M3 SMART Motorway Junction 2-4a

Consultation on the proposal to amend the permanent 50mph speed limit and variable speed limit zones on the westbound carriageway of the M3

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Executive summary

This statutory consultation gives interested parties an opportunity to comment on the amendment(by regulations under section 17(2) and (3) of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984) of the coverage of the both the fixed 50mph speed limit and the variable speed limit on the M3 westbound carriageway.

Furthermore a minor change in the reference point used to define the link road from the anti-clockwise carriageway of the M25 at junction 12 to the westbound carriageway of the M3. It should be noted that this change in reference point does not affect the application or extent of existing speed limits.

We are proposing to permanently amend the current 50mph zone to provide sufficient weaving length for heavy goods vehicles travelling on the M3 westbound carriageway (towards Southampton) and traffic from the M25 Thorpe Interchange merging onto the M3 westbound carriageway, to safely navigate to the nearside lanes in advance of the variable speed limit.

It is proposed that the fixed 50mph speed limit zone be extended by 1.05 km (0.65 miles), with the fixed 50mph speed limit zone terminating 0.5 km (0.31 miles) west of Bridge Lane Overbridge. In conjunction the variable speed limit will commence 0.2 km (0.12 miles) closer to junction 2. This is to ensure that the variable speed limit commences from the point the fixed 50mph speed limit zone ends.

A minor change is also proposed to the reference point defining the start of the M25 anti-clockwise link road to the M3 westbound carriageway, currently defined as “1.38 km south of Muckhatch Lane Overbridge” to be defined as “2.57 km south of the New Wickham Lane Overbridge”. This however does not affect the application or extent of existing speed limits.

The consultation at a glance

Scope	We are keen to have your comments regarding the amendment of the permanent fixed 50mph speed limit zone on the M3 motorway, on the westbound carriageway (travelling towards Southampton) following junction 2. The 50mph speed limit zone will be extended by 1.05 km (0.65 miles), with the fixed 50mph speed limit zone terminating 0.5 km (0.31 miles) west of Bridge Lane Overbridge. In conjunction the variable speed limit will commence 0.2 km (0.12 miles) closer to junction 2. This is to ensure that the variable speed limit commences following the end of the fixed 50mph speed limit zone. As shown in appendix A, on the Extents of fixed 50mph speed limit zone drawing. We are proposing to permanently amend the fixed 50mph zone to provide sufficient weaving length for heavy goods vehicles, travelling on the westbound M3 motorway (towards Southampton), to navigate to the nearside lanes following the M25 clockwise and anticlockwise link merges and in advance of the variable speed limit section of the network. The consultation will last for a period of 2 weeks commencing on 4 December 2017. The consultation will close on 18 December 2017. Please ensure responses arrive no later than that date. This consultation is solely regarding the following proposals: • Extend the fixed 50mph zone by 1.05Km further west to Junction 2 on the M3 westbound carriageway • Relocate the commencement of the variable speed limit, 0.2 km closer to junction 2 on the M3 westbound carriageway • Change the reference point used to define the link from the anti-clockwise carriageway of the M25 to the westbound carriageway of the M3
How to respond	Please email your consultation response using the consultation response form in appendix B to: M3Junction2to4aSmartMotorways@highwaysengland.co.uk Or alternatively you can send your response by post to: **Said Enany** **M3 Smart Motorway J2 to 4a** Highways England Bridge House 1 Walnut Tree Close Guildford Surrey, GU1 4LZ
After the consultation	All responses received within the consultation period will be considered and responded to as necessary. Following the end of the consultation period a summary report will be made available on the Highways England website, highwaysengland.citizenspace.com. The summary report will provide an analysis of responses received and the Highways England response. Subject to the results of the consultation, we envisage that the extension of both the speed limit zones will be amended as proposed in this consultation by the early part of 2018.

