

A303 Sparkford to Ilchester Dualling Scheme TR010036

5.1 Consultation Report

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**The Infrastructure Planning
(Applications: Prescribed
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A303 Sparkford to Ilchester Dualling Scheme
Development Consent Order 201[x]

CONSULTATION REPORT

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1 Introduction

1.1 Purpose of this document

- 1.1.1 This Consultation Report relates to the A303 Sparkford to Ilchester Dualling scheme. In seeking the legal powers to construct the scheme, Highways England is making an application for a Development Consent Order (DCO) to the Secretary of State. Section 37(3)(c) of the Planning Act 2008 (PA 2008) requires Highways England to submit this Consultation Report as part of our application.
- 1.1.2 The scheme meets the criteria to be considered as a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project under the PA 2008 and the Highway and Railway (Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project) Order 2013. The scheme is a 'highways' Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project under section 22(5) of the PA 2008 (as amended) as it is a highways construction scheme that is wholly within England, where the Secretary of State is the highway authority and the alteration of the highway will be greater than 12.5 hectares.
- 1.1.3 Highways England recognises the importance of consulting on proposed development at an early stage in scheme development, and the benefits this can bring in terms of delivering an improved scheme. This Consultation Report will explain how we have complied with the consultation requirements set out in the PA 2008. Guidance about the report and the pre-application process, including statutory consultation, is found in the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government's document *Planning Act 2008: guidance on the pre-application process (March 2015)* (MHCLG pre-application guidance).
- 1.1.4 Its primary function is to provide evidence to the Planning Inspectorate (PINS) about Highways England's compliance with the requirements of the pre-application procedure.
- 1.1.5 As stated in MHCLG pre-application guidance, the Consultation Report should:
- "Provide a general description of the consultation process undertaken, which can helpfully include a timeline;
 - Set out specifically what the applicant has done in compliance with the requirements of the Planning Act, relevant secondary legislation, this guidance, and any relevant policies, guidance or advice published by Government or the Inspectorate;
 - Set out how the applicant has taken account of any response to consultation with local authorities on what should be in the applicant's

Statement of Community Consultation (SoCC);

- Set out a summary of relevant responses advising to consultation (but not a complete list of responses);
- Provide a description of how the application was informed and influenced by those responses, outlining any changes made as a result and showing how significant relevant responses will be addressed;
- Provide an explanation as to why responses advising on major changes to a project were not followed, including advice from statutory consultees on impacts;
- Where the applicant has not followed the advice of the local authority or not complied with the guidance or any relevant Advice Note published by the Inspectorate, provide an explanation for the action taken or not taken; and
- Be expressed in terms sufficient to enable the Secretary of State to understand fully how the consultation process has been undertaken and significant effects addressed. However, it need not include full technical explanations of these matters”.

1.2 Consultation context

- 1.2.1 The entirety of the proposed scheme is located within the administrative areas of South Somerset District Council and Somerset County Council.
- 1.2.2 The proposal passes through the parishes of Sparkford, Queen Camel, West Camel and Yeovilton. Each of these parishes is represented by a parish council.
- 1.2.3 The area of the scheme is largely rural, and is characterised by village-level settlements. At the time of the 2011 census, the population of Sparkford was 617, that of Queen Camel was 908, that of West Camel was 495, and that of Yeovilton was 1226.¹
- 1.2.4 Demographically, the area of the scheme reflects broader trends in South Somerset. The majority of the population identifies as white British (96%), Christian (67%) and speaks English as a first language (98%).
- 1.2.5 Similarly, the age profile of the area mirrors that of South Somerset. People aged between 45 and 64 are the largest group in the area (29%), followed by those aged between 25 and 44 (21%) and 65 to 74 (11%).
- 1.2.6 Just over half of the area’s residents are economically active (51%), with the largest employment sectors being wholesale and retail trade (15%), public administration and defence (12%) and manufacturing (12%).

¹ South Somerset District Council, *Area East Profile (Based on 2011 Census)*, available at https://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/media/580735/area_east_profile.pdf

- 1.2.7 Parts of the proposal are in areas identified by South Somerset as being at a higher risk of digital exclusion. This reinforces the importance of using a variety of techniques to publicise consultation activities, and to allow people to take part in consultations.²
- 1.2.8 Highways England has identified hard to reach groups in the area as including isolated communities, those without broadband, young people, older people, disabilities, tourists and visitors, the time poor, the economically challenged, ethnic minorities, and LGBT+ people.
- 1.2.9 It should be noted that there is also a history of proposals to upgrade the A303 between Sparkford and Ilchester. These include a scheme for which orders under the Highways Act 1980 were made in 1995.
- 1.2.10 While there is no statute of limitation for these orders, it would not be permitted for any scheme brought forward under them to vary in design or for additional land to be taken. As such Highways England is seeking permission anew to upgrade the A303 between Sparkford and Ilchester under the PA 2008.

1.3 Summary of consultation activities

- 1.3.1 Figure 1.1 provides an overview of consultation activities:

Figure 1.1 Consultation timeline



² South Somerset District Council, *South Somerset Profile December 2016*, available at https://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/media/897867/south_somerset_profile_v6.pdf

- 1.3.2 Table 1.1 sets out more detail of the consultation activities included in Figure 1.1. These include non-statutory consultation, on-going engagement following the non-statutory consultation, and statutory consultation:

Table 1.1 Summary of consultation activities

Consultation activity undertaken:	Date:
Non-statutory public consultation – Q4 2015 – Q1 2018	
Early engagement with local authorities and statutory environmental bodies (Section 2.1)	December 2015 – November 2016
Non-statutory public consultation (Section 2.2)	Tuesday 14 February – Wednesday 29 March 2017
Stakeholder and community engagement following announcement of preferred route (Section 2.3)	October – November 2017
On-going stakeholder engagement to inform design development (Section 2.3)	November 2017 – June 2018
Statutory consultation – Q1 2018	
Consultation of host local authorities on the SoCC as prescribed by s47(3) of the PA 2008 (Section 3.2)	Monday 16 October – Tuesday 14 November 2017
Notice of availability of SoCC in the vicinity of the proposal as prescribed by s47(6) of the PA 2008 (Section 3.2)	Thursday 18 January 2018 and Thursday 25 January 2018
Proposed application publicised as prescribed by s48 of the PA 2008 (Section 3.6)	Thursday 18 January 2018 and Thursday 25 January 2018
Notification of PINS of proposed application as prescribed by s46 of the PA 2008 (Section 3.4)	Wednesday 24 January 2018
SoCC made available in the vicinity of the proposal as prescribed by s47(6) of the PA 2008 (Section 3.2)	Friday 26 January 2018 – Friday 9 March 2018
Consultation as prescribed under s42 of the PA 2008 (Section 3.3)	Friday 26 January 2018 – Friday 9 March 2018
Consultation in accordance with the SoCC as prescribed under s47(7) of the PA 2008 (Section 3.5)	Friday 26 January 2018 – Friday 9 March 2018

2 Non-statutory public consultation

2.1 Overview of the non-statutory public consultation

- 2.1.1 Highways England conducted a period of non-statutory public consultation on route options for upgrading the A303 between Sparkford and Ilchester from Tuesday 14 February to Wednesday 27 March 2017. This consultation took place in the spirit of statutory consultation under the PA 2008, with reference to the guidance set out in 1.1.3.
- 2.1.2 The purpose of this period of non-statutory public consultation was to solicit feedback on 2 route options, and to support design development of the scheme by gathering information on how consultees used the existing A303.
- 2.1.3 Prior to the non-statutory public consultation, Highways England engaged with host local authorities and statutory environmental bodies to develop its scope and methodology. Details of these meetings are set out in Table 2.1:

Table 2.1 Summary of early engagement with host local authorities and statutory environmental bodies

Stakeholders met:	Date:	Topics discussed:
National Trust, Environment Agency, and Natural England	Friday 4 December 2015	Introduction to the scheme and route options, Development Consent Order process, project timescales and engagement methodology.
Somerset County Council, South Somerset District Council	Thursday 14 January 2016	Scheme overview and building collaborative relationships.
National Trust, Environment Agency, South West Heritage Trust and Natural England	Tuesday 22 March 2016	Scheme update and public consultation strategy discussion
Somerset County Council, South Somerset District Council	Tuesday 22 March 2016	Explanation of the non-statutory and statutory consultation process, Development Consent Order process, and development of the non-statutory SoCC.
Somerset County Council, South Somerset District Council	Thursday 26 May 2016	Discussion of draft non-statutory SoCC, public consultation dates, update on consultation process, and progress on the project equality strategy.

Stakeholders met:	Date:	Topics discussed:
National Trust, Environment Agency, South West Heritage Trust and Natural England	Wednesday 13 July 2016	Stakeholder engagement progress meeting and discussion about public consultation activities timing.
National Trust, Environment Agency, South West Heritage Trust and Natural England	Friday 11 November 2016	Stakeholder engagement progress meeting and update about public consultation activities planned.
Historic England	Wednesday 15 March 2017	On-site meeting at Hazlegrove registered park and garden.

- 2.1.4 The engagement activity set out in Table 2.1, alongside a process of desktop stakeholder mapping, identified audiences for consultation and informed the production of a non-statutory SoCC.
- 2.1.5 As part of the non-statutory consultation, Highways England wrote directly to identified consultees, held a series of targeted and public consultation events, made information available publicly in the vicinity of the consultation events, and online.
- 2.1.6 Highways England consulted with:
- Host and neighbouring local authorities, including Somerset County Council, South Somerset District Council, Bath and North East Somerset Council, Devon County Council, Dorset County Council, East Devon District Council, Mendip District Council, North Dorset District Council, North Somerset Council, Sedgemoor District Council, Taunton Deane Borough Council, West Dorset District Council, and Wiltshire Council;
 - Parish councils along potential route options, including Queen Camel Parish Council, Sparkford Parish Council, West Camel Parish Council, and Yeovilton Parish Council;
 - Statutory environmental bodies, including Natural England, the Environment Agency and Historic England;
 - Stakeholders including the Heart of the South West Local Enterprise Partnership, National Farmers Union, National Trust and South West Heritage Trust;
 - Potentially affected landholders, identified as all residents, landowners, tenants, businesses and organisations within a 150m buffer of each route option; and,
 - The local community, identified as all residents, businesses and organisations located within a 1,500m buffer zone of each route option.
- 2.1.7 Highways England publicised the non-statutory public consultation by:

- Writing to 111 organisations outlining the scheme proposals and drawing attention to the scheme website and public consultation events;
- Writing to 113 potentially affected landholders included within the 150m buffer zones set out above;
- Writing to 3,297 addresses identified in the 1,500m local community buffer zones set out above;
- Promoting the scheme in the media through a press release issued by the Department for Transport on Monday 13 February 2017;
- Launching a consultation website (<https://highwaysengland.citizenspace.com/he/a303-sparkford-to-ilchester/>) with details of the route option proposals and consultation materials, including the means to contact Highways England and to complete an online questionnaire; and,
- Displaying posters with details of the consultation at locations in the vicinity of each route option.

2.1.8 Information including the consultation brochure, consultation questionnaire, a map showing the environmental constraints facing the scheme, and a *Technical Appraisal Report* (TAR) setting out how the route options had been developed, was made available at locations in the vicinity of the scheme and on the consultation website. These are set out in Table 2.2.

Table 2.2 Public information points used in non-statutory public consultation

Dates available:	Location:
Tuesday 14 February – Wednesday 27 March 2017	Wincanton Library, 7 Carrington Way, Wincanton, Somerset, BA9 9JS http://www.somerset.gov.uk/libraries-and-heritage/using-the-library/find-your-library/
	Yeovil Library, King George Street, Yeovil, Somerset, BA20 1PZ http://www.somerset.gov.uk/libraries-and-heritage/using-the-library/find-your-library/
	South Petherton Library, St. James Street, South Petherton, Somerset, TA13 5BS http://www.somerset.gov.uk/libraries-and-heritage/using-the-library/find-your-library/
	Taunton Library, Paul Street, Taunton, Somerset, TA1 3XZ http://www.somerset.gov.uk/libraries-and-heritage/using-the-library/find-your-library/
	Martock Library, The Shopping Centre, Martock, Somerset, TA12 6DL http://www.somerset.gov.uk/libraries-and-heritage/using-the-library/find-your-library/
	Barrington Court, Barrington, Ilminster, TA19 0NQ https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/barrington-court

Dates available:	Location:
	Lytes Cary Manor, near Somerton, Somerset, TA11 7HU https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/lytes-cary-manor
	Montacute House, Montacute, TA15 6XP https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/montacute-house
	Somerset County Council, County Hall, Taunton, Somerset, TA1 4DY http://www.somerset.gov.uk
	South Somerset District Council, Brympton Way, Yeovil, Somerset, BA20 2HT https://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/

2.1.9 Details of consultation events held as part of the non-statutory consultation are set out in Table 2.3:

Table 2.3 Non-statutory public consultation events

Event:	Date:	Location:
Stakeholder preview event (by invitation only)	Thursday 14 February 2017 6.00pm – 8.00pm	Haynes Motor Museum, Wolverlands, Sparkford, Yeovil BA22 7LH
Landholder consultation event (by appointment only – to those set out in 2.1.7)	Wednesday 15 February 2017 11.00am – 7.00pm	Haynes Motor Museum, Wolverlands, Sparkford, Yeovil BA22 7LH
Landholder consultation event (by appointment only – to those set out in 2.1.7)	Thursday 16 February 2017 11.00am – 7.00pm	Haynes Motor Museum, Wolverlands, Sparkford, Yeovil BA22 7LH
Public consultation event	Thursday 23 February 2017 12.00 midday – 8.00pm	Sparkford Inn, High Street, Sparkford, Yeovil, BA22 7JH

Event:	Date:	Location:
Public consultation event	Saturday 25 February 2017 10.00am – 5.00pm	Queen Camel Memorial Hall, High Street, Queen Camel, Yeovil, BA22 7NF
Public consultation event	Thursday 9 March 2017 6.00pm – 8.30pm	Red Lion, Babcary, TA11 7ED
Public consultation event	Friday 10 March 2017 10.00am – 6.00pm	Davis Hall, Howell Hill, West Camel, Yeovil, BA22 7QX

2.1.10 Following the non-statutory consultation, Highways England published the *Report on Public Consultation (October 2017)*, which sets out full details of the non-statutory consultation. This is available in **Consultation Report Annex K (TR010036/APP/5.12)**.

2.2 Scope and outcome of the non-statutory public consultation

2.2.1 Initially, Highways England identified a potential 13 options, and following a sifting process carried out further assessments on 4 of these. Taking into account factors including existing conditions, traffic, road standards, economic performance, safety, environmental and social effects and stakeholder views, Highways England then identified 2 options to take forward to non-statutory public consultation.

2.2.2 Option 1 followed the existing corridor of the A303 very closely. It was closely aligned to the side of the existing carriageway to allow re-use of the existing road for local access, to avoid impacts on existing properties and to facilitate construction. Option 1 is shown in Figure 2.1.

