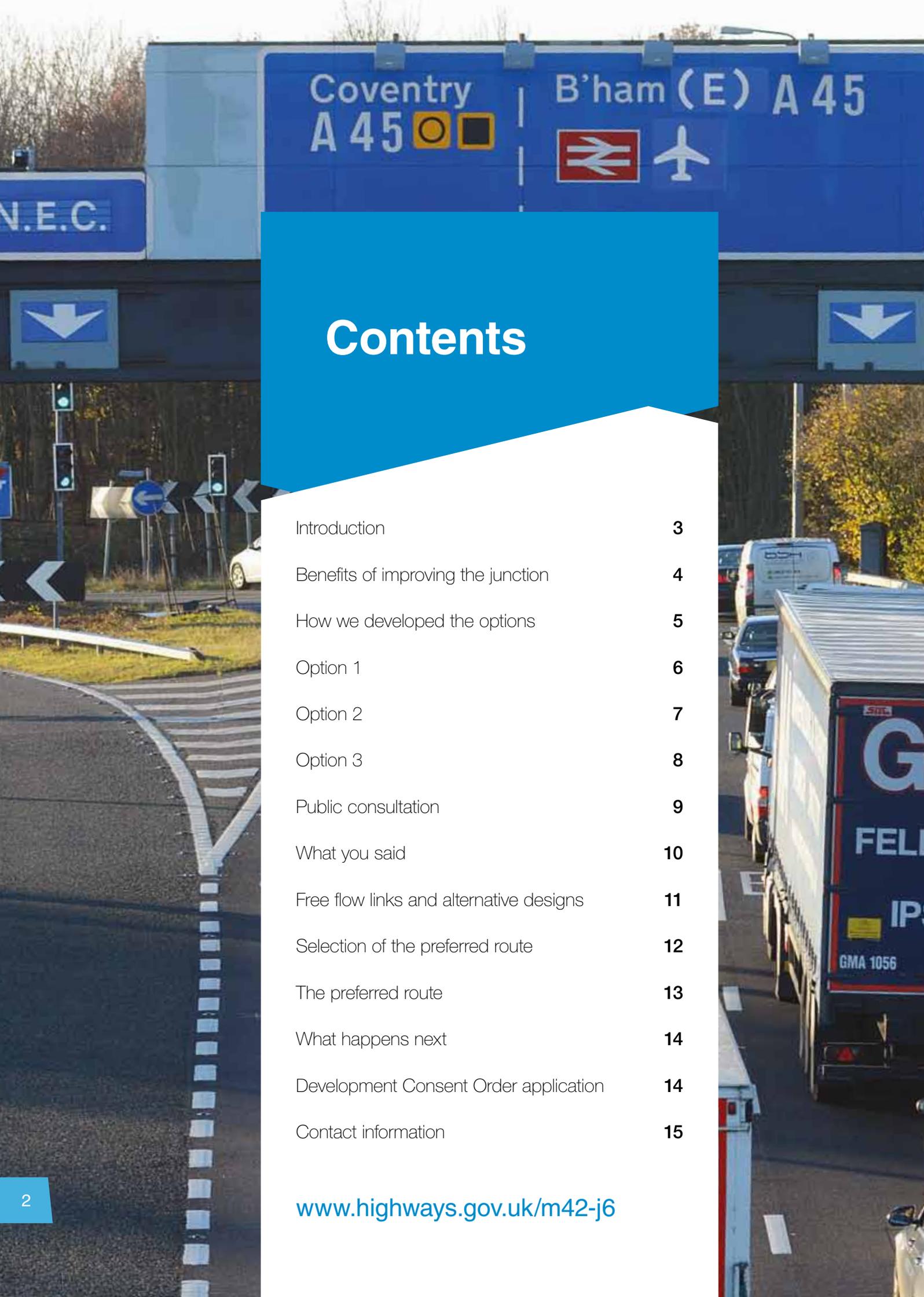


M42 junction 6 Improvement scheme

Preferred route announcement

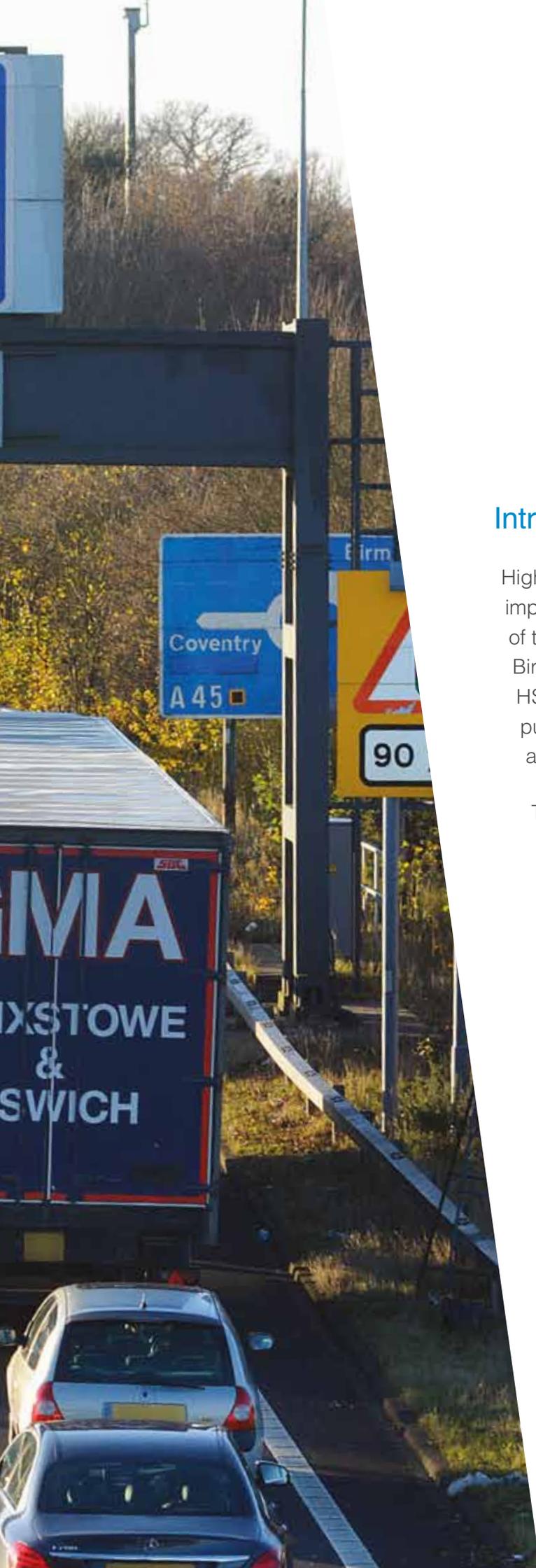




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www.highways.gov.uk/m42-j6



Introduction

Highways England developed a number of options to improve junction 6 of the M42 to allow better movement of traffic on and off the A45, supporting access to Birmingham Airport and preparing capacity for the new HS2 station. Three viable options were promoted at a public consultation, held between 9 December 2016 and 27 January 2017.

The public consultation was held to seek the views of local residents, businesses and other key stakeholders on our proposals to improve junction 6 of the M42.

This leaflet summarises the results from the public consultation, and outlines the preferred route, which will be taken forward through the planning process.

Benefits of improving the junction

M42 junction 6 lies at the heart of an area of dynamic growth and is surrounded by a unique mix of existing and proposed major assets that serve both the local and wider economy. Current levels of congestion are having a serious effect on communities and businesses and would constrain future development planned in the area.

Improving the junction will:

- **Promote the safe and reliable operation of the road network**

The scheme will improve the safety of the network by providing additional capacity, reducing driver stress and enabling safer access to and from the motorway.

- **Increase the capacity of the junction**

The scheme will improve traffic flow by removing a significant amount of vehicles from the roundabout at junction 6.