Background

The M3 between junction 2 and junction 4a is part of the primary strategic route linking London to the South West of England and previously most of the links carried traffic in excess of the traffic levels for which the road was designed. This resulted in congestion and delays to drivers. Highways England developed proposals and implemented smart motorway – all lanes running operating under mandatory variable speed limits between junctions 2 and 4a. The completed smart motorway scheme aimed to:

- Increase motorway capacity and reduce congestion;
- Smooth traffic flows;
- Provide more reliable journey times;
- Increase and improve the quality of information for the driver;
- Provide means of enforcement
- Maintain and, and where possible, improve current safety standards.

The smart motorway also introduced an improved layout between the M25 link roads merging into the M3 westbound carriageway at junction 2. This will smooth traffic flows and reduce congestion at this strategic interchange. To reflect this we are proposing these amendments as per the details in this consultation to ensure heavy goods vehicles travelling on the M3 westbound carriageway towards Southampton, continue to have sufficient weaving length to be able to safely navigate to the nearside lanes, ahead of the variable speed limit section of the network.

Proposed legislative changes

Subject to the outcome of the consultation, regulations will need to be made under section 17(2) and (3) of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 (‘the 1984 Act’).

The relevant legislative power in the 1984 Act permits the making of regulations that regulate the manner in which, and the conditions subject to which, all motorways may be used by traffic authorised to use such motorways, or specific motorways or sections of motorways.

Vehicles used for emergency services would be exempt from the proposed speed limits.

For a 2.35 km (1.46 miles) section on the M3 motorway around junction 2 on the westbound carriageway it will be an offence to use the motorway in contravention of regulations applying to the scheme made under section 17(2) and (3) of the 1984 Act.

Drivers of vehicles that pass a speed limit sign indicating that a speed limit other than the national speed limit applies, should obey that sign until the vehicle passes another sign indicating either that a new speed limit or the national speed limit applies.

Subject to the outcome of the consultation, the proposed regulations when made will apply in relation to the M3 motorway for a 2.35 km (1.46 mile) section of the westbound M3 carriageway around junction 2. The roads governed by the regulations will be set out in the statutory instrument.

The regulations would put in place the legislative framework required to operate a 2.35 km (1.46 mile) section of the westbound M3 motorway around junction 2 with a fixed speed limit of 50mph, in conjunction to the amended commencement of the variable speed limit zone.

Furthermore subject to the outcome of the consultation, the proposed regulation will amend the reference point used to define the start of the M25 anticlockwise link road at junction 12, currently defined as “1.38 km south of the Muckhatch Lane Overbridge” to be defined as “2.57 km metres south of the New Wickham Lane Overbridge”. This does not affect the application or extent of existing speed limits.

Frequently asked questions

Why do you need to reduce the speed on this section of the M3 to 50mph?

We are proposing to permanently extend an existing fixed 50mph zone to provide sufficient weaving length for heavy goods vehicles, travelling on the M3 westbound carriageway (towards Southampton), to safely navigate to the nearside lanes in advance of the variable speed limit section of the network.

Why have you amended the start point of the variable speed limit?

The variable speed limit will commence immediately following the end of the fixed 50mph speed limit. This is to ensure no confusion of the mandatory speed limit.

What effect does this have on journey times and journey time reliability?

None as it is not expected to affect journey times at all as it is an extension of existing speed restrictions. The recently implemented smart motorway upgrade on the M3 has increased the motorway capacity and reduced congestion providing smooth traffic flows and more reliable journey times. We are only proposing a very short extension of a 1.05km (0.65 miles) for a current permanent 50mph fixed speed limit and a 200m extension of the variable speed limit. Taking all of this into account the travelling public will not be disadvantaged from the proposed changes and will not notice any difference throughout their journey.

How are you going to enforce the speed limit?

These will be mandatory speed limits and will be enforced by the police in accordance with legislation.

Who can respond to this?

This consultation is available for anyone to respond to, including organisations that would be affected by the amendment of a mandatory 50mph and a variable speed limit. The consultation is aimed at interested stakeholder groups.