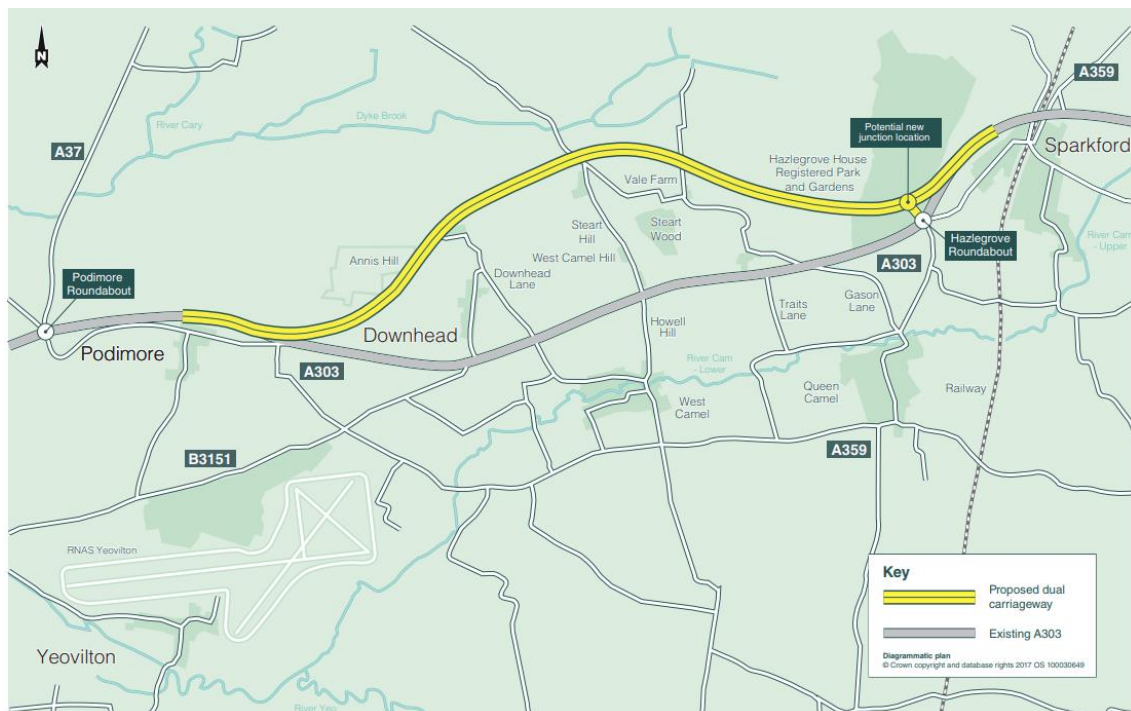
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Figure 2.1 Option 1



2.2.3 Option 2 took a course away from the existing route, to its north. At its maximum distance, the route was approximately 1kilometre north of the existing A303. Option 2 is shown in Figure 2.2.

Figure 2.2 Option 2



- 2.2.4 The Public Consultation Brochure created for consultation purposes is provided in **Consultation Report Annex A (TR010036/APP/5. 2)**.
- 2.2.5 Highways England received 1,237 responses to the non-statutory public consultation. Of these, 64% said they preferred option 1, and 29% said they preferred option 2. The remainder of respondents either did not answer this question (4%) or did not support either option (3%).
- 2.2.6 Considerations raised by respondents included:
- Flooding issues;
 - Environmental effects;
 - Safe provision for pedestrians, cyclists and equestrians; and,
 - The need for ready, safe access to the local road network.
- 2.2.7 Highways England used the feedback received to help inform the choice of option 1 for the preferred route. The feedback was used alongside further assessment work undertaken since consultation, as reported in the *Scheme Assessment Report*, available in **Consultation Report Annex K (TR010036/APP/5.12)**, to inform the selection.
- 2.2.8 A full summary of responses received during the non-statutory public consultation, and the regard had to them by Highways England, can be found in the report referenced in 2.1.10.
- 2.3 Ongoing engagement**
- 2.3.1 Throughout the development process, Highways England has engaged with stakeholders outside of periods of non-statutory and statutory consultation.
- 2.3.2 This has included establishing a series of technical working groups comprising representatives of Highways England, host local authorities and statutory environmental bodies. The purpose of these groups has been to offer a means for Highways England to seek the technical and local expertise of stakeholders on relevant issues, and to support the development of Statements of Common Ground (SoCG).
- 2.3.3 Details of on-going engagement undertaken outside any advertised periods of non-statutory and statutory consultation, including the composition of each group, when the engagement took place, a summary of discussions had, and appropriate action taken in response, is set out in Table 2.4.

Table 2.4 Details of engagement undertaken outside of advertised periods of non-statutory and statutory consultation

Engagement overview:	Date:	Summary of engagement:	Action taken as appropriate:
Communications working group meeting	Wednesday 13 September 2017	Highways England convened a working group consisting of representatives from Somerset County Council, South Somerset District Council and its own team to discuss scheme communications. Items discussed included preferred route announcement and the preparation of the SoCC.	Working group comments considered in communication of preferred route announcement and preparation of the SoCC.
Preferred route announcement – publication of information	Tuesday 24 October 2017	To provide information on how it had selected a preferred route, taking into account feedback from the non-statutory consultation, Highways England published the following information on the consultation website and at the public information points (set out in table 2.1.2): preferred route announcement booklet, <i>Report on Public Consultation (October 2017)</i> , <i>Scheme Assessment Report</i> , preferred route map.	The purpose of this was to provide information on how Highways England had selected a preferred route, taking into account feedback from the non-statutory consultation.
Preferred route announcement – engagement with potentially affected landholders (as set out in 2.1.7)	Tuesday 7 and Friday 10 November 2017	All potentially affected landholders as defined in 2.1.6 were invited to discuss the impact of the preferred route on their land interest. Individual meetings	Highways England used feedback from these meetings to refine its understanding of land requirements prior to statutory

Engagement overview:	Date:	Summary of engagement:	Action taken as appropriate:
		took place by appointment at Haynes Motor Museum, Wolverlands, Sparkford, Yeovil, BA22 7LH from 11.00am – 3.00pm on 7 and 10 November 2017.	consultation.
Preferred route announcement – public information events	Tuesday 7 and Friday 10 November 2017	Highways England invited all consultees as set out in 2.1.6, to public information events at Haynes Motor Museum, Wolverlands, Sparkford, Yeovil, BA22 7LH from 3.00pm – 7.00pm on 7 and 10 November 2017.	The purpose of the events was to provide information on how it had selected a preferred route, taking into account feedback from the non-statutory consultation.
Meeting with West Camel Parish Council	Friday 17 November 2017	Highways England met with West Camel Parish Council to provide an update on the scheme following the preferred route announcement and set out details of its next steps.	Early engagement enabled Highways England to more effectively consider comments made by parish councils as part of the statutory consultation.
Environment working group meetings	Meetings took place on Thursday 7 December 2017, Tuesday 13 February 2018, Monday 2 April 2018 and Tuesday 8 May 2018.	Highways England convened a working group consisting of representatives from Somerset County Council, South Somerset District, Natural England, Environment Agency, National Trust, Historic England and its own team to discuss the environmental elements of scheme design. Items discussed	The purpose of the working group was to provide a means for Highways England to seek the technical expertise of environmental stakeholders on relevant issues from an early point in scheme development. Discussions informed the environmental information

Engagement overview:	Date:	Summary of engagement:	Action taken as appropriate:
		included Hazlegrove House registered park and garden, road drainage and the water environment, ecology, cultural heritage and landscape.	presented during the statutory consultation, and development of the Environmental Statement.
Meeting with Somerset County Council	Tuesday 12 December 2017	Highways England met with Somerset County Council to provide an update on the scheme and discuss the statutory consultation.	Highways England set out an overview of the timing of the statutory consultation and its preparation of a DCO application to provide a framework for input from Somerset County Council.
Meeting with Queen Camel Parish Council	Tuesday 12 December 2017	Highways England met with Queen Camel Parish Council to provide an update on the scheme following the preferred route announcement and set out details of its next steps.	Early engagement enabled Highways England to more effectively consider comments made by parish councils as part of the statutory consultation.
Workshop with non-motorised user groups	Thursday 14 December 2017	Highways England met with representatives from the Somerset Cycling Group, South Somerset Bridleways Association and the Rights of Way team at Somerset County Council to discuss non-motorised user provision as part of the scheme.	The purpose of the workshop was to inform the emerging design for non-motorised user provision as part of the scheme. Feedback from the workshop was considered as part of the preparation of proposals for statutory consultation.
Meeting with Sparkford Parish Council	Thursday 18 January 2018	Highways England met with Sparkford Parish Council to provide an update on	Early engagement enabled Highways England to more effectively consider

Engagement overview:	Date:	Summary of engagement:	Action taken as appropriate:
		the scheme following the preferred route announcement and set out details of its next steps.	comments made by parish councils as part of the statutory consultation.
Meeting with Yeovilton Parish Council	Tuesday 30 January 2018	Highways England met with Yeovilton Parish Council to provide an update on the scheme following the preferred route announcement and set out details of its next steps.	Early engagement enabled Highways England to more effectively consider comments made by parish councils as part of the statutory consultation.
Traffic and economics working group meetings	Meetings took place on Tuesday 13 February 2018, Wednesday 14 March 2018, Wednesday 30 May 2018 and Tuesday 5 June 2018	Highways England convened a working group consisting of representatives from Somerset County Council, South Somerset District Council and its own team to discuss the traffic and economic impacts of the scheme. Items discussed included scheme costs, conventional transport user benefits, assessment of wider economic benefits, construction and maintenance impacts and benefits and costs, holiday and weekend transport user benefits and operational performance, accident benefits, monetised environmental benefits and local traffic impacts.	The purpose of the working group was to provide a means for Highways England to seek the technical expertise of traffic and economic stakeholders on relevant issues from an early point in scheme development. Discussions informed the information presented during the statutory consultation
Highways design working group	Meetings took place on Tuesday	Highways England convened a working	The purpose of the working group was

Engagement overview:	Date:	Summary of engagement:	Action taken as appropriate:
meetings	13 February 2018, Tuesday 13 March 2018, Tuesday 3 April 2018, Tuesday 17 April 2018 and Wednesday 30 May 2018	group consisting of representatives from Somerset County Council, and its own team to discuss highways design relevant to the scheme. Items discussed included layout, local road traffic impacts, signage strategy, drainage strategy, road lighting, non-motorised user proposals, structures, construction proposals and works in connection with returning sections of the existing trunk road that will no longer form part of the new route to the responsibility of the local authorities.	to provide a means for Highways England to seek the local and technical expertise of the local highways authority on scheme design from an early point in scheme development. Discussions informed the highways design presented at statutory consultation, and enabled Highways England to more effectively consider comments made by the local highways authority as part of the statutory consultation.
Targeted engagement with landholders (as defined in 4.3.11) affected by red line boundary changes	Tuesday 15 May to Friday 25 May 2018	Highways England wrote to landholders (as defined in 4.3.11) to inform them about changes to the scheme red line boundary within their land interest which had been made since the statutory consultation. Recipients were invited to comment on the change. This engagement was non-statutory. A copy of the letter is included in Consultation Report Annex K (TR010036/APP/5.12).	Highways England has not received feedback in response to this engagement.

- 2.3.4 Early and on-going engagement as set out in Table 2.4, has enabled Highways England to consider technical and local expertise in the scheme development and helped avoid unnecessary delays and the costs of having to make changes at later stages of the process.
- 2.3.5 Where appropriate, Highways England will produce draft SoCG through ongoing engagement with selected stakeholders. These will contain evidence of agreements and disagreements identified during pre-application consultation.

3 EIA screening

- 3.1.1 An Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is required under the *Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations) 2009* for a scheme of this scale and nature.
- 3.1.2 Highways England conducted an EIA screening exercise, before moving to the scoping phase. As such, Highways England prepared a scoping report seeking a view on its approach to the environmental surveys and assessments proposed as part of the EIA.
- 3.1.3 Highways England wrote to PINS under Regulation 8(1) of the *Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 (EIA Regs)* on Monday 27 November 2017 to request a screening opinion, and received acknowledgement on Thursday 30 November 2017.
- 3.1.4 Highways England received a scoping opinion from PINS on Tuesday 9 January 2018. The scoping opinion has informed the scope and contents of the Environmental Statement presented as part of the application, and was considered in the production of the preliminary environmental information (PEI) published during statutory consultation.
- 3.1.5 In addition, following receipt of the scoping opinion, Highways England reviewed the list of consultees contacted by PINS as part of its consultation on the scoping report. This was to ensure that all organisations contacted by PINS were included in subsequent consultation activity.
- 3.1.6 A copy of the letter, scoping report and the acknowledgment are provided within ***Consultation Report Annex B (TR010036/APP/5.3)***.

4 Statutory consultation

4.1 Overview of the statutory consultation

- 4.1.1 Highways England held a statutory consultation on its proposal to upgrade the A303 between Sparkford and Ilchester from Friday 26 January to Friday 9 March 2018.
- 4.1.2 The purpose of the consultation was to seek feedback on the design of the upgrade, including the location, purpose and layout of junctions, provision for non-motorised users, and environmental impact and mitigation.
- 4.1.3 Highways England ran consultation under s42 of the PA 2008 in parallel with consultation under s47 and s48 of the PA 2008. This meant that all consultation materials made available under s47 of the PA 2008 were also available to s42 consultees.
- 4.1.4 Consultees were provided with 43 days to comment, which is greater than the 28 calendar days required to be provided for comments as prescribed by s45(2) of the PA 2008.

4.2 Preparation of SoCC

- 4.2.1 As prescribed by s47 of the PA 2008, Highways England prepared a statement (the SoCC) setting out how it proposed to consult people living in the vicinity of the land affected by the scheme about its proposal. It then consulted with each local authority that is within s43(1) of the PA 2008 on the SoCC.
- 4.2.2 Highways England identified South Somerset District Council and Somerset County Council as the host local authorities for the purposes of the preparation of the SoCC. As part of meeting the requirement to consult these authorities as prescribed by s47(2) of the PA 2008, Highways England also identified and consulted with each local authority that is within s43(2) of the PA 2008. Details of the identification of these authorities are included in Table 4.4.
- 4.2.3 Highways England's preparation of a draft SoCC took into account best practice and guidance from PINS, early engagement with the communications teams as per the communications working group (table 2.4), lessons learned from the non-statutory public consultation summarised in chapter 2, and desktop research.
- 4.2.4 The draft SoCC included the following information and proposals for engaging with the local community:
 - An overview of the document;
 - A statement of Highways England's intention to submit a DCO application, with guidance on where to find more information on the planning process;

- A summary of the scheme;
- Details of the methods Highways England proposed to engage with the local community, including:
 - Holding public information events in the vicinity of the scheme;
 - Provision of information at public information points in the vicinity of the scheme;
 - Provision of information on the consultation website;
 - Written communications, including letters to be distributed to all addresses within a 1,500m buffer zone from the scheme proposals and emails to those who had asked to be kept informed about the scheme;
 - Production of a consultation brochure, which was made available on the consultation website, at public information events, and at public information points;
 - Cooperation with parish councils and local authorities to disseminate consultation information through their own existing communications channels;
 - Inviting elected members of host local authorities and members of parish councils the boundaries of which include the scheme proposal to a preview event;
 - Attending where appropriate parish council, local group and local forum meetings;
 - Providing updates where appropriate about the progress of the statutory consultation through channels including written communications, the Highways England website, local media, local authority websites, newsletters and social media;
 - Inviting comments through an online questionnaire or in writing;
 - Publicising the consultation through the media using a press release detailing the consultation process and explaining how the local community and road users can provide feedback;
 - Considering, in consultation with relevant parish councils and community / area forums, whether there is benefit in establishing a stakeholder group;
 - Publicising the consultation through Highways England's Twitter feed (@HighwaysSWEST);
- Providing details of proposed times, dates and locations for public information events and public information points; and,
- Setting out how Highways England would have regard to comments received and how it would move forward with a DCO application following the statutory consultation.

