

M3 junction 9 improvements scheme

Have your say



January to February 2018

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Introduction

About us

Highways England, formerly the Highways Agency, is the government company charged with operating, maintaining and improving England's motorways and major A roads. We are responsible for the M3 motorway in Hampshire.

The Government's Road Investment Strategy 2015-2020

In 2014, the government released its Road Investment Strategy, announcing £15 billion to invest in England's strategic road network between 2015 and 2020. The funding will be used to increase the capacity and condition of the network in key areas, including the M3 junction 9 to upgrade the junction to allow free movement from the A34 to the M3.

About the junction

M3 junction 9 is a key interchange which connects South Hampshire and the ports of Southampton and Portsmouth with the wider region. It also connects this region to the Midlands and the North via the A34, and London via the M3 northbound. As well as being a key route to and from Winchester and the surrounding areas.

Have your say

This brochure provides a summary of the proposal together with information about the development of the scheme. Further information is available within this brochure and via our website.

You can find out more at one of our public information events. Our team of experts will be on hand to answer your questions. See page 12 for dates and venue.

We will be seeking your feedback over a 6 week period, from Tuesday, 9 January 2018 to Monday, 19 February 2018.

Need for M3 junction 9 improvements

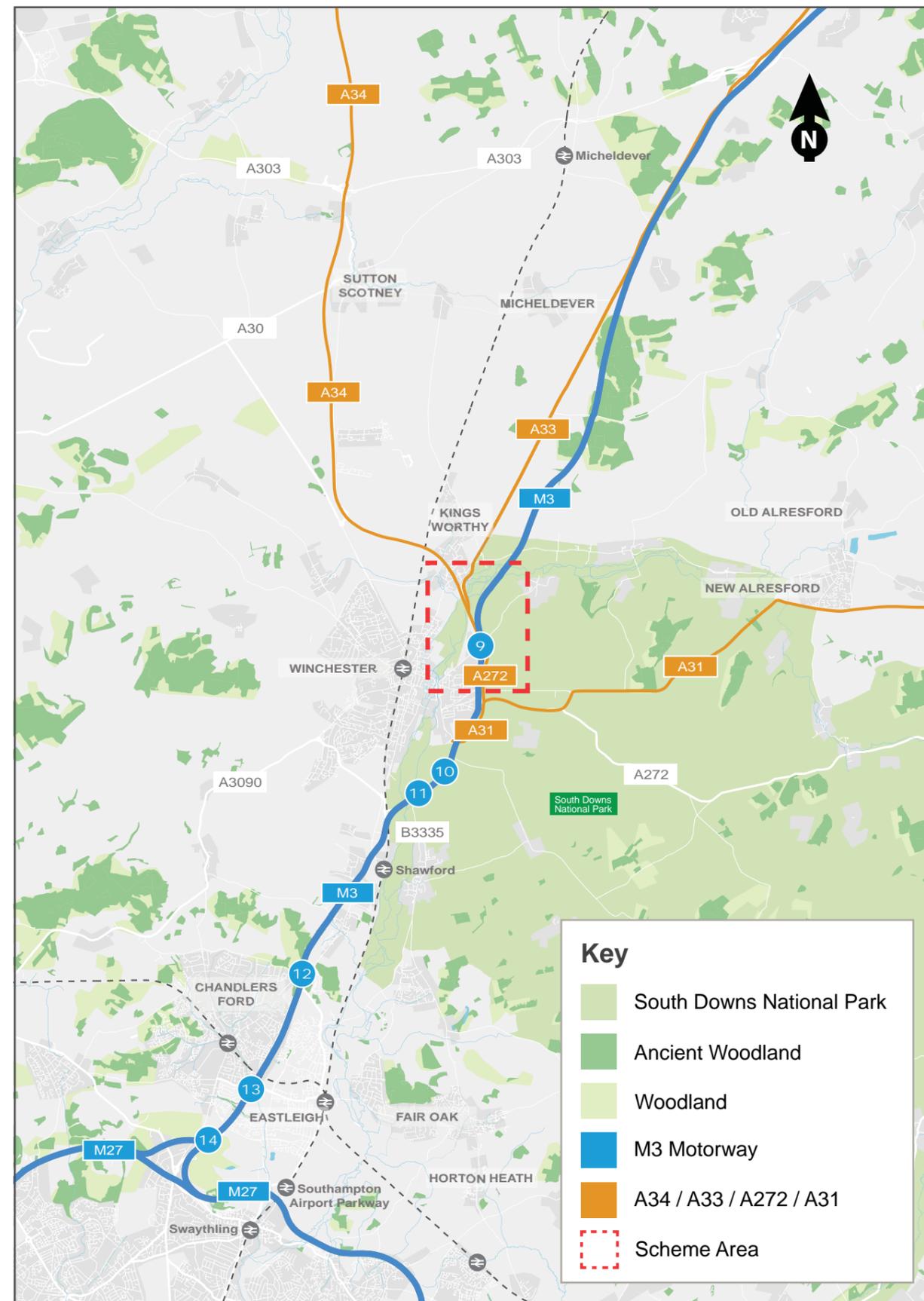
Approximately 110,000 vehicles use junction 9 every day, a large roundabout across two bridges, which goes above the M3. The roundabout is partly give-way and partly controlled by traffic signals.