What happens next?

This consultation will run until 18 December 2017. Feedback collated during this period will then be considered, with a consultation report produced within four weeks of it ending. This report will provide an analysis of the feedback and Highways England's response to it.

Subject to the results of the consultation, it is envisaged the new speed limit will be in operation by the early part of 2018.

Appendix

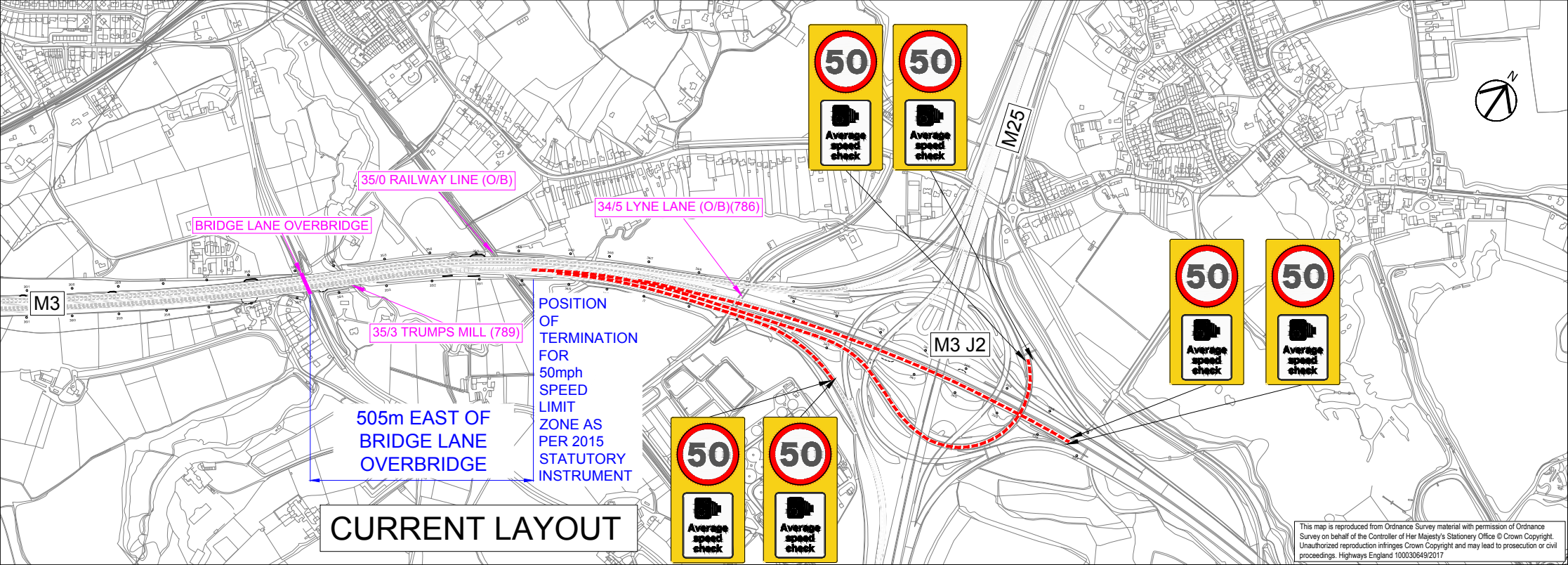
Appendix A - Extents of fixed 50mph speed limit zone drawing (47065129-URS-06-SK-ZZ-00.010-1I)