4.2.5 A copy of the draft SoCC is provided in *Consultation Report Annex C (TR010036/APP/5.4)*.

- 4.2.6 Highways England wrote to Somerset County Council and South Somerset District Council on Monday 16 October 2017 requesting comments on the draft SoCC by Tuesday 14 November 2017. Therefore the authorities were provided with 30 days to provide comments on the SoCC, which is greater than the 28 calendar days required to be provided for comments as prescribed by s47(3) of the PA 2008. A copy of the request for comment is provided in **Consultation Report Annex D (TR010036/APP/5.5)**.
- 4.2.7 In addition, Highways England went beyond the requirements of s47 and contacted local authorities neighbouring the host local authorities to be as inclusive as possible. These included Bath and North East Somerset Council, Devon County Council, Dorset County Council, East Devon District Council, Mendip District Council, North Dorset District Council, North Somerset Council, Sedgemoor District Council, Taunton Deane Borough Council, West Dorset District Council, and Wiltshire Council.
- 4.2.8 A response from North Somerset Council was received on Tuesday 17 October 2017 and a copy is provided within **Consultation Report Annex E (TR010036/APP/5.6)**. This was an acknowledgement and set out that the authority had no other comments.
- 4.2.9 A response from West Dorset District Council was received on Thursday 19 October 2017 and a copy is provided within **Consultation Report Annex E (TR010036/APP/5.6)**. This was an acknowledgement and set out that if the authority had other comments, it would contact Highways England again. No other response has been received by Highways England to date.
- 4.2.10 A response from Somerset County Council was received on Tuesday 14 November 2017 and a copy is provided within **Consultation Report Annex E (TR010036/APP/5.6)**. Table 4.1 sets out details of the response received and how Highways England responded.
- 4.2.11 Highways England did not receive a response from South Somerset District Council by the close of the 30 day consultation period. Recognising the importance of receiving comments from a host local authority, Highways England wrote to South Somerset District Council on Thursday 16 November 2017 setting out that it would still welcome its comments despite the close of the advised consultation period. A copy of this email is provided in **Consultation Report Annex D (TR010036/APP/5.5)**.
- 4.2.12 A response from South Somerset District Council was received on Monday 20 November 2017 and a copy is provided within **Consultation Report Annex E (TR010036/APP/5.6)**. While this was received after the close of the 30 day consultation period provided, Highways England responded to the comments it included. Table 4.1 sets out details of the response received and how Highways England responded.
- 4.2.13 No other local authority listed in 4.2.7 provided a response to the consultation on the SoCC.

Table 4.1 SoCC consultation with local authorities

Section of SoCC:	Suggestion / comment made by local authority:	Regard had to the suggestion:	Amendment to SoCC (if applicable):
Somerset County Council			
4	Whilst the scheme and the works associated with it will have a significant impact on the local communities the consultation should also ensure the views of those who travel along the route are captured.	Highways England made provision to ensure the views of those who travel along the route were captured, by engaging with road user groups, promoting the consultation through media and online channels and manning a pop-up information stand at Morrisons Yeovil, 7 Lysander Road, Yeovil, BA20 2AU, on Saturday 17 February 2018 to publicise the consultation	These provisions were already included in section 4 of the SoCC and no amendment was made in response to this comment.
4	We would suggest that a workshop for elected members of the County Council and the District Councils, to take place prior to the commencement of the public consultation, be included within the list of events so that members are prepared for the questions from their communities.	A preview event for elected members was included in the statutory consultation programme in response to this comment.	The SoCC was amended to include details of the preview event organised in response to this comment.
4	The draft SoCC states that the consultation will be promoted through local authority and parish council communication channels. We would recommend working	Highways England met with parish councils along the route in the period prior to the statutory	The SoCC was amended to make clear that Highways England would continue to engage with parish councils along the route when appropriate.

Section of SoCC:	Suggestion / comment made by local authority:	Regard had to the suggestion:	Amendment to SoCC (if applicable):
	closely with parish councils along the route by attending meetings to explain the process and consultation opportunities.	consultation, as set out in table 2.4, to explain the consultation process and discuss the emerging scheme design.	
4	It would be helpful if the range of stakeholders were set out within the SoCC; we would recommend actively engaging with businesses and the tourism sector both along the route and further afield.	Highways England included details of stakeholders proposed for engagement in the SoCC, including businesses and the tourism sector both along the route and further afield.	The SoCC was amended to reflect these details.
4	We have contacts within many of the identified hard to reach groups in the county and send them regular newsletter / useful information. We can use these to share information about the consultations.	Highways England sent information to the contacts identified by Somerset County Council.	The SoCC was amended to make clear Highways England would send information to the contacts identified by Somerset County Council.
5	The draft SoCC does not contain any dates or duration of consultation at this point; for the non-statutory consultation we advised that a 30 day consultation period would be insufficient and we recommended extending the consultation period to 12 weeks.	Dates were included once known. The consultation period was longer than 30 days referenced by Somerset County Council as insufficient. Highways England considers the 43 day consultation period proposed	The SoCC was amended to include dates and an explanation of why Highways England considered the 6 week consultation period proposed was appropriate.

Section of SoCC:	Suggestion / comment made by local authority:	Regard had to the suggestion:	Amendment to SoCC (if applicable):
		in the SoCC as appropriate in the context of similar schemes.	
5	We previously suggested that consideration should be given to increasing the number of exhibitions from the proposed number. Whilst the draft SoCC does not contain the details of the proposed exhibitions we would recommend increasing the number from that which were carried out for the non-statutory consultation. A wider range of venues and times would allow more people to attend.	A further exhibition was included in the statutory consultation programme in response to this comment.	The SoCC was amended to include details of the additional exhibition organised in response to this comment.
South Somerset District Council			
5	The only comment I have received is why no Public Information Point in Ilchester and / or Podimore village when there is one in Martock (this was from someone who lives in Ilchester)? My reasoning on suggesting Martock originally was because there is a public library but given that Ilchester and Podimore are alongside the route and more affected, it would make sense to address this and I understand there would be possible locations for information.	Highways England added a public information point in Ilchester.	The SoCC was amended to include details of the public information point added in Ilchester.

4.2.14 A copy of the published SoCC is provided in *Consultation Report Annex F (TR010036/APP/5.7)*.

4.2.15 As prescribed by s47(6) of the PA 2008, Highways England made the SoCC available at locations in the vicinity of the proposal. Details of the availability of the SoCC in the

vicinity of the proposal are included in Table 4.2, while figure 4.1 shows their locations on a map:

Table 4.2 Availability of the SoCC in the vicinity of the proposal

Public information points	
Dates available:	Location:
<p>Friday 26 January – Friday 9 March 2018</p> <p>Monday 9.30am - 1.30pm and 2.30pm – 5.00pm Tuesday 9.30am - 1.30pm and 2.30pm – 5.00pm Wednesday 9.30am - 1.30pm and 2.30pm – 5.00pm Thursday Closed Friday 9.30am - 1.30pm and 2.30pm – 5.00pm Saturday 9.30am – 12.00pm Sunday Closed</p>	<p>Wincanton Library, 7 Carrington Way, Wincanton Somerset, BA9 9JS http://www.somerset.gov.uk/libraries-and-heritage/using-the-library/find-your-library/</p>
<p>Friday 26 January – Friday 9 March 2018</p> <p>Monday 9.30am - 12.30pm and 1.30pm – 5.00pm Tuesday 9.30am - 12.30pm and 1.30pm – 6.00pm Wednesday 9.30am - 12.30pm and 1.30pm – 5.00pm Thursday 9.30am – 1.00pm Friday 9.30am - 12.30pm and 1.30pm – 5.00pm Saturday 9.30am - 12.30pm and 1.30pm – 4.00pm Sunday Closed</p>	<p>Yeovil Library, King George Street, Yeovil, Somerset, BA20 1PYZ http://www.somerset.gov.uk/libraries-and-heritage/using-the-library/find-your-library/</p>
<p>Friday 26 January – Friday 9 March 2018</p> <p>Monday Closed Tuesday 10.00am – 2.00pm Wednesday Closed Thursday 10.00am – 2.00pm Friday 10.00am – 1.00pm and 2.00pm – 4.00pm Saturday 9.30am – 1.00pm Sunday Closed</p>	<p>South Petherton Library, St. James Street, South Petherton, Somerset, TA13 5BS http://www.somerset.gov.uk/libraries-and-heritage/using-the-library/find-your-library/</p>

Public information points	
Dates available:	Location:
<p>Friday 26 January – Friday 9 March 2018</p> <p>Monday 9.30am - 5.30pm Tuesday 9.30am - 5.30pm Wednesday 9.30am – 7.00pm Thursday 9.30am - 5.30pm Friday 9.30am - 5.30pm Saturday 9.30am – 5.00pm Sunday Closed</p>	<p>Taunton Library, Paul Street, Taunton, Somerset, TA1 3XZ http://www.somerset.gov.uk/libraries-and-heritage/using-the-library/find-your-library/</p>
<p>Friday 26 January – Friday 9 March 2018</p> <p>Monday 8.00am – 5.00pm Tuesday 8.00am – 5.00pm Wednesday 8.00am – 5.00pm Thursday 8.00am – 5.00pm Friday 8.00am - 4.30pm Saturday Closed Sunday Closed</p>	<p>Somerset County Council, County Hall, Taunton, Somerset, TA1 4DY http://www.somerset.gov.uk</p>
<p>Friday 26 January – Friday 9 March 2018</p> <p>Monday 9.30am – 5.00pm Tuesday 9.30am – 5.00pm Wednesday 9.30am – 5.00pm Thursday Closed Friday 9.30am – 5.00pm Saturday 9.30am – 12.00pm Sunday Closed</p>	<p>Martock Library, The Shopping Centre, Martock, Somerset, TA12 6DL http://www.somerset.gov.uk/libraries-and-heritage/using-the-library/find-your-library/</p>
<p>Friday 26 January – Friday 9 March 2018</p> <p>Monday 8.45am - 5.15pm Tuesday 8.45am - 5.15pm Wednesday 8.45am - 5.15pm Thursday 8.45am - 5.15pm Friday 8.45am - 4.45pm Saturday Closed Sunday Closed</p>	<p>South Somerset District Council, Brympton Way, Yeovil, Somerset, BA20 2HT https://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/</p>
<p>Friday 26 January – Friday 9 March 2018</p> <p>Monday 8.00am – 3.00pm</p>	<p>Talltrees Community Centre, 4 Taranto Hill, Ilchester, Yeovil, BA22 8JP https://www.royalnavy.mod.uk/welfare/find-help/community-centres-and-</p>

Public information points

Dates available:

Tuesday 8.00am – 3.00pm
Wednesday 8.45am – 3.00pm
Thursday 8.00am – 3.00pm
Friday 8.00am – 3.00pm
Saturday 12.30pm – 11.59pm
Sunday 1.00pm - 10.30pm

Location:

[houses/community-centres/tall-trees-community-centre](#)

Figure 4.1 Location of public information points



4.2.16 Highways England also publicised the SoCC's availability in newspapers circulated in the vicinity of the land, as prescribed by s47(6) of the PA 2008. Details of the publication of these notices are included in table 4.3. Copies of the final SoCC notices as published (which clearly confirm the name of the publication and the date) are provided within **Consultation Report Annex F (TR010036/APP/5.7)**.

Table 4.3 SoCC Notice publication dates

Date published:	Newspapers:
Thursday 18 January 2018	Somerset County Gazette
Thursday 18 January 2018	Western Daily Press
Thursday 25 January 2018	Somerset County Gazette
Thursday 25 January 2018	Western Daily Press

4.3 Section 42 (Letters and consultation documents)

4.3.1 S42 of the PA 2008 requires the applicant to consult with the prescribed consultees (s42(1)(a)), landowners, those with an interest in the land and those who would or might

be entitled to make a relevant claim under s42(1)(d) and relevant local authorities (s42(1)(b)).

- 4.3.2 Prescribed consultees are defined in Schedule 1 of *The Infrastructure Planning (Applications: Prescribed Forms and Procedure) Regulations 2009 (as amended)*. This also makes provision through a 'circumstances' test for whether there is a requirement to consult a specific party. **Consultation Report Annex G (TR010036/APP/5.8)** sets out each consultee prescribed in Schedule 1 of *The Infrastructure Planning (Applications: Prescribed Forms and Procedure) Regulations 2009 (as amended)*, whether they were included in the consultation, and justification for that inclusion.
- 4.3.3 S42(1)(b) of the PA 2008 requires the applicant to consult with the local authorities identified in s43 of the PA 2008, which sets out 4 categories of authority:
- A is a neighbouring local authority (s43(3)) that shares a boundary with a unitary council or lower-tier district B council within whose area development is situated;
 - B is either a unitary council or a lower-tier district council in which the development is situated – a host local authority;
 - C is an upper-tier county council in which the development is situated – a host local authority; and,
 - D is either a unitary council or an upper tier county council which shares a boundary with a host 'C' authority – a neighbouring local authority (s43(3)).
- 4.3.4 Details of the identification of relevant local authorities, including whether they are an A, B, C or D authority, and the criteria for their identification, are included in Table 4.4. Figure 4.2 displays the relationship between the authorities.