- **Improve access to key businesses**

M42 junction 6 provides connections between the national motorway network, and the A45 Coventry Road, which provides strategic access to Birmingham (to the west) and Coventry (to the east). It provides the main access to an expanding Birmingham Airport, Birmingham International railway station and Jaguar Land Rover, the National Exhibition Centre (NEC) and the planned HS2 station, Birmingham Interchange.

- **Support economic growth**

Current congestion and journey time reliability issues on the M42 and at junction 6 are significant constraints to future investment and economic growth. An improvement to the junction will encourage continued investment in the regional economy and support new corporate, commercial and residential development opportunities, for example the proposals by the Urban Growth Company for a mixed use development immediately north east of the junction, which will maximise the benefits HS2 can bring to the region.



How we developed the options

To identify the options we presented at the public consultation, we went through the following 3 stages.

Stage 1

We identified 40 options which would meet our objectives for the scheme.

40 options

A high level assessment was undertaken and six themes remained.

Stage 2

The 6 themes were then assessed in more detail to identify viable options to take to public consultation.

Theme 1
North and south junctions



Discounted

Theme 2
Southern junction



Taken forward

Theme 3
Southern junction with link to HS2



Discounted

Theme 4
Interchange



Discounted

Theme 5
Northern junction



Discounted

Theme 6
Free flow left turns



Taken forward

Stage 3

This work identified that the only viable solution is to have a new junction to the south with a connection to the A45 Clock Interchange. We have identified three options to match this solution. In addition, one or more free flow left turns at M42 junction 6 could be included with these options.