Due to the high traffic volumes between the M3 and particularly the A34, the M3 junction 9 roundabout cannot cope. Queuing traffic can often be found backing onto the main carriageway of the M3 northbound, resulting in safety concerns, especially during peak periods. Queuing traffic can also have a detrimental impact on environmentally sensitive areas such as the River Itchen and South Downs National Park. This has a knock on impact to local traffic and can create queuing on the Spitfire Link (A272) for traffic trying to come onto the junction.

Projected development of the Southampton container port is anticipated to significantly increase heavy goods vehicle (HGV) traffic on the A34 and M3.

A map showing the existing junction arrangement is provided on page 6 for your information, highlighting key road links and other features along the M3 and A34 at junction 9 in Winchester.

M3 junction 9 scheme map



Scheme objectives

- **Support economic growth** by unlocking development capacity for jobs, business and housing creation
- **Improve safety** as a result of a reduction in delays and queue lengths
- **Reduce congestion** and increase journey time reliability
- **Improve the environment** by reducing adverse noise, improving air quality and no net loss to biodiversity
- **Improve facilities** for pedestrians, cyclists, and equestrians

How we developed the proposal

Hampshire County Council began work on this option by undertaking a scoping exercise which looked at a wide range of alternatives to improve the junction. These were assessed on the basis of a number of criteria:

- The extent to which it solved the traffic problems
- Impact on the environment (especially given the sensitive location of the scheme)
- Affordability (is there sufficient funding available)
- Did the proposal meet the needs of county and city council partners to support growth and development in Winchester

Highways England then progressed this further, undertaking environmental assessments and traffic modelling in order to shortlist options.

This produced the rejected options shown on page 5 and our proposal shown on page 7.

Our proposal was developed in collaboration with the following bodies in order to understand the unique national, regional and local constraints and ensure their aspirations for growth and development are represented in our assumptions:

- Hampshire County Council
- Winchester City Council

Highways England has also been engaging with the following environmental bodies:

- South Downs National Park
- Environment Agency
- Natural England
- Historic England

Our proposal

Our proposal will:

- Improve safety
- Reduce delays
- Reduce the amount of congestion
- Increase journey time reliability

It will also unlock the potential to create further businesses, jobs and housing.

Our proposal (Option 14) provides free-flowing road links between the M3 and the A34 both northbound and southbound with no need to enter the junction 9 roundabout to travel between the A34 and M3. The A34 southbound link will pass under the M3 with a 50mph speed limit.

These changes will reduce congestion on the newly designed dumbbell road layout which make journey times more reliable, improve road safety and reduce air pollution.