Figure 4.2 Identification of relevant local authorities

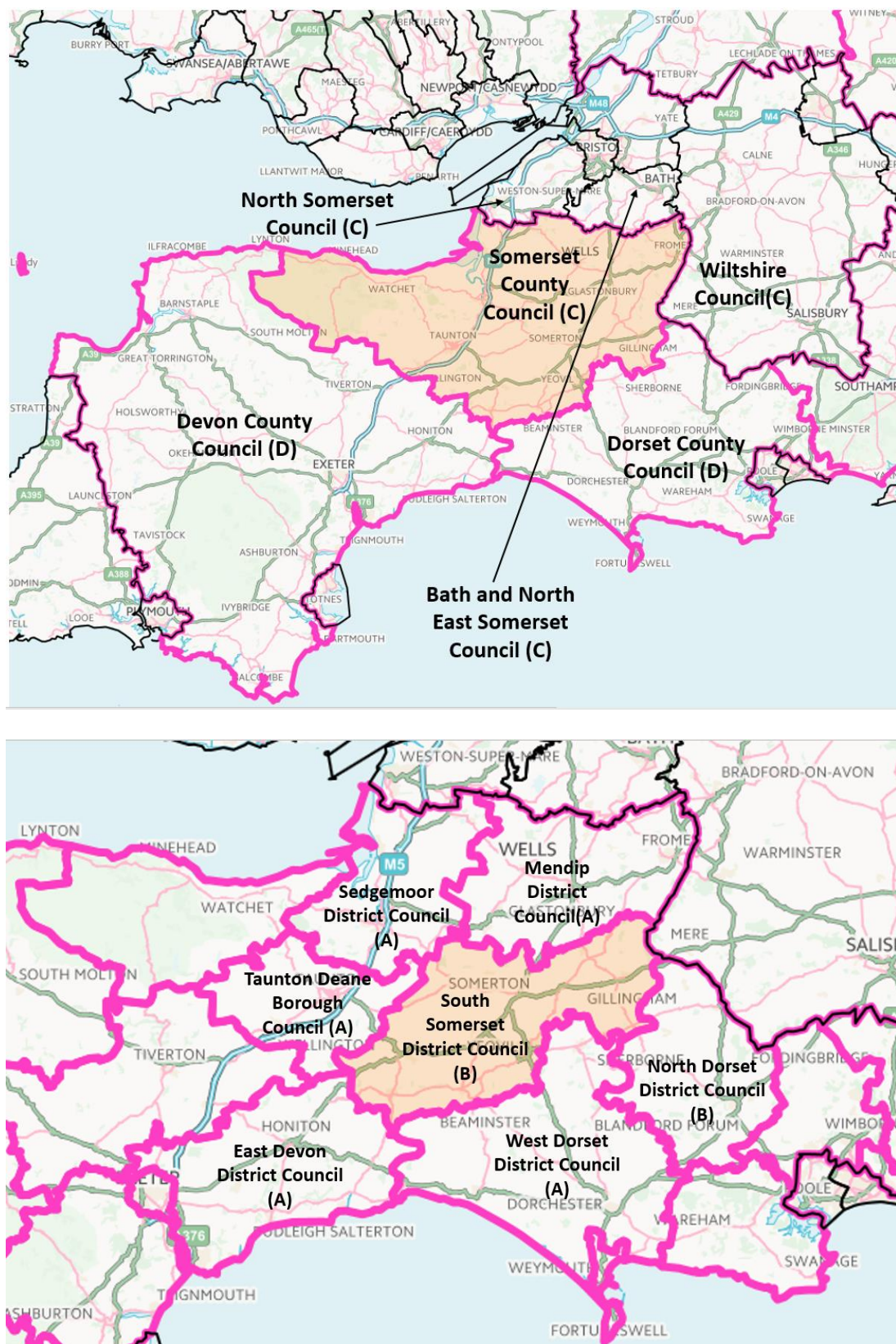


Table 4.4 Identification of relevant local authorities

Name (alphabetical order):	A, B, C or D authority:	Criteria for identification:
Bath and North East Somerset Council	D	Bath and North East Somerset Council is a unitary authority which shares a boundary with a host 'C' authority (Somerset County Council)
Devon County Council	D	Devon County Council is an upper tier county council which shares a boundary with a host 'C' authority (Somerset County Council)
Dorset County Council	D	Dorset County Council is an upper tier county council which shares a boundary with a host 'C' authority (Somerset County Council)
East Devon District Council	A	East Devon District Council is a neighbouring local authority (s43(3)) that shares a boundary with a lower tier district 'B' council within whose area development is situated (South Somerset District Council)
Mendip District Council	A	Mendip District Council is a neighbouring local authority (s43(3)) that shares a boundary with a lower tier district 'B' council within whose area development is situated (South Somerset District Council)
North Dorset District Council	A	North Dorset District Council is a neighbouring local authority (s43(3)) that shares a boundary with a lower tier district 'B' council within whose area development is situated (South Somerset District Council)
North Somerset Council	D	North Somerset Council is a unitary authority which shares a boundary with a host 'C' authority (Somerset County Council)
Sedgemoor District Council	A	Sedgemoor District Council is a neighbouring local authority (s43(3)) that shares a boundary with a lower tier district 'B' council within whose area development is situated (South Somerset District Council)
Somerset County Council	C	Somerset County Council is an upper-tier county council in which the development is situated – a host authority
South Somerset District Council	B	South Somerset District Council is a lower-tier district council in which the development is situated – a host authority
Taunton Deane Borough	A	Taunton Deane Borough Council is a neighbouring local authority (s43(3)) that shares a boundary with a lower tier district 'B' council within whose area development is

Name (alphabetical order):	A, B, C or D authority:	Criteria for identification:
Council		situated (South Somerset District Council)
West Dorset District Council	A	West Dorset District Council is a neighbouring local authority (s43(3)) that shares a boundary with a lower tier district 'B' council within whose area development is situated (South Somerset District Council)
Wiltshire Council	A and D	Wiltshire Council is a unitary authority which shares a boundary with a lower tier district 'B' council within whose area development is situated (South Somerset District Council) and which shares a boundary with a host 'C' authority (Somerset County Council)

- 4.3.5 S42(1)(d) of the PA 2008 requires the developer to consult with landowners, those with an interest in the land and those who would or might be entitled to make a relevant claim under the same section. Landowners were identified via a diligent inquiry process covering 6 research methods: title information, land interest questionnaire, environmental impact assessment information, host and companies house searches, site investigations and web based research. This process provided a landowners' Book of Reference.
- 4.3.6 The methodology for identifying land interests as defined in s42(d) and s44 of the PA 2008 is described further in the **Statement of Reasons (TR010036/APP/4.1)**.
- 4.3.7 Highways England has adopted a precautionary approach to identifying and consulting with category 3 land interests. As such, all category 1 land interests were also treated as potential category 3 land interests for the purposes of the consultation.
- 4.3.8 A list of land interests consulted (noting their interest in the land) during the statutory consultation phase is provided in **Consultation Report Annex H (TR010036/APP/5.9)**. Persons as identified within **Consultation Report Annex H (TR010036/APP/5.9)** and the **Book of Reference (TR010036/APP/4.3)** (at that time) were consulted.
- 4.3.9 Highways England wrote formally to all consultees identified under s42 of the PA 2008 to notify them of the consultation. Letters, and the information included with them, were tailored to ensure their reference to consultees under different parts of the PA 2008.
- 4.3.10 Prescribed consultees (s42(1)(a)) and relevant local authorities (s42(1)(b)) were sent a letter on Thursday 25 January 2018 setting out the background to the scheme, Highways England's intention to submit a DCO application, the fact that Highways England had identified them as a consultee under s42 of the PA 2008, explaining the documents being provided as part of the consultation, and explaining how to respond to the consultation. The following documents were included with the letter:

- A hard copy of the notice published under s48 of the PA 2008 providing formal notification of the application;
- A hard copy of the consultation booklet;
- A hard copy of the consultation questionnaire;
- An electronic copy of the PEI, in the form of a PEI report, together with a non-technical summary; and,
- A CD with a file containing all of the documents above.

4.3.11 Landowners, those with an interest in the land and those who would or might be entitled to make a relevant claim under s42(1)(d) were sent a letter on Friday 26 January 2018. This set out that Highways England had identified them as a consultee under s44 of the PA 2008 and details of Highways England's understanding of their interest in land, offered to meet with the consultee to discuss their interest in land, explaining the consultation process and how to respond, and listed the documents being provided as part of the consultation. The following documents were included with the letter:

- A plan showing Highways England's understanding of the consultee's interest in land;
- A red-line plan showing the whole scheme;
- A copy of the consultation booklet; and,
- A copy of the consultation questionnaire.

4.3.12 The letters included a link to the consultation website, which made available the information set out in 4.5.5.

4.3.13 In addition to writing to land interests to notify them of the consultation, Highways England invited these consultees to 2 appointment-only consultation events to discuss their interest in land. Details of these sessions are set out in Table 4.5:

Table 4.5 Landholder consultation event

Event:	Date:	Location:
Landholder consultation event 1	Tuesday 30 January 2018 11.00am – 7.00pm	Haynes International Motor Museum, Sparkford, Yeovil, BA22 7LH
Landholder consultation event 2	Wednesday 31 January 2018 11.00am – 7.00pm	Sparkford Hall, Yeovil, BA22 7LD

4.3.14 Highways England wished to ensure that all consultees under s42 of the PA 2008 had the opportunity to respond to the consultation, and were aware of when and how they could respond.

- 4.3.15 Highways England therefore issued a reminder letter to land interests on Friday 9 February 2018, and a separate reminder letter to all other consultees under s42 of the PA 2008 on Thursday 22 February 2018. The letter to land interests reiterated Highways England's willingness to meet to discuss their interest.
- 4.3.16 All letters made clear that the deadline for receiving comments was Friday 9 March 2018.
- 4.3.17 Copies of the letters are provided within **Consultation Report Annex I (TR010036/APP/5.10)**.

4.4 Section 46 (Notifying the Secretary of State)

- 4.4.1 Under s46 of the PA 2008, the applicant must send PINS (on behalf of the Secretary of State) the s42 consultation documents before commencing the s42 consultation. Highways England wrote to PINS on Thursday 25 January 2018 to provide the documents listed in 4.3.10.
- 4.4.2 Alongside these documents, Highways England provided a covering letter which set out the background to the scheme, Highways England's intention to submit a DCO application, details of the documents included and the fact they would be sent to consultees under s42 of the PA 2008, and a summary of the consultation process.
- 4.4.3 Highways England received an acknowledgement of the receipt of its notification under s46 of PA 2008 from PINS on Thursday 25 January 2018.
- 4.4.4 A copy of the letter is provided in **Consultation Report Annex J (TR010036/APP/5.11)** alongside the accompanying consultation material.

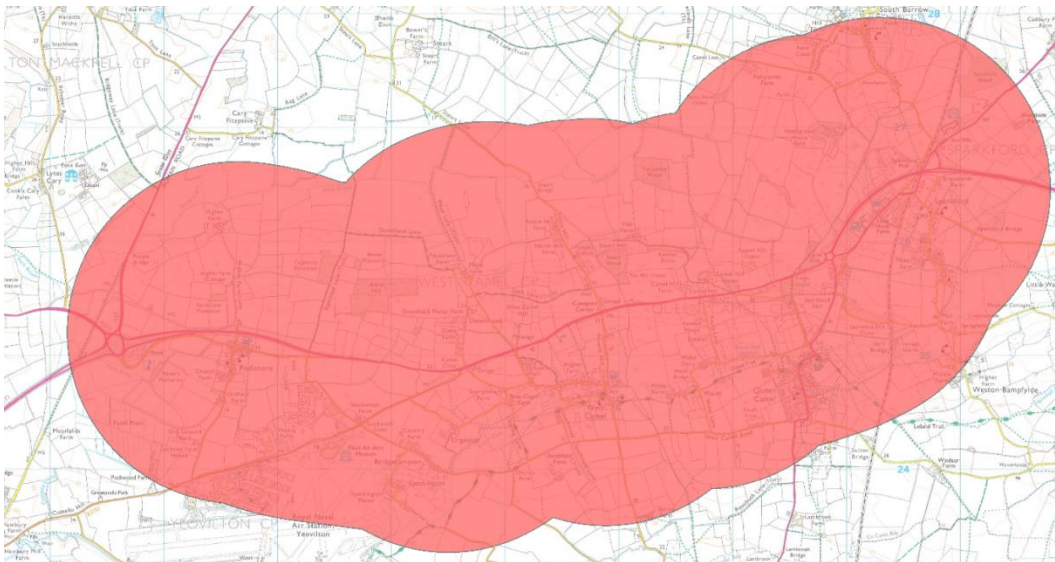
4.5 Section 47 (Local community consultation)

- 4.5.1 Highways England consulted with the local community in accordance with the SoCC provided in **Consultation Report Annex F (TR010036/APP/5.7)**, as prescribed by s47(7) of the PA 2008.
- 4.5.2 This included inviting the local community to consultation events in the vicinity of the scheme, depositing consultation materials at locations in the vicinity of the scheme, publishing consultation materials online, and inviting responses online and in writing.
- 4.5.3 Highways England notified the local community about the consultation by:
- Writing directly to all addresses within a 1,500m buffer zone shown in figure 4.3 on Friday 12 January 2018;
 - Writing directly to identified land interests as set out in annex H to alert them to the local community consultation on Friday 12 January 2018;
 - Writing to elected members of host local authorities and parish councils along the route to invite them to a preview event and alert them to the local community

- consultation on Friday 12 January 2018;
- Providing details of the consultation at the public information points set out in table 4.2 using a poster;
- Providing details of the consultation on its consultation website (<https://highwaysengland.citizenspace.com/he/a303-sparkford-to-ilchester-statutory-consultation/>);
- Cooperating with parish councils and local authorities to disseminate consultation information through their own existing communications channels;
- Manning a pop-up information stand at Morrisons Yeovil, 7 Lysander Road, Yeovil, BA20 2AU, on Saturday 17 February 2018 to publicise the consultation. This was held to promote the consultation to road users and the time poor;
- Publicising the consultation through the media using a press release issued on Friday 26 January 2018 detailing the consultation process and explaining how the local community and road users can provide feedback;
- Issuing a pack designed to support the participation of identified hard to reach groups in the consultation to representative organisations, alongside an offer of direct engagement;
- Promoting the consultation at other events held by Highways England in the region during the same period; and,
- Publicising the consultation through Highways England's Twitter feed.

4.5.4 Copies of letters sent to addresses within the 1,500m buffer zone, to identified land interests, and to elected members of host local authorities and parish councils, as well as the poster and press release outlined above, are provided in **Consultation Report Annex K (TR010036/APP/5.12)**.

Figure 4.3 Consultation buffer zone



4.5.5 In support of consultation with the local community, Highways England prepared materials including:

- A consultation booklet;

- A consultation questionnaire;
- The PEI report;
- A non-technical summary of the PEI report;
- The SoCC;
- A map showing an overview of the scheme;
- A detailed scheme plan;
- Overview aerial imagery;
- A plan showing the proposed red line boundary;
- The booklet about the preferred route described in table 2.4;
- The *Scheme Assessment Report*;
- The *Report on Public Consultation (October 2017)*; and,
- Copies of the notices prepared in compliance with s47 and s48 of the PA 2008.

- 4.5.6 Copies of all materials set out as part of 4.5.5 were made available at all consultation events, at the public information points set out in Table 4.5, and on the consultation website. To support the participation of hard to reach groups in the consultation, copies of all consultation materials were available in alternative, accessible formats on request.
- 4.5.7 In addition, Highways England prepared a suite of information boards and a video showing a 3D visualisation of the scheme proposal. These were made available at all consultation events and on the consultation website.
- 4.5.8 Highways England also published a document summarising provisional local traffic information on Wednesday 31 January 2018. This was made available on the consultation website and at public information points, and at all consultation events. It should be noted that Highways England did not undertake to provide this information in the SoCC.
- 4.5.9 While this was published after the start of the consultation period on Friday 26 January 2018, it was made available for a period of 38 days during the consultation period. This is greater than the 28 calendar days required to be provided for comments as prescribed by s45(2) of the PA 2008. The information published was supplementary and supported the consultation materials.
- 4.5.10 Copies of all materials made available as part of the consultation with the local community are included in ***Consultation Report Annex K (TR010036/APP/5.12)***.
- 4.5.11 Table 4.6 provides details of consultation events undertaken within the local community during the consultation period. All venues used for consultation events were chosen to be compliant with the Equality Act 2010.