Option 1

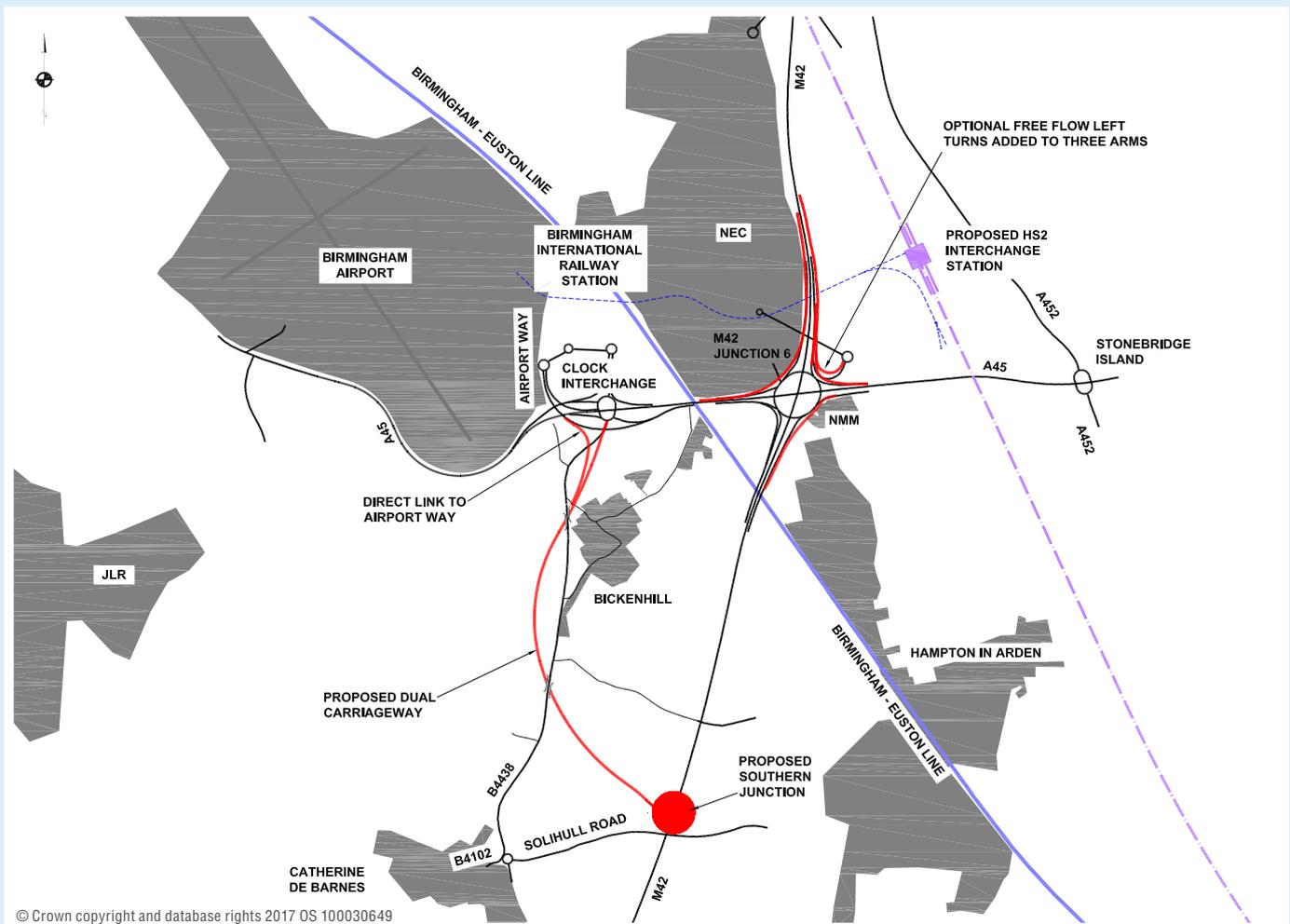
Option 2

Option 3

These 3 options are detailed on the following pages.