Appendix B - Consultation response form

Appendix C - List of statutory consultees

Appendix D - Government consultation principles

Appendix A - Extents of fixed 50mph speed limit zone drawing



CURRENT LAYOUT

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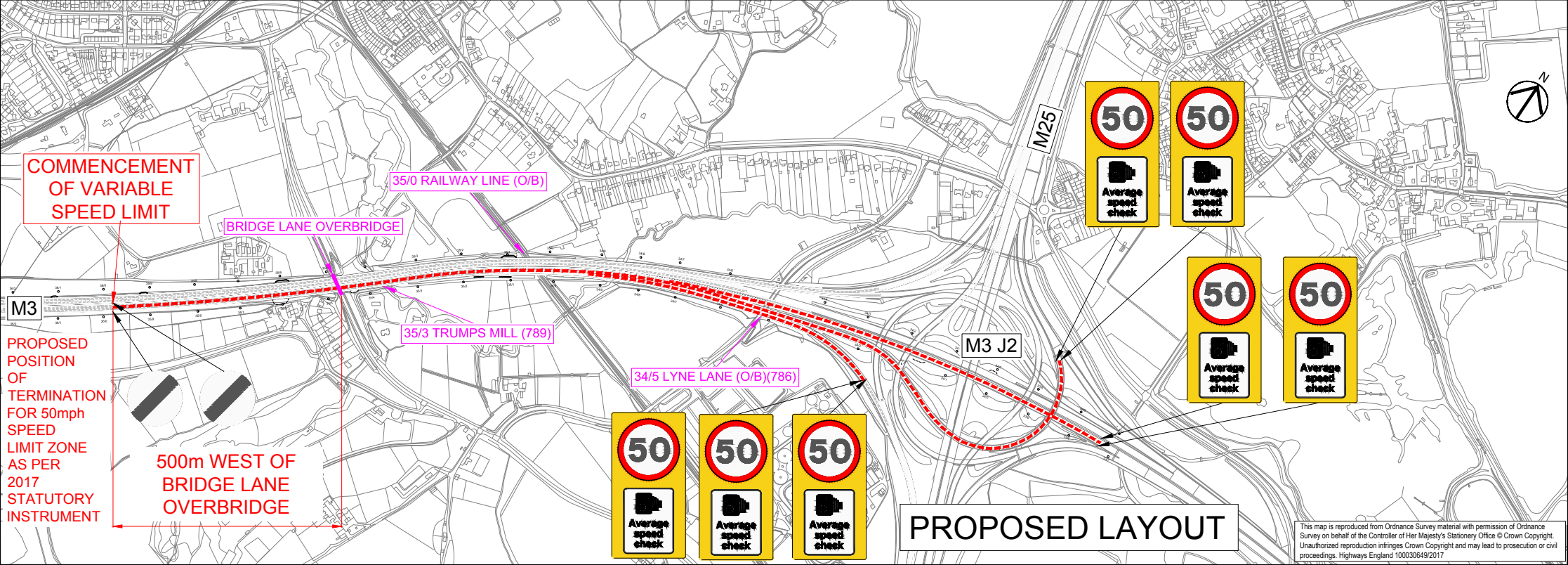
COMMENCEMENT OF VARIABLE SPEED LIMIT
35/0 RAILWAY LINE (O/B)
BRIDGE LANE OVERBRIDGE
M3
35/3 TRUMPS MILL (789)
34/5 LYNE LANE (O/B)(786)
M3 J2
M25
PROPOSED POSITION OF TERMINATION FOR 50mph SPEED LIMIT ZONE AS PER 2017 STATUTORY INSTRUMENT
500m WEST OF BRIDGE LANE OVERBRIDGE
50
Average speed check
PROPOSED LAYOUT
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Appendix B - Consultation response form

Proposal to extend the mandatory fixed speed limit of 50mph and the commencement of the variable speed limit on the westbound carriageway of the M3 motorway following junction 2

Please complete this form by 18 December 2017 and email it to:
M3Junction2to4aSmartMotorways@highwaysengland.co.uk

Alternatively post it to:

Said Enany
M3 Smart Motorway J2 to 4a
Highways England
Bridge House
1 Walnut Tree Close
Guildford
Surrey, GU1 4LZ

Part 1 – Information about you

Completion of this section is optional but helps with our analysis of results. A note at the end of this form explains that we may be obliged to release information if asked to do so.