Table 4.6 Events undertaken within the local community

Event:	Date:	Location:
Elected member and parish council preview event	Thursday 25 January 2018 6.30pm – 9.30pm	Haynes International Motor Museum, Sparkford, Yeovil BA22 7LH
Public consultation event 1	Saturday 3 February 2018 10.00am – 6.00pm	Queen Camel Memorial Hall, High St, Queen Camel, Yeovil, BA22 7NF
Public consultation event 2	Monday 5 February 2018 2.00pm – 8.00pm	Fleet Air Arm Museum, RNAS Yeovilton, Yeovilton, Ilchester, BA22 8HT
Public consultation event 3	Friday 9 February 2018 2.00pm – 8.00pm	The Davis Hall, Howell Hill, West Camel, Yeovil, A22 7QX
Public consultation event 4	Thursday 15 February 2018 2.00pm – 8.00pm	Huish Park Stadium Lufton Way, Yeovil BA22 8YF

4.5.12 Consultees were invited to provide comments by:

- Completing an online copy of the consultation questionnaire at the consultation website;
- Completing a hard copy of the consultation questionnaire or submitting comments in the form of a letter and returning it to the following address:
 - Freepost HIGHWAYS CONSULTATION;
- Submitting comments in the form of an e-mail to the following address:
 - A303SparkfordtoIlchesterDualling@highwaysengland.co.uk.

4.5.13 Evidence that consultation with the community adhered to those commitments made in the SoCC is provided in Table 4.7:

Table 4.7 SoCC compliance table

Commitment within the SoCC:	Accordance with commitment:
To hold consultation events at locations along the route of the scheme.	Details of consultation events held along the route of the scheme are provided in table 4.6.
To inform the public of events through channels including advertisements in appropriate local newspapers, via Highways England's website, the media, direct communications and project updates.	Details of events were published on Highways England's consultation and scheme websites. Notices prepared in compliance with s47 and s48 of the PA 2008 included details of the consultation website. A press release was issued to publicise the consultation and is available in Consultation Report Annex K (TR010036/APP/5.12) . Events were directly publicised to the local community through a letter issued on Friday 12 January 2018 included in Consultation Report Annex K (TR010036/APP/5.12) .
To make questionnaires available at events.	Consultation questionnaires were made available at events. Attendees were given the option of returning the questionnaire at the event or by freepost using a pre-printed envelope provided by Highways England. A copy of the consultation questionnaire is provided in Consultation Report Annex K (TR010036/APP/5.12) .
To make information on consultation events and how interested parties could provide consultation feedback available at specified public information points.	The public information points specified in the SoCC and in table 4.2 included a poster with information on consultation events. They also included copies of the consultation booklet and questionnaire, which explained how interested parties could provide consultation feedback. Copies of the poster, booklet and questionnaire are provided in Consultation Report Annex K (TR010036/APP/5.12) .
To provide a full summary of the project, copies of the supporting project documents and a questionnaire on a dedicated project website: www.highways.gov.uk/Sparkford-to-Ilchester	This information was made available on the consultation website, which was accessible via the dedicated project website.
To write to residents and businesses in the consultation zone included in the SoCC, stakeholder organisations and special interest groups, and individuals and organisations which had	Highways England wrote to the audiences described on Friday 12 January 2018. Evidence of correspondence, including stakeholder organisations and special interest groups contacted, is provided in Consultation Report

Commitment within the SoCC:	Accordance with commitment:
registered for updates on Highways England's website, about the consultation.	Annex K (TR010036/APP/5.12). In addition, Highways England issued a briefing pack designed to support the participation of membership organisations to a number of groups. A copy of the pack and details of groups contacted is provided in Consultation Report Annex K (TR010036/APP/5.12).
To produce a consultation brochure that will provide information about the scheme proposals, the need for the scheme, and the issues being consulted on, and to make it available online, at public information points, consultation events and to those who request copies.	Highways England produced a consultation brochure providing information on these issues, which is available in Consultation Report Annex K (TR010036/APP/5.12). It was provided on the consultation website, at public information points, consultation events and to those who requested copies.
To promote the statutory consultation through local authority and parish council communication channels.	A briefing pack with sections designed to support the promotion of the statutory consultation through existing communication channels was provided to host local authorities and parish councils along the route. A copy is provided in Consultation Report Annex K (TR010036/APP/5.12).
To invite elected members from host authorities to a preview event, as well as representatives from parish councils, prior to the start of the consultation period.	Details of this event are included in table 4.6. Elected members and parish councils along the route were invited to the preview event by a letter issued on Friday 12 January 2018. A copy of the letter is provided in Consultation Report Annex K (TR010036/APP/5.12).
Where appropriate, to attend a local event to discuss the statutory consultation.	Highways England did not receive any requests to attend local events during the consultation period.
To engage with hard to reach groups using appropriate and proportionate consultation tools.	Highways England identified a range of hard to reach groups prior to the start of consultation, and proactively encouraged their participation in the consultation by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sending them a pack designed to support their participation in the consultation alongside an offer of direct engagement. A copy of the pack and details of groups contacted is provided in Consultation Report Annex K (TR010036/APP/5.12); • Holding a pop-up information stand at Morrisons Yeovil, 7 Lysander Road, Yeovil, BA20 2AU, on Saturday 17 February 2018 to publicise the

Commitment within the SoCC:	Accordance with commitment:
	<p>consultation. This was held to promote the consultation to road users and the time poor;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensuring all venues used for consultation events were chosen to be compliant with the Equality Act 2010; and, Making it clear that materials could be provided in alternative, accessible formats. No requests were received to provide consultation materials in alternative formats.
To keep local community and other road users updated about the progress of the statutory consultation.	Highways England promoted the statutory consultation on its Twitter feed.
To enable the submission of comments in writing or online.	Highways England accepted comments in writing and online at the addresses set out in 4.5.12.
To publicise the statutory consultation through media channels by means of a Highways England press release.	Highways England issued a press release on Friday 26 January 2018 publicising the statutory consultation. This is available in Consultation Report Annex K (TR010036/APP/5.12) .
To consider, in consultation with relevant town and parish councils and community / area forums, whether there is benefit in establishing a stakeholder group to discuss the proposals.	Highways England has engaged directly with parish councils along the route and has received no requests to establish a stakeholder group to discuss the proposals.
To advertise the consultation using Highways England's Twitter presence.	Highways England promoted the statutory consultation on its Twitter feed.

4.6 Section 48 (Publicity)

- 4.6.1 S48 of the PA 2008 imposes a duty on the applicant to publish a notice of the proposed application in accordance with Regulation 4 of the *Infrastructure Planning (Applications: Prescribed Forms and Procedure) Regulations 2009* (as amended).
- 4.6.2 Table 4.8 includes details of the newspapers used to publicise the proposed application, including national, local and the *London Gazette*.

Table 4.8 Newspaper notices table

National newspaper		
Name:	Week 1:	Week 2:
The Times	Thursday 18 January 2018	Thursday 25 January 2018
The London Gazette	Thursday 18 January 2018	Thursday 25 January 2018
Local newspaper(s)		
Western Daily Press	Thursday 18 January 2018	Thursday 25 January 2018
Somerset County Gazette	Thursday 18 January 2018	Thursday 25 January 2018

- 4.6.3 The contact telephone number in the notices published on 18 January 2018 was incorrect. Given that Regulation 4 of the *Infrastructure Planning (Applications: Prescribed Forms and Procedure) Regulations 2009* (as amended) requires only that applicants publish details of a name and address, and that consultees were able to access the correct telephone number by accessing the website, it was not considered necessary to re-publish the first notice. Updated notices were published on Thursday 25 January 2018.
- 4.6.4 The *Western Daily Press* (circulation 14,472) and *Somerset County Gazette* (circulation 11,145) are both circulated in the vicinity of the scheme.
- 4.6.5 Copies of the newspaper notices as noted in Table 4.8 are provided within **Consultation Report Annex L (TR010036/APP/5.13)**.
- 4.6.6 In accordance with Regulation 13 the *Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 (EIA Regs)*, Highways England issued the notice to EIA consultation bodies. This took into account bodies notified to Highways England in accordance with Regulation 11(c) the *Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 (EIA Regs)*.
- 4.6.7 This took place at the same time as consultation under s42 of the PA 2008, and consultees were provided with the period of Friday 26 January to Friday 9 March 2018. This is greater than the 28 calendar days required to be provided for comments.
- 4.7 Additional statutory consultation**
- 4.7.1 Following the close of consultation, Highways England became aware that it should have consulted with the Exmoor National Park Authority as a 'D' authority under s43 of the PA 2008, as it shares a boundary with a 'C' authority, Somerset County Council.
- 4.7.2 Through an oversight, Highways England did not consult with the Exmoor National Park Authority between Friday 26 January and Friday 9 March 2018. When Highways England became aware of this fact, it wrote to the Exmoor National Park Authority on Thursday 10 May 2018 to invite it to take part in the consultation.

- 4.7.3 Highways England provided the same information with the letter as set out in 4.3.10. In line with the 28 calendar days required to be provided for comments as prescribed by s45(2) of the PA 2008, Highways England provided until Friday 8 June 2018 for the Exmoor National Park Authority to provide comment.
- 4.7.4 Exmoor National Park Authority confirmed on Tuesday 5 June 2018 that it did not have comments.

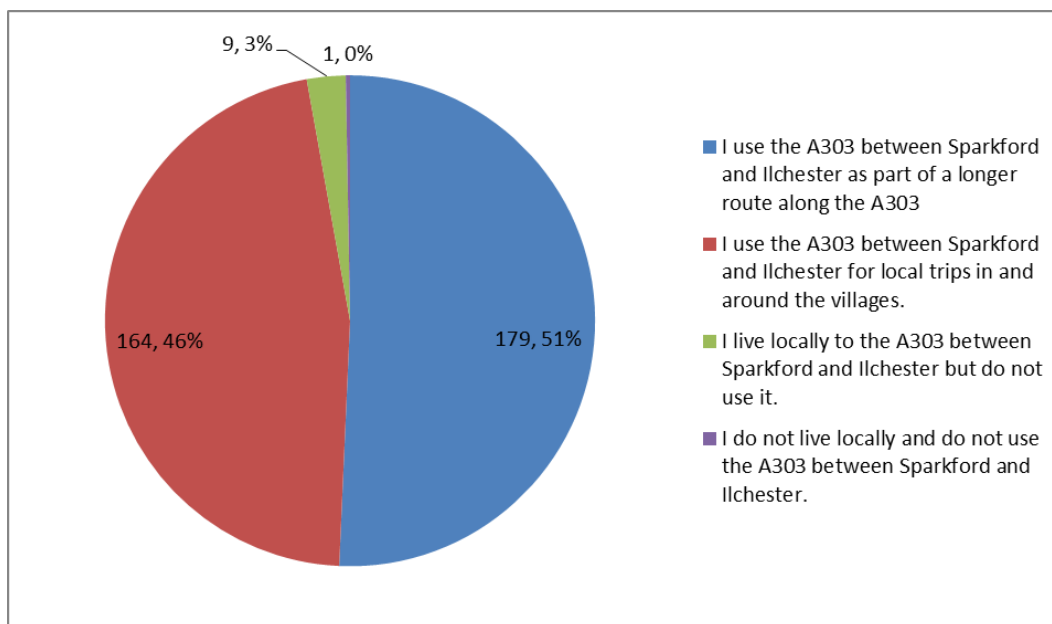
5 Response to consultation to demonstrate how we have had regard to responses

5.1 Analysis of responses

- 5.1.1 This section provides an overview of responses received from consultees under s42, s47 and s48 of the PA 2008.
- 5.1.2 All responses to the consultation under s42 of the PA 2008 were logged and PDF files created for all hard copy responses. These are provided in full in **Consultation Report Annex K (TR010036/APP/5.15)**.
- 5.1.3 Key themes raised in responses from consultees under s42 of the PA 2008 include:
- Recognition of broad community acceptance in principle of the need to upgrade the A303 between Sparkford and Ilchester;
 - A proposal to retain a section of the existing A303 as a local road running in parallel to the upgraded A303;
 - Requests to amend the layout of the proposed junctions at Camel Cross, Downhead and Hazlegrove, in particular to address the proximity of junctions to the upgraded A303;
 - A requirement for a transport assessment to understand in detail the operational performance and impact of the upgraded A303;
 - A view that the proposed Downhead junction may lead to increased levels of traffic in West Camel;
 - A desire for traffic calming measures on local roads in West Camel, Queen Camel and Podimore;
 - Calls to ensure appropriate long-term provision for non-motorised users;
 - Requests for further information to be included in the DCO application on environmental impact and mitigation, particularly with regards air quality, cultural heritage, drainage, landscape, noise and vibration;
 - An emphasis on the importance of achieving, and ideally beating, the 'no net loss' principle in ecological mitigation in practice, particularly with regards to woodland, parkland, hedgerows and bat receptors;
 - The need to strike a balance between the public benefit of upgrading the A303 and the impact on Hazlegrove registered historic park and garden;
 - An emphasis on the need to minimise where possible severance impacts throughout the scheme, both for wildlife and local communities;
 - Representations from potentially affected land interests arguing that land acquisition and scheme development could have a negative impact on business operations and residential amenity; and,
 - A desire for on-going community engagement throughout the planning and development process.
- 5.1.4 Highways England solicited responses to consultation under s47 of the PA 2008 primarily through the consultation questionnaire, and also accepted written responses submitted as letters and emails.

- 5.1.5 Hard copy consultation questionnaires were collected during events, via the post and through invited community events. Electronic questionnaires were acknowledged when completed and recorded within the overall results section. A separate access link to the master electronic questionnaire allowed for the hard copy questionnaires to be uploaded and recorded as a manual upload.
- 5.1.6 Statistical results are presented from the questionnaire compiled from the combined electronic and manually uploaded results (of which a total of 241 were received). Results where a tick box answer was required and completed by the consultee are rounded up or down to the nearest percentage.
- 5.1.7 Where a question included a free text response section, a summary of responses to free text sections of each question, including frequency of themes, is presented.
- 5.1.8 Question 1 asked respondents how they used the A303 between Sparkford and Ilchester, if at all. It provided a series of tick box options for responses. Figure 5.1 presents a summary of responses to this question.

Figure 5.1 Responses to question 1- How do you use the A303 between Sparkford and Ilchester if at all?



- 5.1.9 Question 2 asked respondents how the improvement to the A303 between Sparkford and Ilchester affected them. It provided a series of tick box options and an area to write any free text comments. Figure 5.2 presents a summary of responses to the tick box element of this question, and Table 5.1 summarises free text responses.

Figure 5.2 Responses to question 2 - How does the improvement to the A303 between Sparkford and Ilchester affect you?

