many people cause for concern around whether the short-term inconvenience of the impacts of construction were worth the long-term benefits of the scheme. The O/FBC was completed ready for issuing in September 2021 but in discussion with the local MP, a decision was made to pause its submission for a year to undertake monitoring of the Wraxall Road scheme to understand its performance and impacts. Post implementation monitoring surveys of Wraxall Road will start in May 2022. Site observations and early anecdotal public feedback indicates that Wraxall Road is operating as intended. The programme is outlined below.

Milestone	Programme Date
Wraxall Road monitoring and evaluation	March - June 2022
Decision and submission of Outline/ Full Business Case to DfT	December 2022
Approval of Outline/Full Business Case	May 2023
Commencement of construction	May 2023
Completion of Works	August 2026
Scheme bought into public uses	September 2026

A4174 MOD Junction Improvements

WG STB prioritised the scheme for MRN funding as part of its submission of the Regional Evidence Base to the DfT in July 2019, alongside a Pre-Strategic Outline Business Case (Pre-SOBC).

Like the A4174 junction improvement above, the DfT have noted the deliverability of this scheme requiring no land consents and the relatively low estimated cost of the scheme compared to other MRN submissions. The scheme offers an opportunity to respond quickly to the build back better agenda and economic restart following the impacts of the covid pandemic. The Concorde Way, a major arterial cycle route, crosses the ring road at this location so there is a significant opportunity to overcome severance issues for walking and cycling as part of this scheme. Feedback received from DfT to the Pre-SOBC and Appraisal Summary Report (ASR) has encouraged us to proceed directly to OBC rather than SOBC. We are therefore in the process of mobilising to progress to OBC to the milestones below.

Milestone	Programme Date
Submission of Outline Business Case to DfT	September 2022
Submission of Full Business Case	June 2023
Commencement of construction	Jan 2024
Completion of Works	Dec 2026

I trust that information provides you with the information you need to respond to the DfT. We feel that the two MRN schemes are deliverable and support retaining them both in the DfT's MRN programme. Please do let me know we can provide any further information in support of these submissions.

Yours sincerely,



Head of Strategic Infrastructure Services

WILTSHIRE COUNCIL:

10th February 2022

Cllr Mike Greene
Chair Western Gateway Sub-national Transport Body
By E-mail

Cabinet Office
County Hall
Bythesea Road
Trowbridge
Wiltshire
BA14 8JN

Our Ref: MM/LY/22088

Dear Cllr Greene

Major Road Network (MRN) / Large Local Major (LLM) programme

I refer to the letter from [REDACTED], Head of Road Investment, Policy and Pipeline Development at DfT dated 18th January 2022 regarding the review of the MRN/LMM programme, and to the email to Wiltshire Council from [REDACTED] of 24th January 2022.

I can confirm that Wiltshire Council have reviewed and reconsidered the schemes in the current programme as requested by DfT. As you are aware the Council has three MRN schemes and one LLM scheme currently in the programme. The position regarding the individual schemes is as follows:

A350 Chippenham Bypass (Phases 4 & 5) - MRN

The scheme has been approved at OBC stage and DfT have indicated that such schemes would not normally be considered for removal. I confirm that work is progressing on this project and the scheme has not changed since the OBC was approved. The scheme still conforms to the latest local authority, STB and Government objectives and should therefore remain in the programme.

A350 M4 Junction 17 Improvements - MRN & A350 Melksham Bypass – LLM

The OBCs for both schemes are approaching completion and the OBCs will be submitted to the DfT in July. Both schemes are considered to conform to the latest local authority, STB and Government objectives. They are both high priorities for Wiltshire Council because of their position on the strategically important A350 north - south route and should remain in the MRN/LMM programme.

A338 Southern Salisbury Improvements

The council has been developing proposals for the junctions in Salisbury, but it is considered that there is potential for a better scheme which could be progressed using existing developer contributions and Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding, potentially in conjunction with National Highways proposals, which although it may not meet the specific requirements for a DfT funded MRN scheme, would actually provide an improvement that represents better value for money, reduces delays, and would reflect the results of the public consultation held on the proposals last year.

The council would have no objection to the A338 Southern Salisbury Improvements scheme being removed from the MRN programme, if necessary, as other means of progressing improvements have been identified.

I hope these comments are helpful and would commend the STB to support the position set out above.

Please do not hesitate to contact me should you wish to discuss this matter further. Wiltshire Council remains committed to delivering these major highway improvements and is making provision within its future capital programme to ensure their delivery.

Yours sincerely



Cllr Dr Mark McClelland
Cabinet Member - Transport, Waste, Street Scene & Flooding

Direct line: 01225 [REDACTED]
Email: [REDACTED]@wiltshire.gov.uk

If you are not happy with the response to your request, you may ask for an internal review. You can do so by writing to the Data Protection Officer at West of England Combined Authority, 3 Rivergate, Temple Quay, Bristol BS1 6EW or emailing Democratic.Services@WestofEngland-ca.gov.uk. Your request must be received by the Authority within 40 working days of the date of this letter.

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review, you have the right to complain to the Information Commissioner. Details of your right to complain can be found at <https://ico.org.uk/concerns/>.

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Kind regards,

FOI Team - West of England Combined Authority

Tel: +44 (0)117 428 6210
Email: info@westofengland-ca.gov.uk

3 Rivergate, Temple Quay, Bristol, BS1 6ER
www.westofengland-ca.gov.uk

The West of England Combined Authority (WECA) covers Bath & North East Somerset, Bristol and South Gloucestershire. WECA also supports the Local Enterprise Partnership, which includes North Somerset.