Name	
Address	
Postcode	
Email	
Company name or organisation	

Please tick one box from the list below that best describes you/your company or organisation.

	Small to medium enterprise (up to 50 employees)
	Large company
	Representative organisation
	Trade union
	Interest group
	Local government
	Central government
	Police
	Member of the public
	Other (please describe)

If you are responding on behalf of an organisation or interest group how many members do you have and how did you obtain the views of your members.

If you would like your response or personal details to be treated confidentially, please explain why.

Part 2 - Response to the Proposal

Do you have any concerns or feedback to offer regarding the plan to extend the 50mph fixed speed limit and the commencement of the variable speed limit on the westbound carriageway on the M3 motorway following junction 2 or on the changes in respect of the M25 link road reference point?	**Yes**	
	No	
Please add any comments:		

Space for additional comments:

Notes on the disclosure of information

Information provided in response to this consultation, including personal information, may be subject to publication or disclosure in accordance with the access to information regimes (these are primarily the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA), the Data Protection Act 1998 (DPA) and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004).

If you want any information that you provide to be treated as confidential, please be aware that under the FOIA, there is a statutory Code of Practice with which public authorities must comply and which deals, amongst other things, with obligations of confidence.

For more information about what information can be requested under the FOIA, see: https://ico.org.uk/for-the-public/official-information

Highways England will process your personal data in accordance with the DPA and in the majority of circumstances this will mean that your personal data will not be disclosed to third parties.

Appendix C - List of statutory consultees

Government bodies	
Chief Executive DVSA Berkeley House Croydon Street Bristol BS5 0DA	MOD DE&S Secretariat Ministry of Defence Maple 0a, #2043 MOD Abbey Wood Bristol BS34 8JH
Chief Executive Local Government Association Local Government House Smith Square London SW1P 3HZ	Chairman The Crown Estate 6 Bell's Brae Edinburgh EH4 3BJ
Core responders / legal	
National Police Chiefs Council 1st Floor 10 Victoria St London SW1H 0NN	The Association of Ambulance Chief Executives 32 Southwark Bridge Road London SE1 9EU
Chief Constable British Transport Police Force HQ 25 Camden Road London NW1 9LN	Executive Director Magistrates' Association 28 Fitzroy Square London W1P 6DD
The President Chief Fire Officers Association 9-11 Pebble Close Amington Tamworth Staffordshire B77 4RD	The Chairman Police Federation 15/17 Langley Road Surbiton KT6 6LP
Chief Constable Ministry of Defence Police 5th Floor, Zone A Main Building Whitehall London SW1A 2HB	Chief Constable Ministry of Defence Police 5th Floor, Zone A Main Building Whitehall London SW1A 2HB
The President Police Superintendents Association of England and Wales 67a Reading Road Pangbourne Berkshire RG8 7JD	Regimental Secretary RHQ RMP Defence Police College Policing and Guarding Postal Point 38 Southwick Park Fareham Hants PO17 6EJ

Justices Clerk Society Port of Liverpool Building Pier Head Liverpool L3 1BY	Ambulance Services Association Friars House 157-168 Blackfriars London SE1 8EU
Association of Police Officers (ACPO) PO Box 481 Fareham Hampshire PO14 9FS	Hampshire Police Police Headquarters West Hill Romsey Road Winchester Hampshire SO22 5DB
Surrey Police Roads Policing Unit, Operational Support Division Bretlands Road Chertsey KT16 9QN	South East Coast Ambulance Service The Horseshoe Bolters Lane Banstead SM7 2AS
Surrey Fire and Rescue Service 70 Wray Park Rd Croydon Rd Reigate RH2 0EJ	
Environmental organisations	
Chief Executive Environment Agency South East Regional Office Kings Meadow House Kings Meadow Road Reading RG1 8DQ	Chief Executive Natural England 1 East Parade Sheffield S1 2ET
Road user / safety organisations	
The Chairman AIRSO 68 The Boulevard Worthing BN13 1LA	The Chairman Alliance of British Drivers P O Box 248 MANCHESTER M41 4BW
The Chairman Parliamentary Advisory Council for Transport Safety (PACTS) Clutha House 10 Storey's Gate London SW1P 3AY	The Chairman British Motorcycle Federation 3 Oswin Road Brailsford Industrial Estate Braunstone Leicester LE3 1HR
The Chair Disabled Persons Transport Advisory Committee 2/17 Great Minster House 33 Horseferry Road London SW1P 4DR	Chief Executive Health and Safety Executive Rose Court 2 Southwark Bridge London SE1 9HS