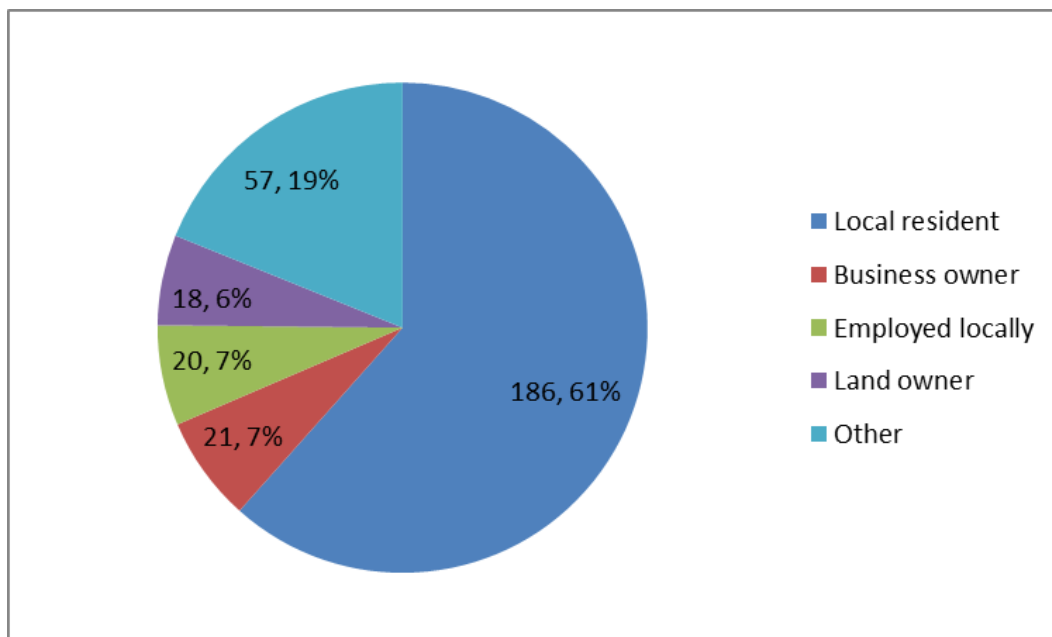


Table 5.1 Summary of free text responses to question 2

Theme	Frequency of comment
Method of use	43
Non-specific method	39
Horse rider	1
Motorist	1
Pedestrian	1
Cyclist	1
Geographical use	29
Travel to and from south west	12
Travel to and from south east	10
Travel to and from London	3
Travel to and from east midlands	2
Access to the A37	1
Access to the M5	1
Journey duration	3
Long distance	3
Journey purpose	9
Commuting	3
Visiting family	3
Visiting friends	1
Holiday use	1
Leisure use	1
Frequency	10

Theme	Frequency of comment
Regular user	10
Concerns	13
Environmental impact	4
Constructions concerns	3
Traffic flow	2
Safety concerns	2
Journey times	2
Local community role	4
Local resident	2
Local role, for example political representative	2

5.1.10 Question 3 asked respondents about their working status. It provided a series of tick box options and an area to write any free text comments. Figure 5.3 presents a summary of responses to the tick box element of this question, and Table 5.2 summarises free text responses.

Figure 5.3 Responses to question 3 - What is your working status?

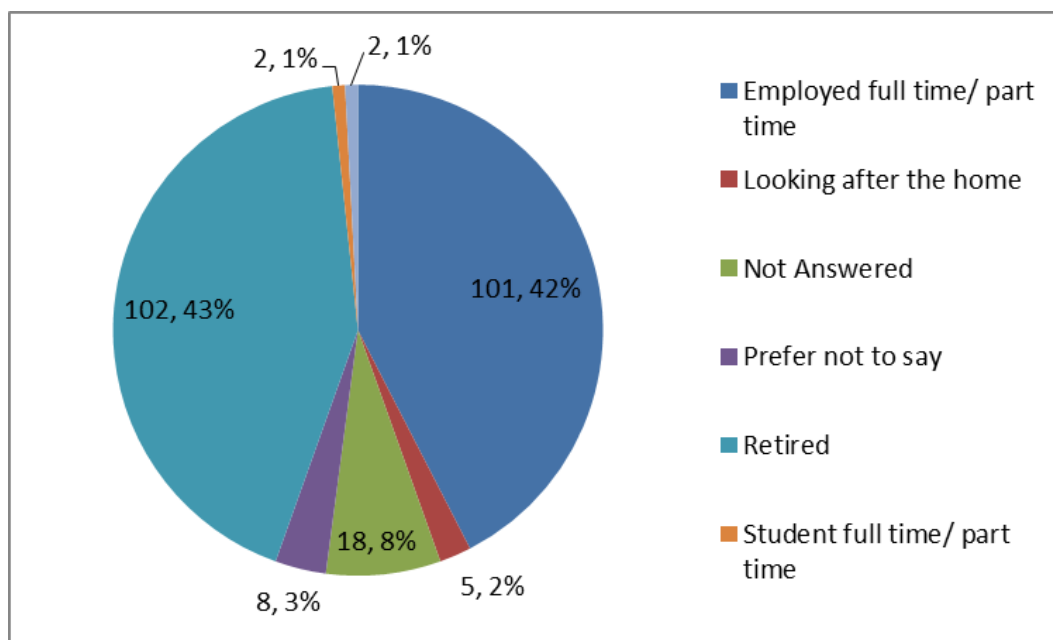


Table 5.2 Summary of free text responses to question 3

Theme	Frequency of comment
Specified place of work and / or job title in local economy	9
Self employed	9
Response for more than 1 individual – employed full time and retired	1

- 5.1.11 Question 4 asked respondents for details of where they lived and worked. 214 respondents provided a postcode. These are plotted on a map in Figure 5.4. It is recognised that this may represent respondents to consultation under s48 of the PA 2008 as well as under s47, even where respondents have not identified themselves as such.

Figure 5.4 Responses to question 4- Please provide the postcode for your home and workplace



- 5.1.12 Question 5 asked respondents to what extent they agreed with Highways England's proposals for Hazlegrove junction. It provided a series of tick box options and an area to write any free text comments. Figure 5.5 presents a summary of responses to the tick box element of this question, and Table 5.3 summarises free text responses.

Figure 5.5 Responses to question 5 - To what extent do you agree with our proposal for the Hazlegrove junction?

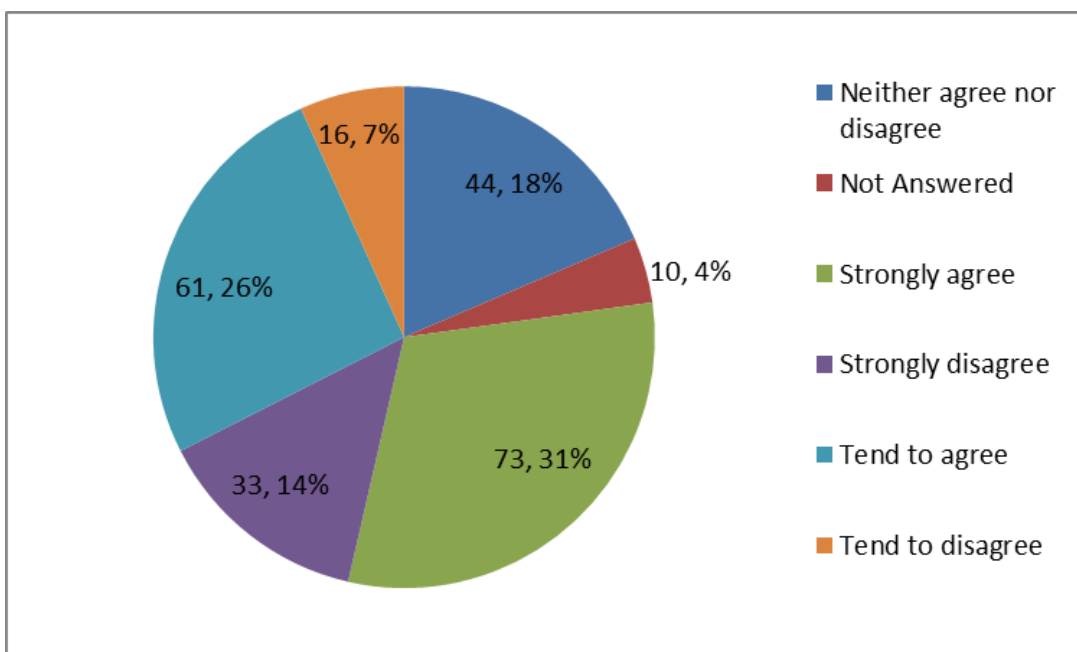


Table 5.3 Summary of text responses to question 5

Theme	Frequency of comment
Nature of the solution	52
Stated general support	29
Suggested alternative route	7
Concerned about expense	6
Perceived as a necessary investment	5
Noted as not necessary	5
Design	46
Concerned about circuitous layout of junction	24
Supportive of junction proposals	2
Concerned about roundabouts	2
Proposed slip road from Hazlegrove Roundabout along original A303	2
Supportive of 2 level route	1
Proposed bridge as part of junction	1
Concerned about pedestrian crossing	1
Suggestion of traffic lights to calm traffic	1
Proposed junction at Hazlegrove Park	1
Supportive of junction at Sparkford	1
Concerned about underpass at Sparkford	1
Proposed bridge A303 to Sparkford	1
Concerned about westbound traffic at roundabout	1
Proposed roundabout for eastbound traffic leaving A303	1
Proposed speed limits	1
Proposed improvements to Podimore Roundabout	1
Supportive of grade-separated solution	1
Concerned about north easterly exits	1
Concerned about current road design	1
Concerned about equestrian provision	1
Impact on local community	28
Noted as not affected by sight, noise or disruption, traffic	6
Supportive of limited impact on local residents	4
Concerned about access to specific local sites and local economy	4
Concerned about access from villages	2
Supportive of preserving village life	2
Concerned local concerns not being taken into consideration	2
Supportive of local access to services	2
Concerned about agricultural vehicles	2
Concerned about taking green space from Hazlegrove School	1
Concerned about impact of construction on local community	1
Concerned about possible closure of Queen Camel Bridge	1

Theme	Frequency of comment
Concerned about impact on local tourism from Fleet Air Arm Museum	1
Traffic	26
Supportive of reducing traffic	7
Concerned about access points and increased journey times	6
Concerned about the knock-on impact of improvements on the rest of the A303 route	4
Concerned about signage	3
Concerned about closing existing A303 after construction	2
Supportive of additional stretches of dual carriageway	2
Concerned about drivers seeking alternative routes creating traffic elsewhere	1
Greater route access to other parts of the UK	1
Safety	16
Perceived as an unsafe solution	10
Perceived as a safe solution in terms of road layout and design generally	3
Perceived as safe solution supportive for joining and exiting	1
Concerned about absence of route specifically for accidents and road closures	1
Concerned about the quality of the road surfacing	1
Environmental impact	13
Concerned about air pollution	3
Concerned about noise pollution	3
Supportive of minimal environmental impact	2
Supportive of planting woodland	1
Supportive of screening buildings	1
Concerned about lighting	1
Concerned about local wildlife	1
Supportive of protecting Hazlegrove registered park and garden	1

5.1.13 Question 6 asked respondents to what extent they agreed with Highways England's proposals for the junction in the vicinity of Downhead Lane. It provided a series of tick box options and an area to write any free text comments. Figure 5.6 presents a summary of responses to the tick box element of this question, and Table 5.4 summarises free text responses.

Figure 5.6 Responses to question 6 - To what extent do you agree with our proposal for the junction in the vicinity of Downhead Lane, built on two levels?

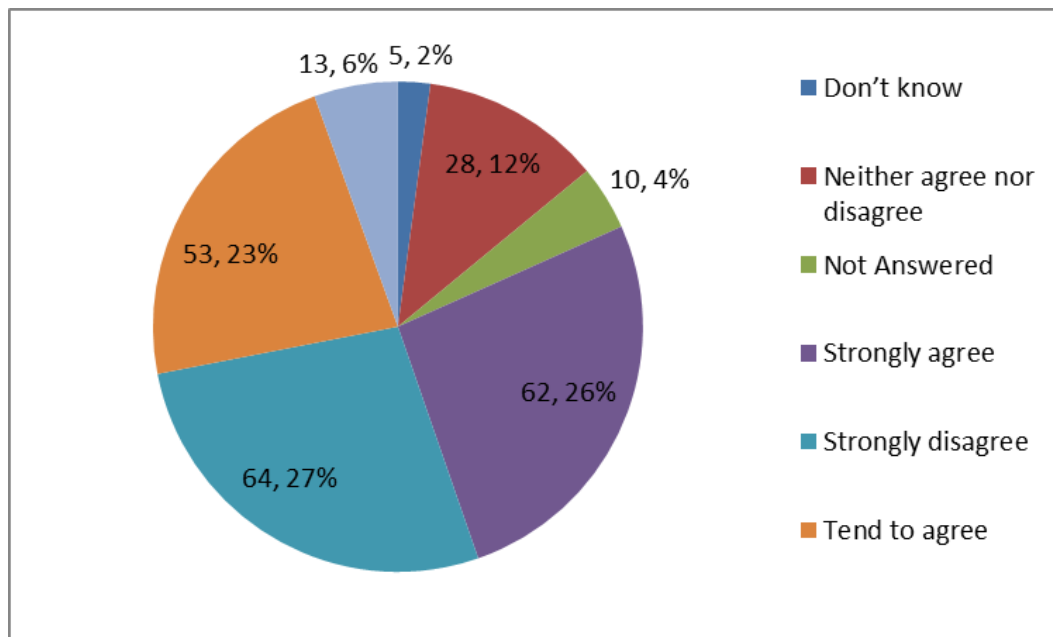


Table 5.4 Summary of free text responses to question 6

Theme	Frequency of comment
Design	70
Concerned over circuitous layout of junction	16
Proposal for section of existing A303 to be retained as a parallel local road	15
Concerned about pedestrian and cycling provision	11
Concerned about equestrian provision	4
Supportive of specific junctions	2
Concerned about roundabouts	1
Proposed 2 level route through the junction	1
Concerned about 2 level junction	1
Concerned about junctions non- site specific	1
Concerned about east to west access linking Downhead to the A303	1
Proposed bridge at West Camel	1
Supportive of full slip roads	1
Proposed flyover at Camel Cross Junction	1
Proposed underbridge at Howell Hill	1
Proposal for specific green bridge	1
Supportive of non-site specific roundabouts	1
Proposed bypass and flyover	1
Proposed bridge linking to the B3151	1
Proposed junction at the B3151	1
Concerned about junctions, non-site specific	1

Theme	Frequency of comment
Supportive of slip road to Yeovilton	1
Concerned about slip road near Camel Hill	1
Proposed roundabout for service east and west to Howell Hill	1
Proposed overbridge and underbridge non site specific	1
Proposed underpass at Parsonage Road	1
Proposed slip road to join east bound with Steart Hill	1
Supportive of grade-separated solution	1
Traffic	43
Concerned about access points and increased journey times through West Camel	24
Concerned about traffic impact on local roads	6
Supportive of reducing backlog	5
Concerned about increased road use generally	3
Supportive of separating local and long distance traffic	3
Concerned about further traffic increases with new town and university proposals	1
Concerned about signage	1
Nature of the solution	39
Stated general concern	13
Noted as not necessary	9
Stated general support	8
Concerned about expense	6
Concerned about over development	2
Perceived as a necessary investment	1
Safety	37
Perceived as an unsafe solution concerned for joining and exiting and speed	24
Proposal for traffic calming measures through West Camel	5
Concerned about no contingency plan for accident and emergencies	3
Concerned about safety impact of inappropriate HGV use	2
Proposed speed limits	1
Perceived as safe solution supportive for joining and exiting	1
Perceived as a safe solution in terms of road layout and design generally	1
Impact on local community	18
Supportive of local access to services	8
Concerned about impact on agricultural and local business	3
Noted as not affected by sight, noise or disruption, traffic	2
Concerned about impacts of junction on residents of Downhead Lane	1
Concerned about impact on local tourism from Fleet Air Arm Museum	1
Concerned about impact on local pub – The Red Lion Inn	1
Concerned about impact of construction on local community	1
Concerned local economy will not benefit	1

Theme	Frequency of comment
Environmental impact	12
Concerned about noise pollution	3
Concerned about visual impact	3
Concerned about pollution	2
Concerned about lighting	2
Supportive of planting woodland	1
Concerned about impact on local wildlife	1
Process	7
Concerned local concerns not being given due consideration	6
Noted that parish council has not expressed an opinion	1

5.1.14 Question 7 asked respondents to what extent they agreed with Highways England's proposals providing for non-motorised users such as cyclists, walkers, and horse riders. It provided a series of tick box options and an area to write any free text comments. Figure 5.7 presents a summary of responses to the tick box element of this question, and Table 5.5 summarises free text responses.