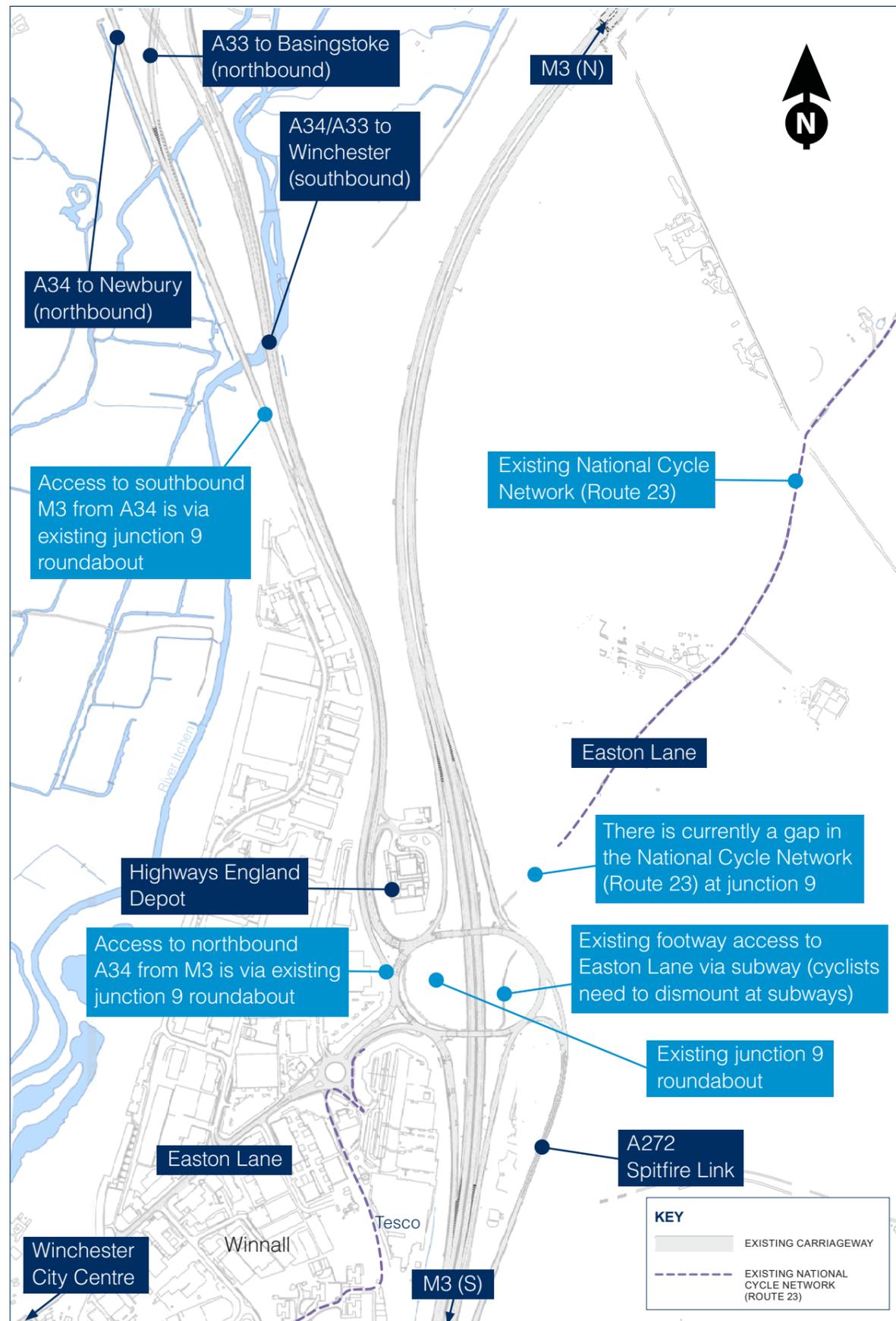
Our proposal will continue to provide access to the A33 as well as upgrading the current footpath through junction 9 to become part of the National Cycle Network (route 23), with bridleway access for horse riders; providing a safe continuous link through to Winchester. Other existing non-motorised routes within the scheme boundary will be maintained or upgraded as appropriate.