Option 1

Link to the west of Bickenhill

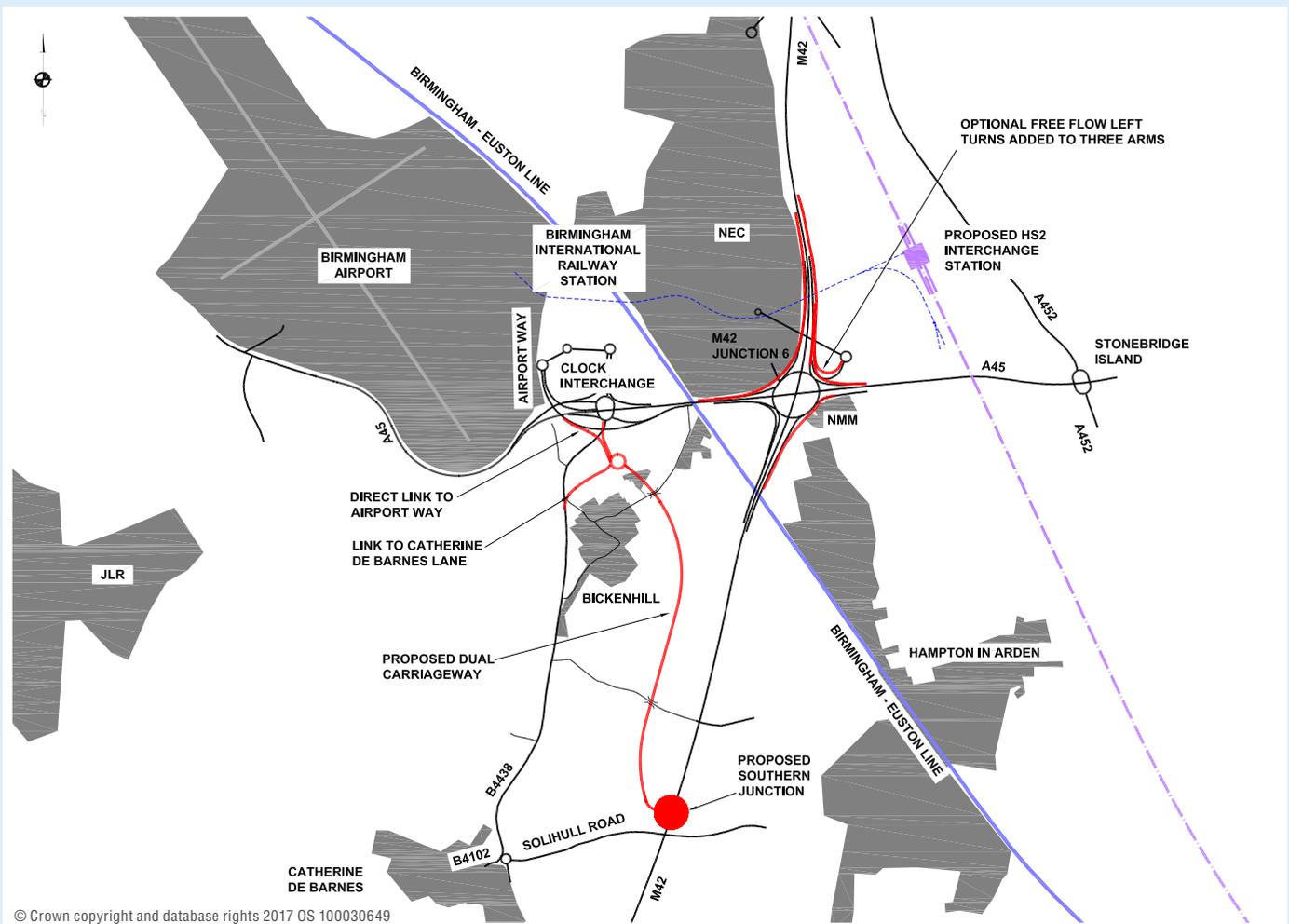


This option, as shown at the public consultation, would provide a new 2.4 kilometre dual carriageway link between the Clock Interchange and an all movements junction allowing north and south access to the M42 north of Solihull Road.

The new dual carriageway would be to the west of Bickenhill and would generally be below ground level and pass beneath the B4438 (Catherine de Barnes Lane), near Bickenhill and towards the M42.

