



TAAG NEWSLETTER #38 April 2025

M5 J9 & A46 Transport Scheme

Route Option Public Engagement Report

In our last newsletter, we advised that Gloucestershire County Council (GCC) would publish a summary of feedback from the Public Engagement this Spring. We have now been informed that this has been delayed until after the May local elections; sometime in Summer 2025.

Cotswold National Landscape (CNL) Submission

We previously informed residents about the late submission by the CNL Board to the Route Options Public Engagement. Their report can be found on our website [here](#).

At the GCC meeting in February, we raised a question to clarify whether CNL's submission would still be considered. We received the following response:

"All the feedback from the M5 J9 and A46 (Ashchurch) Transport Scheme public engagement is being analysed, and a Report on Public Engagement will be published in Spring 2025. The issues raised by respondents will be considered in the next stage of scheme development. Refinements to the six options presented at public engagement will be considered including the impact of closing a section of the A435. The aim of the next stage of work is to reduce shortlisted options from 6 to 2 or 3, then confirm discounted options to stakeholders prior to completing detailed Outline Business Case development and appraisal. It is anticipated this work will take 12 to 18 months to complete."

Their proposals *will* therefore be considered, and we understand this will include traffic modelling to assess the impacts of the proposed revised Route B and the potential closure of the A435 to traffic.

We acknowledge the concerns recently raised by Beckford Parish Council regarding CNL's proposal. They believe it will exacerbate the existing problem of tailbacks and gridlocked traffic on the A46 through their parish. As mentioned above, traffic modelling will be undertaken to assess the impacts. Hopefully, we will hear when the assessment and traffic modelling has been completed and will then report back accordingly.

Ongoing Funding of the M5 J9 & A46 Transport Scheme project

At the January GCC Cabinet meeting, we asked what would happen if the Strategic Outline Business Case (SOC) was not approved and no funding was secured from the Department for Transport (DfT)? Would GCC continue to fund the next development stage or would the project be cancelled? We received the following response:

"If the SOC isn't approved by the Department for Transport (DfT) and no funding from the DfT is forthcoming, GCC will assess all options available before making a decision whether to continue with the scheme."

A decision from the DfT was expected this month; however, it has once again been delayed.

Colin Chick, Executive Director of Economy, Environment and Infrastructure at GCC, recently gave an update to *Punchline*, explaining why it was necessary for the Council to spend £10m so far in developing the project in order to stand a chance of securing major government funding.

You can read the article here:

<https://www.punchline-gloucester.com/searchresult/tewkesbury-9-costs-spiral->

At that time, he was expecting a decision from the DfT imminently. However, he has since told us:

"We have not received any notification as yet in respect to the decision and it is unclear when we are likely to."

So, it appears that GCC will have to continue funding the project themselves for the foreseeable future or seek third-party funding, such as the £1million from the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Infrastructure Fund committee mentioned in the *Punchline* article.

We will continue to monitor this situation and will keep you updated.

Cameron Thomas MP

Since our virtual meeting with Cameron Thomas MP during the public engagement exercise, we have been unable to secure a response from him or arrange an in-person meeting. This is really disappointing, but we will persevere, as he was initially very supportive of our views regarding the route options and their impact on our villages.

Local Elections

The local elections on 1st May could significantly change the composition of the Council. We already know that Cllr Vernon Smith will not be standing again for Tewkesbury East Division. So, we will be closely watching the elections and results, ready to engage with any new councillors.

Cllr Vernon Smith

Cllr Smith has been a strong supporter of TAAG over the past 7 years since our formation. He played a crucial role in ensuring our concerns were heard and helped us establish strong working relationships with the project team and other key councillors.

Thank you, Vernon.

TAAG