Rejected options

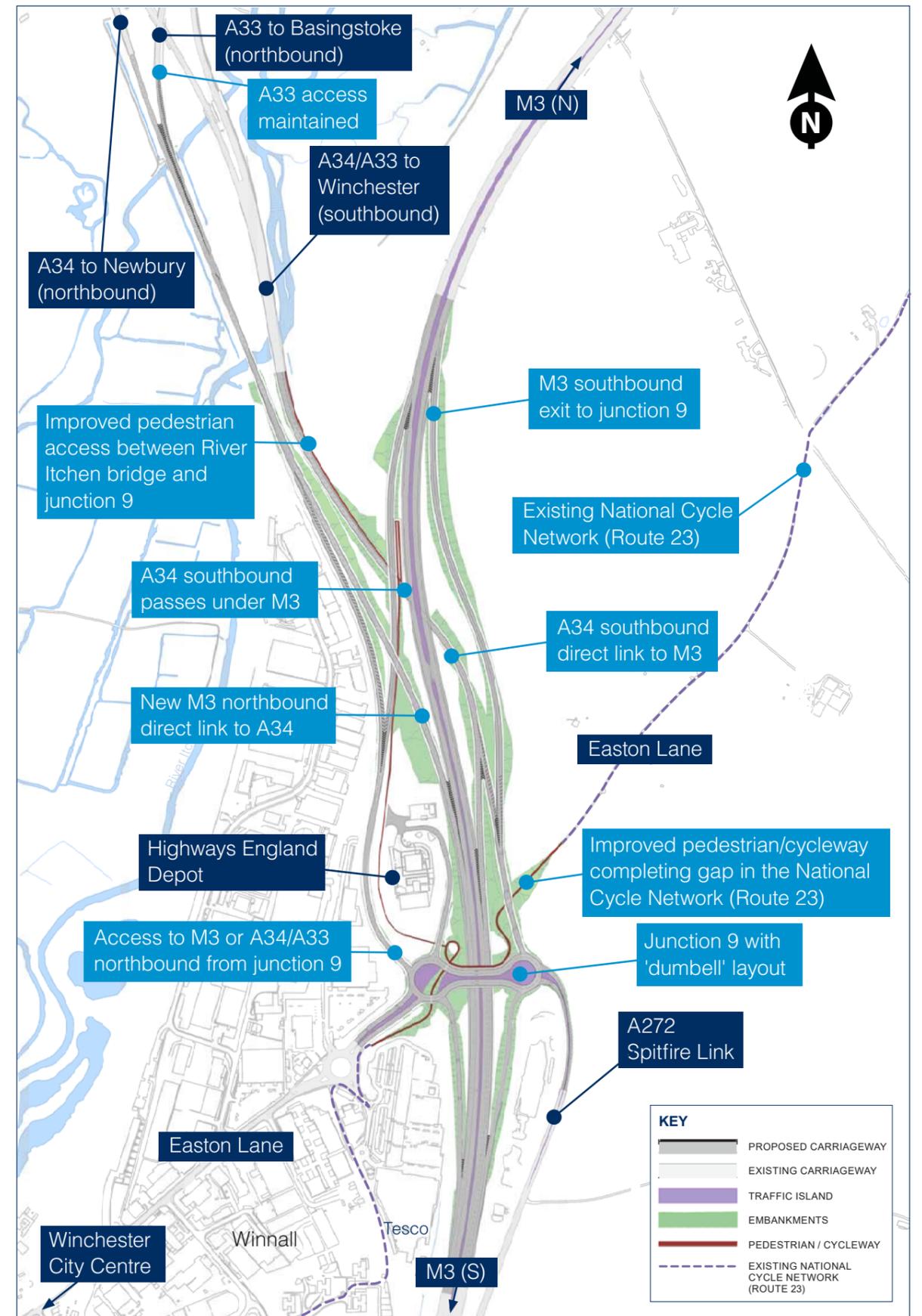
The following options were considered in detail alongside our proposal (Option 14).