Option 2

Link to the east of Bickenhill

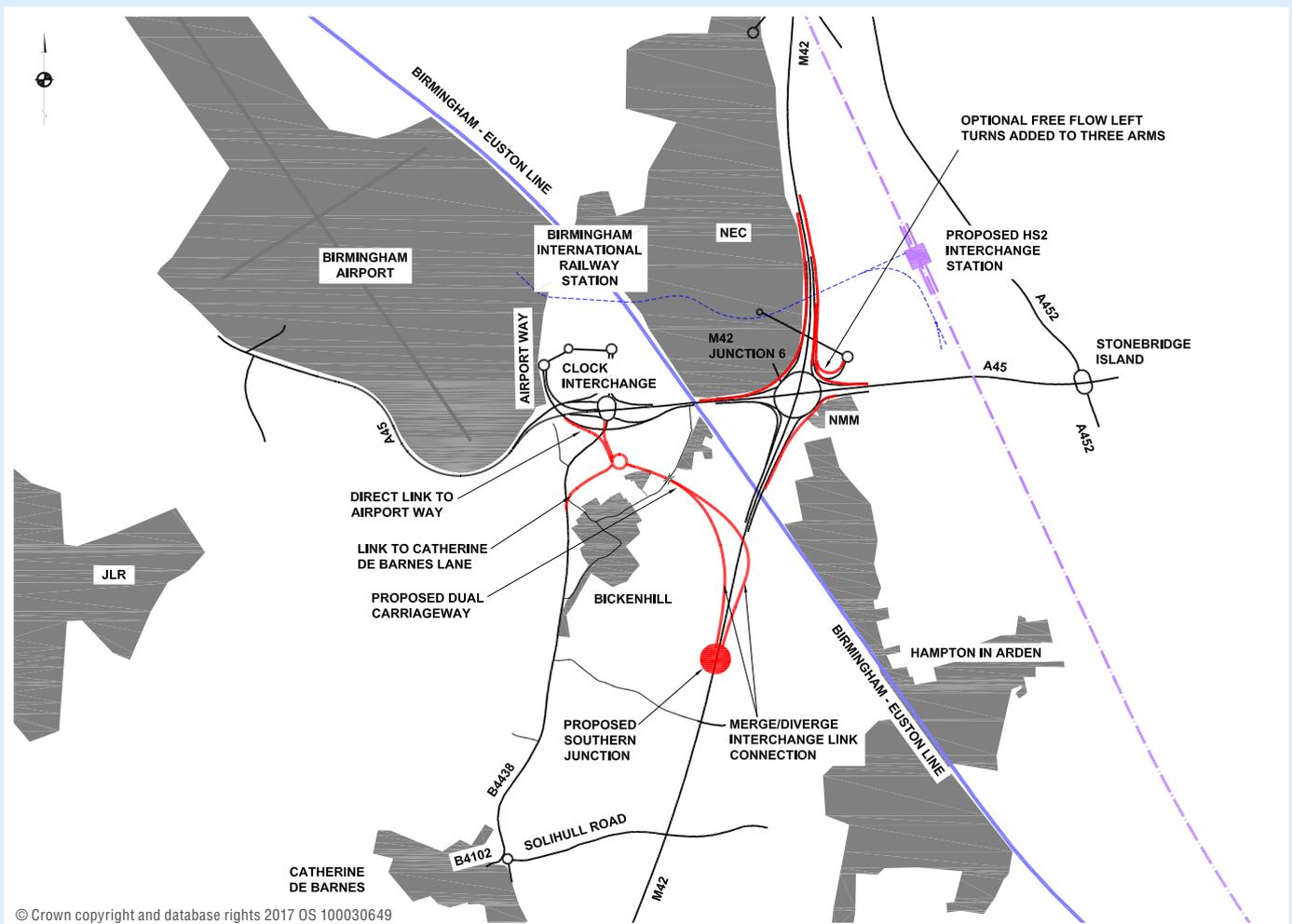


This option, as shown at the public consultation, would provide a new 2.3 kilometre dual carriageway link between the Clock Interchange and an all movements junction allowing north and south access to the M42 north of Solihull Road.

The new dual carriageway would be to the east of Bickenhill and pass beneath Church Lane before returning to existing levels north of Shadowbrook Lane.

Option 3

Link to the east of Bickenhill



This option, as shown at the public consultation, would provide a new 1.6 kilometre dual carriageway link between the Clock Interchange and a restricted movements junction with the M42 north of Shadowbrook Lane.

The new dual carriageway would be to the east of Bickenhill and pass beneath Church Lane before rising on an embankment to cross the M42 on a large bridge. The alignment would minimise the effect on the landscape as it is closer to the existing M42 corridor.

The new link would be to the east of Bickenhill and pass beneath Church Lane before returning to existing levels north of Shadowbrook Lane.

Public consultation

We ran a 7 week public consultation with these options from 9 December 2016 to 27 January 2017 to get feedback on our proposals. We wanted to inform all those affected by or interested in the scheme and give them the opportunity to provide their views.

To support this we:

- Held eight exhibitions, including an exhibition in Bickenhill, to maximise our interaction with the local people who will be most affected by the scheme
- Held one live webchat
- Attended a number of meetings with stakeholders to discuss the options we were presenting
- Sent letters about the consultation events to more than 2000 local residents, businesses, landowners, key organisations and community groups
- Displayed posters advertising the consultation at key locations
- Produced a consultation brochure and questionnaire, which was available on the scheme webpage, at all consultation events and all public libraries within Solihull Borough
- Publicised the consultation via social media, local media, in Solihull Council's residents' magazine and on the Highways England website

A total of 298 people visited the exhibitions and we received 217 responses. 182 of these respondents had completed a questionnaire and 35 had submitted their response as a letter or email.