Figure 5.7 Responses to question 7 - To what extent do you agree with our proposals providing for non-motorised users, such as cyclists, walkers and horse-riders?

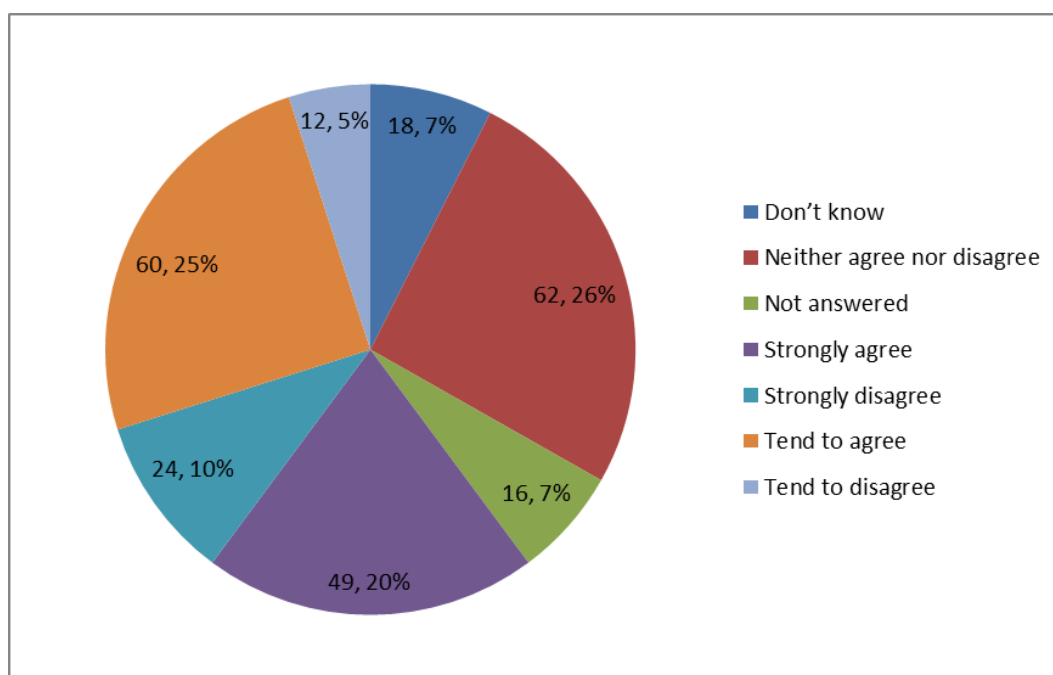


Table 5.5 Summary of free text responses to question 7

Theme	Frequency of comment
Design	51
Proposed further integrated pedestrian / cycle access	18
Concerned over circuitous layout of non-motorised user provision	7
Suggested alternative route overall	5
Proposed further integration for Steart Road residents	3
Opposition to sharing of space between motorised and non-motorised users	3
Perceived as restricting access for non-motorised users	2
Supportive of retaining parts of old A303 as a parallel local road	2
Concerned about absence of non-motorised route specifically for accidents and road closures	1
Proposed speed limits	1
Proposed pedestrian over bridge on either side of the existing A303 to new crossing point	1
Supportive of current plans for cycle network	1
Proposed route for non-motorised users only	1
Proposed use of zebra crossings	1
Proposed footbridge on B3151	1
Proposed overbridge from Downhead to Plowage Lane	1
Proposed underbridge at Steart Hill to West Camel	1
Concerned about road widening	1
Proposed changes to footpaths	1
Safety	41
Stated awareness of importance of safety and access of non-motorised users as a principle	17
Dismissive of concerns regarding safety and access of non-motorised users and therefore dismissive	14
Stated awareness of importance of safety and access of non-motorised users and therefore supportive	7
Concerned about safety of pedestrian and cycling provision	3
Level of provision	30
Stated general support	11
Concerned that proposals restrict ability of non-motorised users to move around the local community	5
Concerned about equestrian access and provision	3
Concerned about agricultural vehicle access and provision	3
Noted as not affected by the proposals as a car driver	3
Concerns over expense	2
Stated general concern	2
Proposed increase in bridleway provision	1
Traffic	5
Concerned about increased journey times	3
Concerned about impact of airbase traffic	2

Theme	Frequency of comment
Environmental impact	3
Supportive of encouraging sustainable travel	3
Impact on the local community	3
Concerned about impact on West Camel	1
Concerned about local needs not being considered	1
Noted as irrelevant to the wider community impact	1

5.1.15 Question 8 asked respondents whether they had any comments on Highways England's approach to environmental impact. It provided a space for free text comments, which are summarised in Table 5.6.

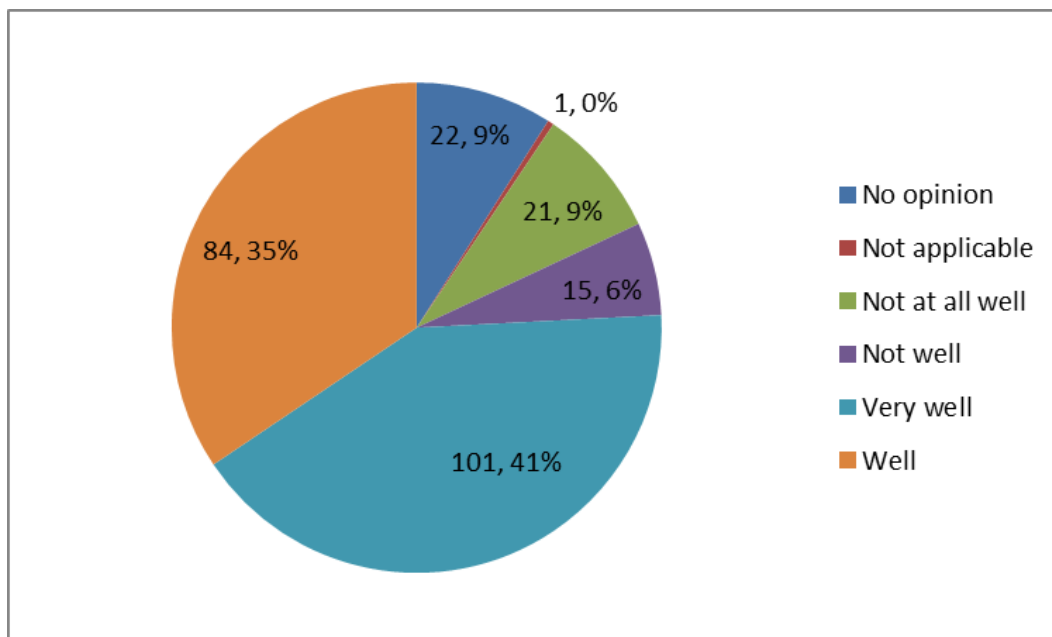
Table 5.6 Summary of free text responses to question 8 - Do you have any comments on our approach to environmental impact?

Theme	Frequency
Drainage	102
Concerned about flooding generally	53
Concerned about water run-off	17
Concerned about drainage	15
Aware of importance of flood prevention	10
Concerned about the impact of drainage on residents' lives	3
Supportive of flooding prevention measures	3
Concerned about use of attenuation ponds	1
Noise	55
Concerned about noise pollution	41
Aware of importance of noise reduction	7
Supportive of noise reduction measures	5
Concerned about increased road vibrations	1
Concerned about impact of noise from scheme on flight paths for users of RNAS Yeovilton	1
Nature of the solution	34
Stated general support	12
Suggested alternative route	6
Stated general concern	5
Concerns over expense	3
Noted as not necessary	2
Concerned about lack of footpaths	2
Supportive of decreased traffic	1
Perceived as a necessary investment	1
Concerned about circuitous layout of junctions	1
Proposed flyover at Podimore	1
General environmental impact	38
Concerned environmental impact of increased road use	19

Theme	Frequency
Concern about environmental impact of construction	6
Concerned about general environmental impact	6
Supportive of reduced environmental impact	4
Supportive of encouraging sustainable travel	2
Supportive of measures taken to reduce environmental impact generally	1
Impact on local community	27
Concerned about impact of construction, specifically on local services and immediate environmental impact	19
Concerned about local resident's road safety	3
Concerned about health and welfare of local residents	3
Emphasis on importance of considering local knowledge	1
Concerned about local peoples' health and wellbeing	1
Air quality	28
Concerned about air quality impact	27
Supportive of decreased air quality impact	1
Visuals	25
Supportive of screening buildings / tree planting / cuttings	10
Supportive of planting woodland	5
Concerned about visual impact	5
Concerned about lighting	5
Process	15
Said process insufficient	10
Felt diagrams unclear	3
Felt description in consultation materials unclear	2
Ecology	7
Concerned about impact on local wildlife	4
Proposed further tree planting	2
Aware of the importance of reforestation	1
Proposed environmental structures	1
Proposed use of green bridge	1

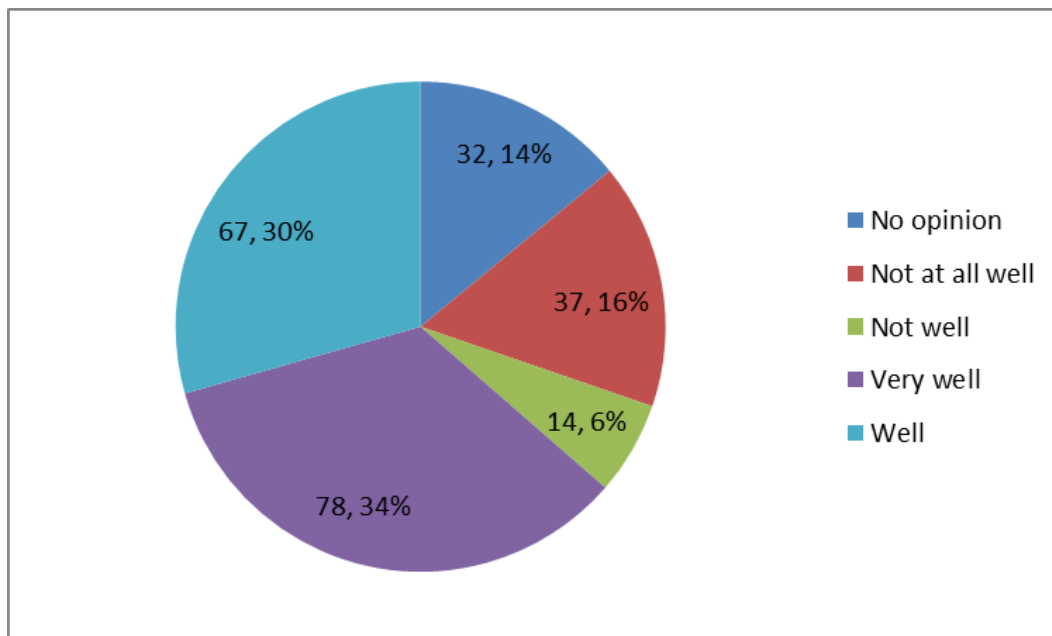
- 5.1.16 Question 9 asked respondents how well they felt the proposal met Highways England's objectives for the scheme. A separate section of the question asked about each objective, providing a series of tick-box options for each.
- 5.1.17 Question 9(i) asked about the objective to reduce delays and queues that occur during peak hours and peak holiday periods throughout the year. Figure 5.8 summarises responses received for each tick box option.

Figure 5.8 Responses to question 9(i) - Reducing delays and queues that occur during peak hours and peak holiday periods throughout the year:



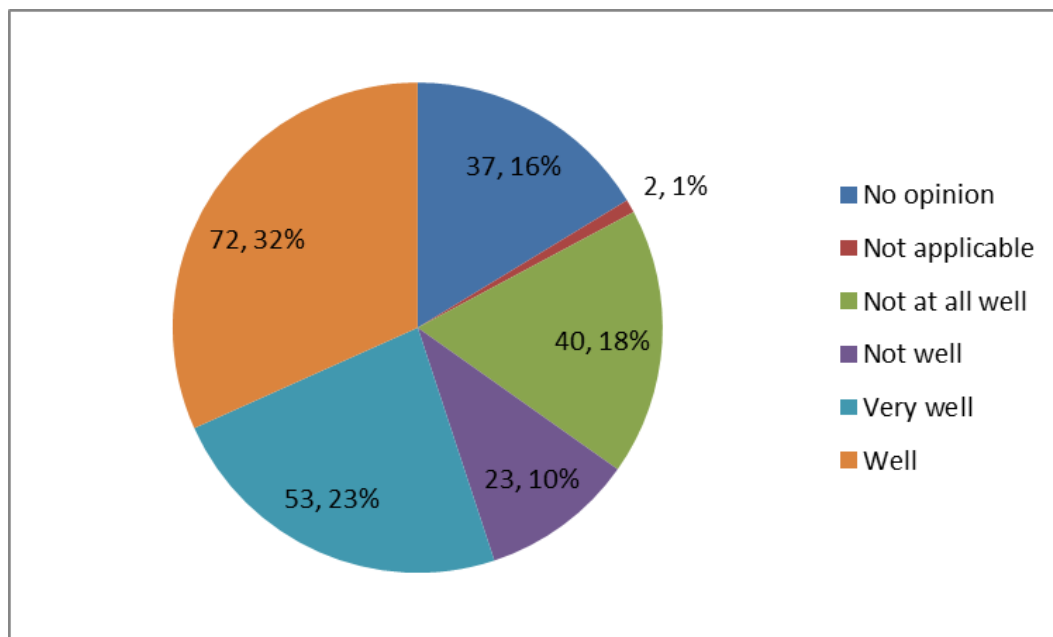
5.1.18 Question 9(ii) asked about the objective to improve safety. Figure 5.9 summarises responses received for each tick box option.