Option	Description	Comments
Option 11	This option provides free-flow links between the A34 and M3 with the A34 southbound link passing under the M3 with a 70mph speed limit. Junction 9 would be rebuilt with a new roundabout layout.	Rejected due to the significant negative environmental effects resulting from the size of the option and the negative effects on the River Itchen and surrounds as well as demonstrating low value for money.
Option 16 (Incremental delivery of Option 14)	<p>Option 16 replicates the same end result as option 14. The only difference is that this approach was to break it down into 16B and 16C. The aim was to deliver it in two stages, with a period of time in between them where no work would be done.</p> <p>This first stage (Option 16B) provides a free-flow link for the A34 northbound. The southbound A34 would still use the existing A34 through the current junction 9 roundabout.</p> <p>The second stage (Option 16C) would aim to start by 2025. This second stage provides a free-flow for the A34 southbound, which has a 50mph speed limit. Junction 9 would be rebuilt with a new roundabout layout.</p>	This option meets the key objectives but was considered as a phased delivery to reduce construction impacts on the users. This was rejected as the impacts would not be significantly reduced and it was a very inefficient method of delivery.
Option 18	This was developed, to consider a reduced cost option of converting the current junction 9 layout to a roundabout with the southbound A34 running through the middle. This was considered to be affordable within the scheme budget and did not require any land take outside the highway boundary with minimum environmental impacts.	Rejected as the option is unlikely to have a significant effect on congestion and queuing traffic on the A34 and M3. It is also likely to make queuing worse on the A272 Spitfire Link and Easton Lane. As a result this option does not meet the key objectives.