Chief Executive Freight Transport Association Hermes House St John's Road Tunbridge Wells Kent TN4 9UZ	The Chairman Institute of Road Safety Officers IRSO Head Office 12 Haddon Close Wellingborough Northamptonshire NN8 5ZB
The Chairman Institute of Advanced Motorists IAM House 510 Chiswick High Road London W4 5RG	The Chair Motorcycle Industry Trainers Association 1 Rye Hill Office Park Birmingham Road Allesley Coventry CV5 9AB
The Chairman Motorcycle Action Group Central Office P.O. Box 750 Warwick CV34 9FU	Chief Executive National Express Ltd 51 Bordesley Green Bordesley Birmingham B9 4BZ
The Chairman PACTS Office F18 The Media Centre 7 Northumberland Street Huddersfield HD1 1RL	The Chairman RAC Foundation 89-91 Pall Mall London SW1Y 5HS
The Chief Executive Road Haulage Association Roadway House Bretton Way Bretton Peterborough PE3 8DD	The Chairman Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents RoSPA House 28 Calthorpe Road Edgbaston Birmingham B15 1RP
The Chief Executive Campaign For Better Transport 16 Waterside 44-48 Wharf Road London N1 7UX	The Chief Executive Disabled Motoring UK National Headquarters Ashwellthorpe Norwich NR16 1EX
Parliamentary Advisory Council for Transport Safety (PACTS) Clutha House 10 Storey’s Gate London SW1 3AY	

Vehicle recovery operators	
Operations Manager RAC Motoring Services RAC House Brockhurst Crescent Walsall WS5 4QZ	Road Operations Director The Automobile Association Ltd Norfolk House Priestly Road Basingstoke Hampshire RG24 9NY
Chief Executive Association of Vehicle Recovery Operators AVRO House 1 Bath Street Rugby CV21 3JF	Managing Director Britannia Rescue Freepost RSJA-XLCX-BLCE Folly Hall Mills St Thomas Road Huddersfield HD1 3LT
Network Operations Manger Green Flag Green Flag House Cote Lane Pudsey Leeds LS3 5GF	Chief Executive Institute of Vehicle Recovery Operators Top Floor Bignell House Horton Road West Drayton Middlesex UB7 8EJ
The Director National Tyre Distributors Association 8 Temple Square Aylesbury Buckinghamshire HP20 2QH	The President Road Rescue Recovery Association Hubberts Bridge Rd Kirton Holme Boston Lincolnshire PE20 1TW
Chief Executive VOSA Berkeley House Croydon Street Bristol BS5 0DA	
Business organisations	
The Chairman Business West Leigh Court Abbots Leigh Bristol BS8 3RA	The Chairman Association of British Insurers 51 Gresham Street London EC2V 7HQ