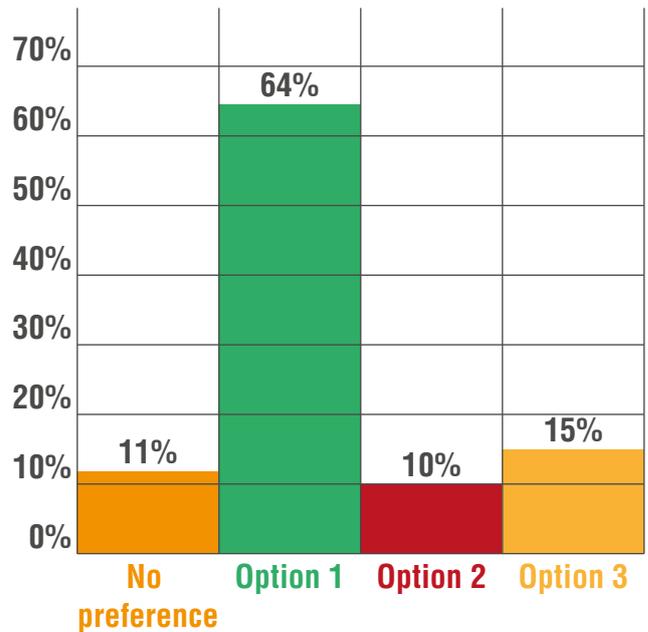
What you said

Q: To what extent do you agree or disagree that the M42 junction 6 needs improving?



43% Strongly agree
28% Agree
13% Neither
6% Disagree
10% Strongly disagree

Q: Which option do you prefer?

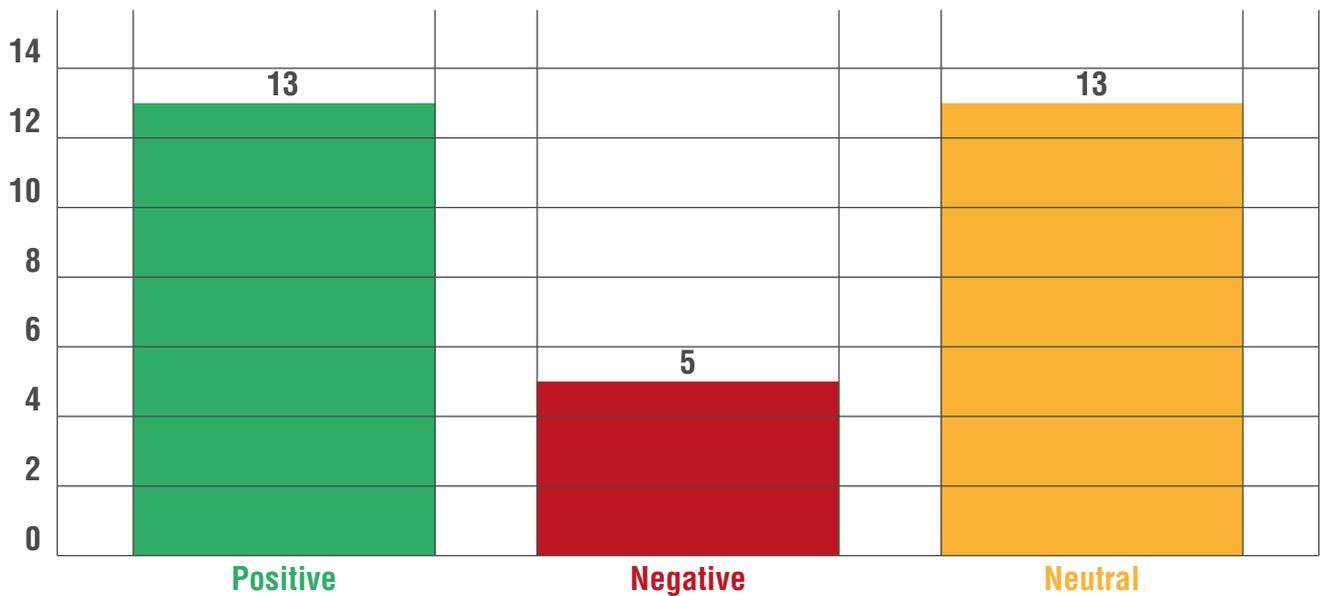


A: Overall, 64% preferred Option 1, 15% preferred Option 3 and 10% preferred Option 2, with 11% giving no preference.

A: 71% of the respondents agreed there was a need to improve the junction.