Existing M3 junction 9 scheme map

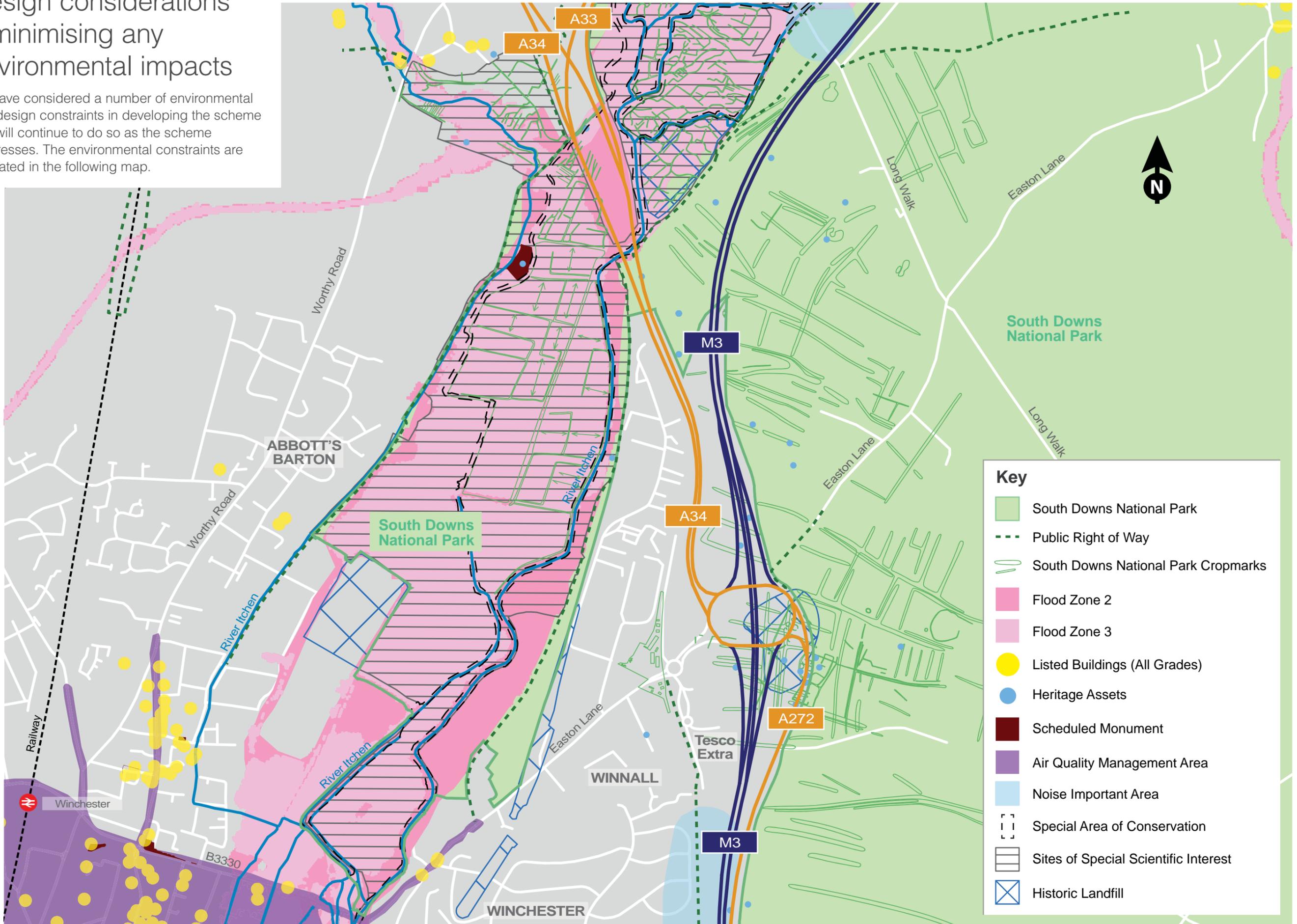


Proposed M3 junction 9 scheme map



Design considerations – minimising any environmental impacts

We have considered a number of environmental and design constraints in developing the scheme and will continue to do so as the scheme progresses. The environmental constraints are illustrated in the following map.



Potential benefits and impacts

The following table presents the likely benefits and effects of the proposal. Measures will be taken to avoid, reduce or offset any environmental impacts.

If you have different views or local information, please tell us in your questionnaire.

Consideration	Description
Residents and community	<p>We have sought to reduce the amount of agricultural land required to a minimum. Currently we anticipate that 10.5 hectares is needed to complete the proposed option.</p> <p>The proposal will maintain or improve access arrangements and crossing facilities for all road users.</p> <p>The proposals are not expected to have any effect on tourism or recreational facilities.</p>
Landscape	<p>The proposal requires additional land take and would be visually more prominent.</p> <p>The proposal is partially within the South Downs National Park but the effects are expected to be relatively small and localised.</p> <p>After mitigation measures have been put in place such as advance planting and considerate construction methods, the landscape and visual effects are predicted to be minor.</p>
Geology and Soils	<p>Construction works could potentially result in some disturbance of the Spitfire Link historic landfill site.</p> <p>The proposals are likely to have potential effects on geology, soils, construction workers, groundwater, surface water and ecology.</p> <p>Mitigation measures such as good practice design and construction methods will minimise these effects.</p>
Cultural heritage	<p>A number of heritage assets, as well as cropmarks (indicating potential buried archaeological features) are present within the scheme boundary.</p> <p>There is the potential for a minor adverse effect on the setting (surroundings) of some heritage assets.</p> <p>There is the potential for adverse effects to known and previously un-recorded buried archaeology, however these will be mitigated.</p> <p>Mitigation measures will include additional investigations and surveys and where appropriate adjustments to the design before construction starts.</p>

Water environment and flooding	<p>The River Itchen is adjacent to the scheme and is classed as a main river with a medium to high risk flood zone.</p> <p>Potential effects such as pollution and flooding to the River Itchen, groundwater resources and floodplain are not expected following mitigation measures.</p> <p>Mitigation measures include best practice construction methods such as the implementation of an erosion prevention and sediment control plan and a groundwater management plan.</p> <p>However, a small residual risk remains due to the proximity of the scheme to the River Itchen and its floodplain.</p>
Safety and effects on travellers	<p>The junction upgrade will have a beneficial effect on commuter journeys due to a reduction in congestion. The proposal will improve the traffic flow between the M3 and the A34.</p> <p>Separating the through-traffic from the traffic going into Winchester and reduced rat-running of traffic through Winchester will help local road network performance.</p> <p>Driver stress is likely to increase temporarily during construction works and while users get used to the new junction layout, after which stress should reduce.</p> <p>Users of public rights of way will likely be impacted due to temporary diversions or the potential closure of public rights of way during construction.</p> <p>Following completion of construction there will be improvements to the existing Public Rights of Way.</p> <p>The assessment of safety and effects on travellers is currently being progressed and the results will be available at our public information events.</p>
Nature conservation	<p>The proposal is close to the River Itchen which is a Site of Special Scientific Interest and Special Area of Conservation. It will be possible to minimise negative effects upon these designated sites through sensitive design and construction methods.</p> <p>Surveys have identified the presence of protected species such as hazel dormouse and common reptile species. The proposal has the potential to negatively affect protected species such as these. However, by replacing lost habitat and using sensitive construction measures it should ensure that the proposal can avoid negatively affecting protected species and in some cases could deliver overall benefits.</p>