Chief Executive British Insurance Brokers' Association 8th Floor John Stow House 18 Bevis Marks London EC3A 7JB	The President Institute of Civil Engineers One Great George Street Westminster London SW1P 3AA
Chief Executive The Chartered Institution of Highways and Transportation 119 Britannia Walk London N1 7JE	Chief Executive The Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport Earlstrees Court Earlstrees Road Corby Northants NN17 4AX
Chief Executive Motor Insurers' Bureau Linford Wood House 6-12 Capital Drive Linford Wood Milton Keynes MK14 6XT	South West Director CBI South West Innovation Centre University of Exeter Rennes Drive EX4 4RN
Local government	
Hampshire County Council The Castle Winchester Hampshire SO23 8UJ	Runnymede Borough Council Runnymede Civic Centre Station Road Addlestone Surrey KT15 2AH
Rushmoor Borough Council Council Offices Knowle Green Staines-upon-Thames TW18 1XB	Surrey Heath Borough Council Surrey Heath House Knoll Road Camberley Surrey GU15 3HD

Appendix D - Government consultation principles

We are conducting this consultation in accordance with the government's consultation principles: Consultation principles 2016

A. Consultations should be clear and concise Use plain English and avoid acronyms. Be clear what questions you are asking and limit the number of questions to those that are necessary. Make them easy to understand and easy to answer. Avoid lengthy documents when possible and consider merging those on related topics.

B. Consultations should have a purpose Do not consult for the sake of it. Ask departmental lawyers whether you have a legal duty to consult. Take consultation responses into account when taking policy forward. Consult about policies or implementation plans when the development of the policies or plans is at a formative stage. Do not ask questions about issues on which you already have a final view.

C. Consultations should be informative. Give enough information to ensure that those consulted understand the issues and can give informed responses. Include validated assessments of the costs and benefits of the options being considered when possible; this might be required where proposals have an impact on business or the voluntary sector.

D. Consultations are only part of a process of engagement. Consider whether informal iterative consultation is appropriate, using new digital tools and open, collaborative approaches. Consultation is not just about formal documents and responses. It is an on-going process.

E. Consultations should last for a proportionate amount of time. Judge the length of the consultation on the basis of legal advice and taking into account the nature and impact of the proposal. Consulting for too long will unnecessarily delay policy development. Consulting too quickly will not give enough time for consideration and will reduce the quality of responses.

F. Consultations should be targeted. Consider the full range of people, business and voluntary bodies affected by the policy, and whether representative groups exist. Consider targeting specific groups if appropriate. Ensure they are aware of the consultation and can access it. Consider how to tailor consultation to the needs and preferences of particular groups, such as older people, younger people or people with disabilities that may not respond to traditional consultation methods.

G. Consultations should take account of the groups being consulted. Consult stakeholders in a way that suits them. Charities may need more time to respond than businesses, for example. When the consultation spans all or part of a holiday period, consider how this may affect consultation and take appropriate mitigating action.

H. Consultations should be agreed before publication Seek collective agreement before publishing a written consultation, particularly when consulting on new policy proposals. Consultations should be published on gov.uk.

I. Consultation should facilitate scrutiny. Publish any response on the same page on gov.uk as the original consultation, and ensure it is clear when the government has responded to the consultation. Explain the responses that have been received from consultees and how these have informed the policy. State how many responses have been received.

J. Government responses to consultations should be published in a timely fashion. Publish responses within 12 weeks of the consultation or provide an explanation why this is not possible. Where consultation concerns a statutory instrument publish responses before or at the same time as the instrument is laid, except in exceptional circumstances. Allow appropriate time between closing the consultation and implementing policy or legislation.

K. Consultation exercises should not generally be launched during local or national election periods. If exceptional circumstances make a consultation absolutely essential (for example, for safeguarding public health), departments should seek advice from the Propriety and Ethics team in the Cabinet Office.

If you have reason to believe this consultation document does not comply with these consultation principles, please write to our consultation co-ordinator at the address on this page, setting out the areas where you believe this paper does not meet the criteria.

Andy Johnson
Highways England
The Cube
199 Wharfside Street
Birmingham
B1 1RN

Or alternatively email

andy.johnson@highwaysengland.co.uk

Further information about the consultation principles can be located on the Gov.uk website:
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/consultation-principles-guidance

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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or email **psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk**.

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