



# TAAG NEWSLETTER #26 - February 2023

Update on a number of items we covered in our December Newsletter and January Update.

## **Public Consultation**

Gloucestershire County Council's (GCC) proposed timing for this continues to move. We have been advised by Councillor Vernon Smith that it's now planned to take place this summer, we updated the Parish Council of this at their February meeting. TAAG await more detail on plans from GCC, but on the basis that we've previously been told it would avoid the school holiday period, this suggests July as most likely. We'll let residents know as soon as we hear more.

## **Laurence Robertson, MP**

You will recall from our December newsletter that Laurence had invited feedback on the M5 J9 bypass, specifically:

*“Can an environmentally friendly way be found to by-pass J9 for those who do not need to access that junction; and secondly, how can the capacity of the A46 and J9 be increased?”*

TAAG found this quite tricky but, not wanting to miss an opportunity to 'have our say' we sent him our comments at the beginning of February. One conclusion is that, even with an expensive new bypass, the congestion on the A46 is unlikely to improve given the unrelenting commercial and housing development along this road. Our response can be viewed on the our website under the Reports Tab.

## **Traffic Monitoring on the A435**

A summary of the results from the A435/A46 traffic monitoring exercise from September 2022 was e-mailed to subscribers in January. The detailed backing data is available on our website, please ask any member of TAAG if you have any questions. Details can be viewed on the our website under the Reports Tab.



## **Bypass Scheme Terms of Reference (ToR)**

Our attempt to obtain a copy of the ToR under a 'Freedom of Information' (Fol) request was again refused after we requested a review of the decision. This continues to be for reasons of 'commercial sensitivity'.

In clarifying comments, GCC state "*early disclosure of possible future routes would risk the needless blight of land/properties*". This does suggest the ToR makes reference to either possible routes or route locations.

TAAG have been told that the ToR will be disclosed once the public consultation starts.

## **GCC project funding for Bypass Scheme Business Case**

The budgeted total cost for the business case currently stands at £14m and the scheme is due to be discussed at GCC's next cabinet meeting on 29<sup>th</sup> March.

## **The 'Bridge to Nowhere'**

Some residents may have been aware of the legal challenge by Ashchurch Rural Parish Council (ARPC) to a 2021 decision by Tewkesbury Borough Council (TBC) to permit the building of a new bridge over the railway in Ashchurch and Northway. This was an infrastructure enabler for the proposed Garden Town, which would allow extensive new development to the East.

On 7<sup>th</sup> February, The Court of Appeal ruled in favour of ARPC.

Further details can be viewed on the Tewkesbury Garden Town website under Latest news Tewkesbury Garden Town. This both overturns the planning decision and has landed TBC with a £200k legal bill.

TBC may appeal or submit a revised (and presumably properly compliant) planning application. All of this does is highlight that, since being awarded Garden Town status in August 2019, TBC have made no progress, with major developments taking place around Ashchurch being driven by Hitchins and Linden Homes. Without progress on a Garden Town, the argument for a new bypass is weakened.