Air quality	<p>The nearest Air Quality Management Area is approximately 600m west of the scheme. There are also a number of residences and schools that could be affected by changes in air quality.</p> <p>The air quality assessment is currently being progressed and the results will be available at our public information event.</p>
Noise	<p>The proposal lies in close proximity to a number of residences and schools and 3 Noise Important Areas (where noise is considered to be an important issue).</p> <p>The noise and vibration assessment is currently being progressed and the results will be available at the public information event.</p>

Relationships with other local projects

The M3 smart motorway project between junction 9 (Winchester/A34 interchange) and junction 14 (M27), linking with the smart motorway scheme on the M27, is planned for delivery during 2020-2021.

The M3 junction 9 scheme is working collaboratively with the M3 smart motorway project in order to reduce congestion during and after construction.

Public information events

You can find out more about the proposal at our public information events where we will be on hand to answer your questions.

Date	Time	Location	Address
Saturday 27 January 2018	10.30am – 4.00pm	Winchester Guildhall	The Broadway Winchester SO23 9GH
Wednesday 31 January 2018	2.00pm – 8.00pm		
Saturday, 10 February, 2018	10.30am – 4.00pm	Winnall Community Centre	Garbett Rd, Winchester SO23 0NY
Friday, 16 February, 2018	2.00pm – 8.00pm	Kings Worthy Community Centre	Fraser Rd, Kings Worthy, SO23 7PJ
Saturday, 17 February, 2018	10.30am – 4.00pm		

Locations to collect consultation material

You can find copies of the brochure and questionnaire at the following locations from 9 January 2018 until 20 February 2018, during their normal hours of opening:

Location	Address	Opening Times
Winchester Discovery Centre	Jewry Street, Winchester SO23 8SB	Weekdays 9am – 7pm, Saturday 9am – 5pm Sunday 11am – 3pm
Winchester Tourist Information Centre	Winchester Guildhall, High Street, Winchester SO23 9GH	Mon- Sat 10am – 5pm
Winchester City Council Customer Service Centre	Winchester City Council, City Offices, Colebrook Street, Winchester, SO23 9LJ	Mon - Thurs 8.30am – 5pm Friday 8.30am – 4.30pm
Kings Worthy Community Centre	Fraser Road, Kings Worthy SO23 7PJ	Only open during specific events
Winnall Community Centre	Winnall, SO23 0NY	Open during specific events
M3 Services Winchester	M3 between junctions 8 and 9 SO21 1PP	Anytime
A34 Services	Sutton Scotney SO21 3JY	Anytime
Tesco Extra	Easton Lane, Winnall, Winchester	During normal open hours

Development Consent Order application

Due to the nature and scale of the project, it is likely that it will be classed as a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP). This would mean that Highways England will apply for a Development Consent Order (DCO) to obtain the range of powers needed to construct and operate the M3 junction 9 improvement scheme.

Highways England will also carry out a further round of public consultation, which is a statutory requirement before applying for a DCO. The likely timeline is shown on page 14 but the full details will be explained in a Statement of Community Consultation, to be published on the scheme's webpage www.highways.gov.uk/m3j9 in advance of the consultation. The statutory consultation will include further details of the design, and a preliminary assessment of the environmental effects of the M3 junction 9 improvement scheme. This consultation will seek the views of the public, local authorities, and other stakeholders on further details of the scheme, to inform the DCO application.

It is anticipated that the DCO application will be submitted to the Planning Inspectorate in 2019. This will include a description of the scheme, a draft DCO setting out the range of legal powers being sought, an Environmental Statement, and a report describing the consultation that has taken place.

Development Consent Order examination and recommendation

Once Highways England has submitted the development consent order (DCO) application, the Planning Inspectorate will prepare for the examination. It will allow individuals and organisations to make representations and participate in the examination by registering as an interested party.