Free flow links and alternative designs

Breakdown of comments in consultation responses on freeflow left turns - broken down by sentiment



Free flow links

The consultation brochure included information on optional free flow left turns at M42 junction 6, which could be added to any of the 3 options. These received a variety of comments in responses. The graph above shows the breakdown of these by sentiment. The majority of responses were either positive or neutral towards the addition of free flow links.

Alternative designs

A number of respondents suggested changes and alternatives to the possible options presented at the consultation. An examination of the alternative design suggestions concluded that they were generally similar to those previously assessed and taken into account as part of the work during the options identification process, or did not fulfil the scheme brief.

Selection of the preferred route

Following the public consultation, we have continued to develop the options taking into account comments and issues raised during the consultation. This included looking at mitigation we can put in place to benefit the environment and local communities from the impact of the scheme.

When identifying the preferred route we considered a number of criteria, including the scheme objectives, benefits, safety, costs, environmental effects, construction and the public consultation results.

Our assessment of the options demonstrated Option 1 was preferred by stakeholders and most of the local community, and had a lesser impact on the built environment and green belt than the other options. Option 1 would support potential future development in the area, which could be realised with minimal disruption to the travelling public.

While Option 3 was slightly cheaper and provided a better economic return, it also had greater impact on the local community, stakeholders and environment.

Our assessment demonstrated that a slightly modified version of Option 1 would provide the best performing route overall by minimising the impact on local communities and a nearby Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), while maximising the resilience and performance of the road network so it can cope with future traffic increases.

The proposed modification to Option 1 moves it up to 50m closer to Bickenhill as it passes the south west corner of the village, in order to minimise the impact on a local business and the SSSI.



The preferred route



- A new dual carriageway link between the Clock Interchange and a new junction on the M42 north of Solihull Road allowing traffic travelling northbound to exit the M42 and traffic travelling southbound to join the M42
- The new dual carriageway would be to the west of Bickenhill and would generally be below ground level and pass beneath the B4438 (Catherine de Barnes Lane), at both the north west and south west corners of Bickenhill
- Improvements will be made to the Clock Interchange and the A45 between the Clock Interchange and the M42
- Free flow links will be provided around the north west and north east of the M42 junction 6
- Improvements will also be included on the south east side of the M42 junction 6, the A45 westbound (east of the M42 junction 6) and the M42 junction 6 southbound slip roads to improve the performance around this quadrant of the junction

What happens next

The preferred route announcement will allow land in the vicinity of the scheme to be protected from development.

During the next stage of the project, we will develop the detailed design. We will be looking for input from various stakeholders, and we will be inviting the public to provide feedback on our preferred route via Commonplace, an online platform launching later in August 2017. Sharing your views using this platform will provide us with early valuable insight as we begin our design. Visit our website to find out more.

Following this work, we will hold a further public consultation so that people can have their say on the detail of the project, which will have been developed taking into account insight gathered.

Development Consent Order application

This scheme is classed as a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP) under the Planning Act 2008. As such, we are required to make an application for a Development Consent Order (DCO) to obtain permission to construct the scheme.

After the public consultation, we will prepare the draft Development Consent Orders and environmental statement ahead of submitting the formal planning application in mid-2018.

The application will be made to the Planning Inspectorate, who will examine the application in public hearings and then make a recommendation to the Secretary of State for Transport, who will decide on whether or not the project will go ahead.

More information about the Development Consent Order process can be found on the Planning Inspectorates Website:

<http://infrastructure.planningportal.gov.uk>

M42 junction 6 Improvement scheme

Preferred route announcement





Contact information

The Report on Public Consultation, Technical Appraisal Report and Scheme Assessment Report are available to view from the project website (www.highways.gov.uk/m42-j6). In addition, copies of the Report on Public Consultation will be available for view at Solihull libraries.

- If you have any further enquiries, please write to us:

Highways England, M42 J6 Project Team
The Cube, 199 Wharfside Street
Birmingham
B1 1RN

You can also:

- go online www.highways.gov.uk/m42-j6
- email m42junction6@highwaysengland.co.uk
- call us on 0300 123 5000



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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