The Planning Inspectorate will also appoint an independent examiner (or panel) for the DCO application. The examination starts after the Preliminary Meeting, and normally takes up to 6 months. The examiner will consider written representations made by interested parties, seek further evidence and hold public hearings where required.

Following the examination, the examiner will produce a report and will recommend to government whether or not the scheme should proceed.

Highways England anticipates that the Planning Inspectorate will be able to report to government by autumn 2020 and that, subject to approval by the Secretary of State, it should be possible to begin construction during 2021.

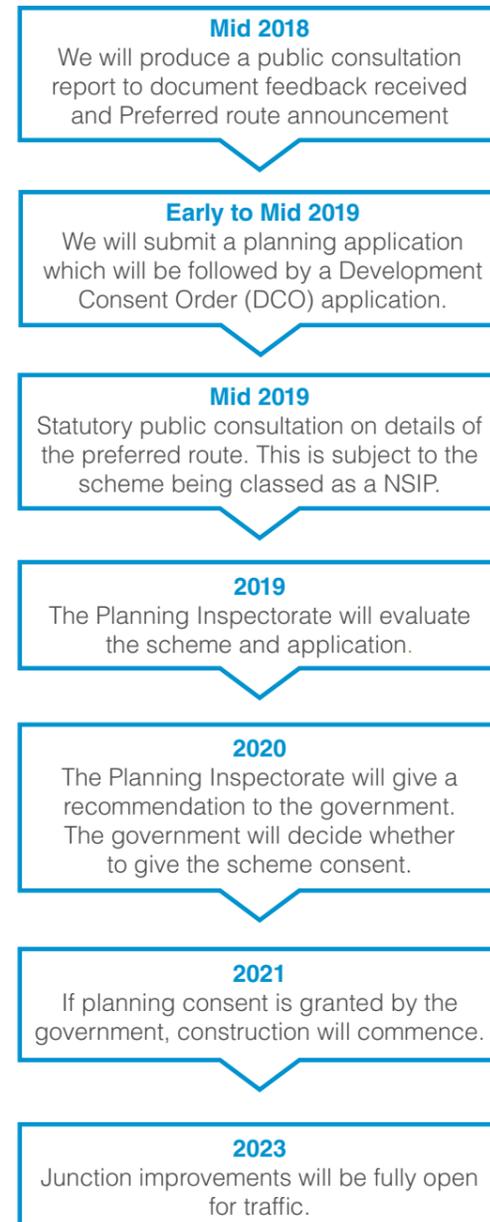
Construction of the entire scheme is expected to take approximately two years.

More information on the planning process and how you can get involved can be found on the Planning Inspectorate's website: <http://infrastructure.planningportal.gov.uk>

Scheme timeline of key events

Following a preferred route announcement, we will develop detailed proposals. This will include further surveys and investigations to allow us to design the scheme in more detail.

There will be another opportunity to have your say during a statutory public consultation on the design of the preferred route.



How to get involved

You can use the following methods:

- Complete the questionnaire and send it to us at: FREEPOST M3 JUNCTION 9
- Complete the questionnaire online at www.highways.gov.uk/m3j9
- Complete the questionnaire at a public information event.

We will publish our report in early summer 2018. This report will summarise the views and opinions expressed before 20 Feb 2018 from the public and other stakeholders and include recommendations for future stages of scheme development.

If you would like to contact the project team with any queries or would like the information in a different format, you can contact us by:

Emailing us at: M3junction9Improvements@highwaysengland.co.uk

Writing to us at: M3 junction 9, Highways England, Bridge House, 1 Walnut Tree Close, Guildford, GU1 4LZ

Call us at: 0300 123 5000 (24 hours)

The deadline for submitting responses to the consultation is **Monday 19 February 2018**.



If you need help accessing this or any other Highways England information, please call **0300 123 5000** and we will help you.

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This document is also available on our website at www.gov.uk/highways

If you have any enquiries about this publication email info@highwaysengland.co.uk or call **0300 123 5000***. Please quote the Highways England publications code **PR145/17**.

Highways England Creative GFD17_0022

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Registered office Bridge House, 1 Walnut Tree Close, Guildford GU1 4LZ
Highways England Company Limited registered in England and Wales number 09346363