Figure 5.9 Responses to question 9(ii) - Improving safety:



5.1.19 Question 9(iii) asked about the objective to avoid unacceptable impacts on the surrounding natural and historic environment and landscape. Figure 5.10 summarises responses received for each tick box option.

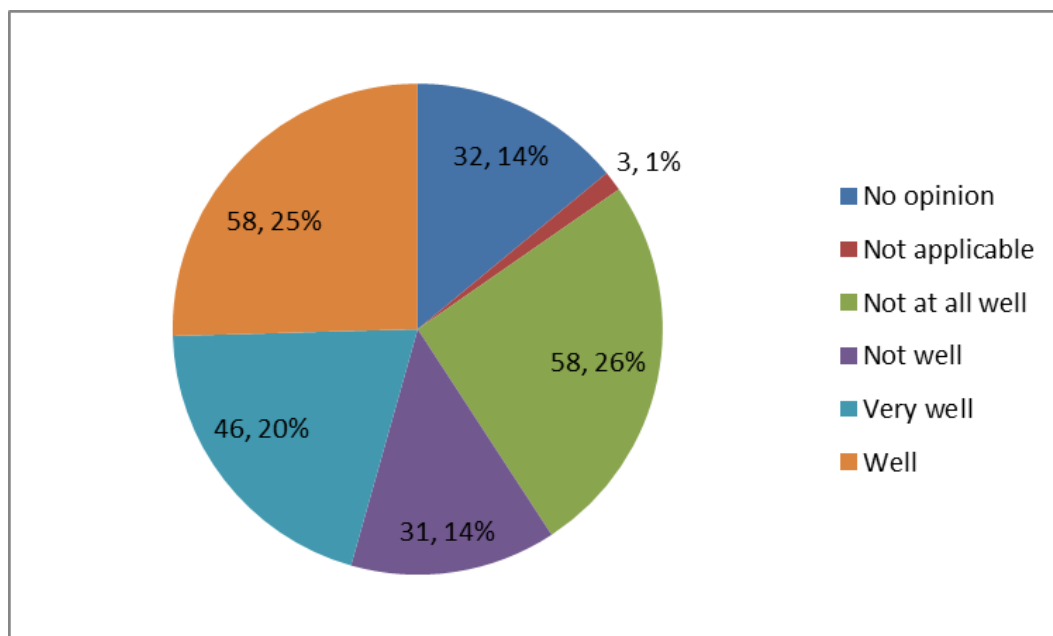
Figure 5.10 Responses to question 9(iii) - Avoiding unacceptable impacts on the surrounding natural and historic environment and landscape:



5.1.20 Question 9(iv) asked about the objective to reduce community severance and promoting opportunities for improving quality of life.

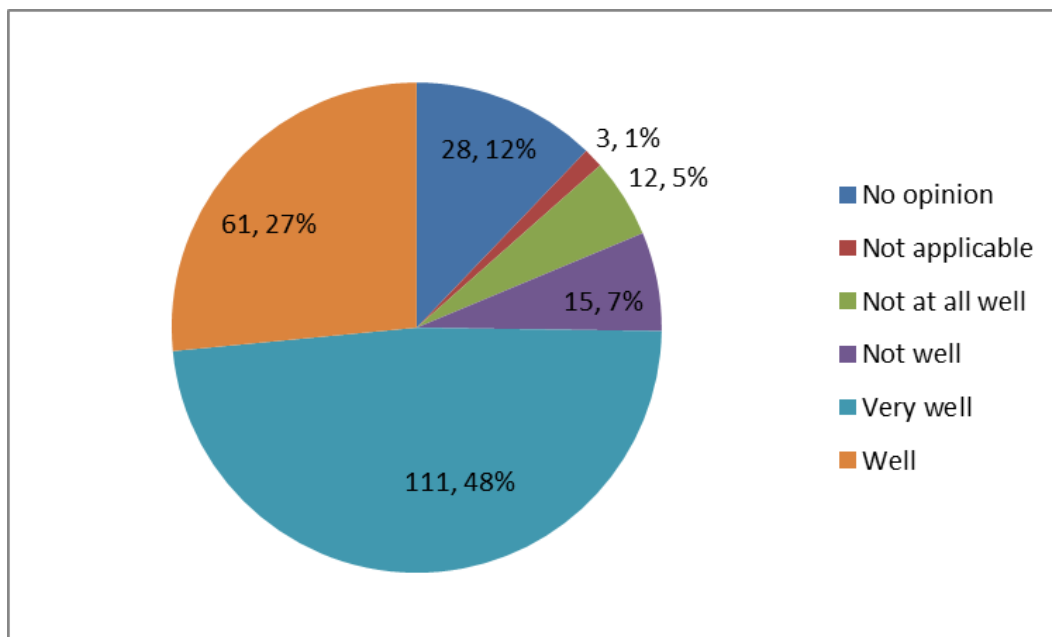
5.1.21 Figure 5.11 summarises responses received for each tick box option.

Figure 5.11 Responses to question 9(iv) - Reducing community severance and promoting opportunities for improving quality of life:



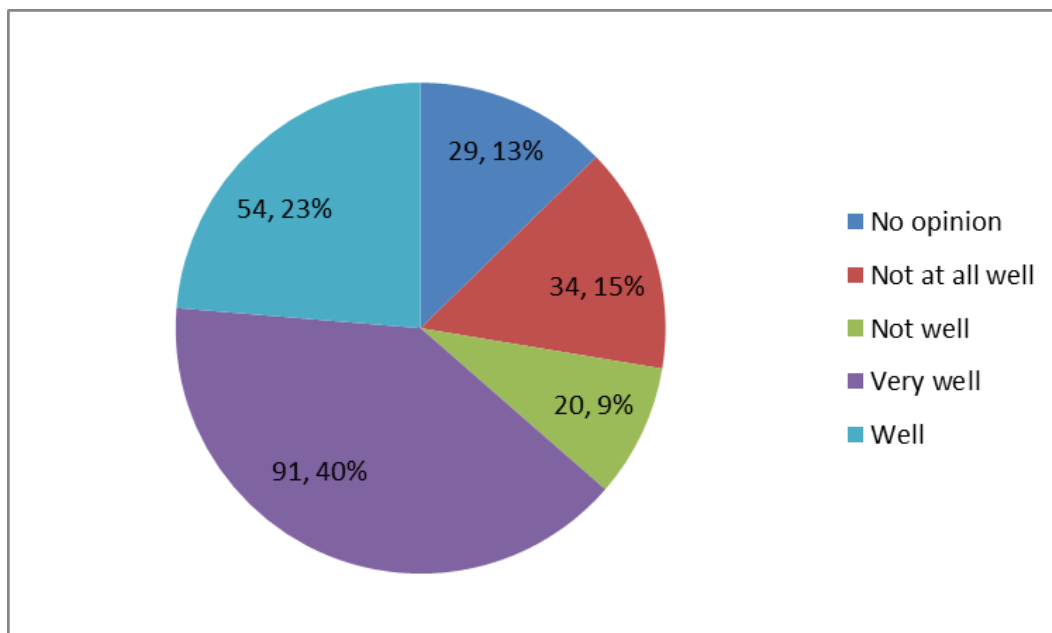
5.1.22 Question 9(v) asked about the objective to improve the connectivity of the south west to the rest of the UK. Figure 5.12 summarises responses received for each tick box option.

Figure 5.12 Responses to question 9(v) - Improving the connectivity of the south west to the rest of the UK:



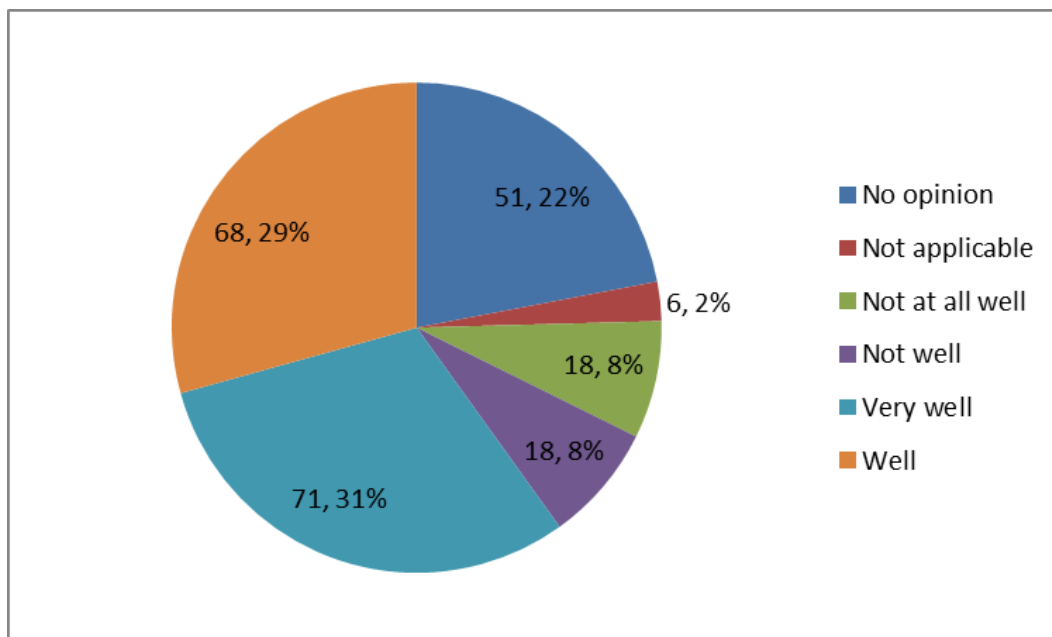
5.1.23 Question 9(vi) asked about the objective to improve journey time reliability and provide extra capacity to make it easier to manage traffic when incidents occur. Figure 5.13 summarises responses received for each tick box option.

Figure 5.13 Responses to question 9 (vi) - Improving journey time reliability and provide extra capacity to make it easier to manage traffic when incidents occur:



5.1.24 Question 9(vii) asked about the objective to support economic growth in the south west. Figure 5.14 summarises responses received for each tick box option.

Figure 5.14 Responses to question 9 (vii) - Supporting economic growth in the south west:



5.1.25 Question 10 asked respondents whether they had any other comments on Highways England's proposal. It provided a space for free text comments, which are summarised in Table 5.7.

Table 5.7 Summary of free text responses to question 10

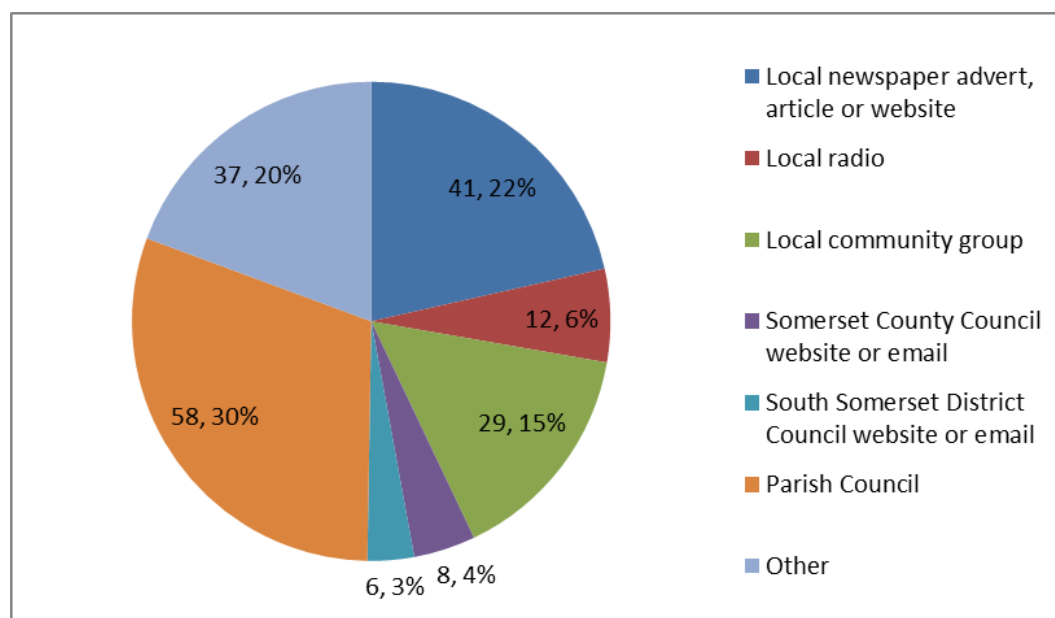
Theme	Frequency
Nature of the solution	106
Noted long build up and / or desire to see it quickly implemented	19
Concerned about chosen route option	17
Concerns over expense	13
Perceived as a necessary investment	10
Stated general concern	9
Concerned about length of construction period	8
Supportive of chosen route option	7
Noted as not necessary	5
Proposed alternative route	5
Scheme perceived as not effectively unlocking regional economic growth	4
Stated general support	4
Desire to see similar schemes and process implemented in other areas	3
Perceived as improving connectivity with rest of UK	2
Proposed linking up with wider road network	1
Safety	66
Perceived as an unsafe solution	25
Concerned about impact of road closers on accidents and emergencies	12
Concerned about safety impact of inappropriate HGV use	8
Concerned about non-motorised user safety	5

Theme	Frequency
Concerned about safety impact of short slip roads	5
Concerned about safety impact for local community	5
Perceived as a safe solution	3
Concerned about safety generally	2
Concerned about safety during construction	1
Impact on local community	60
Concerned about impact of construction on local community	17
Concerned about impact on local services and economy	14
Concerned about health and welfare of local residents	11
Emphasised importance of considering local knowledge	9
Desire for further consideration of impact relative to proposed housing development and garden town	5
Concerned about impact of loss of land locally	4
Traffic	56
Concerned about increased local road use in West Camel, Queen Camel and Yeovilton specifically	19
Concerned about increased local road use in general	19
Perceived as not effectively decreasing journey times	5
Traffic modelling must consider potential new garden town	3
Perceived as decreasing journey time	3
Perceived as increasing journey time	3
Concerned about signage	2
Proposed further links with Yeovil	1
Concerned about farm traffic usage	1
Environmental impact	40
Concerned about noise impact	9
Concerned about air quality impact	5
Concerned about drainage	5
Concerned about visual impact	4
Concerned about general environmental impact	4
Concerned about local wildlife	4
Concerned about the impact on historic buildings and monuments	3
Concerned about lighting impact	2
Aware of importance of environmental impact	2
Supportive of screening buildings / tree planting / cuttings	2
Design	28
Concern about circuitous layout of junctions	4
Proposed further cycling and pedestrian provisions, bridle paths	4
Concerned about the provision for agricultural vehicles	3
Opposed to junctions	2
Proposed single carriageway parallel road over Camel Hill if no junction at Downhead	2
Proposed added slip paths to better meet the needs of the local economy	2

Theme	Frequency
Concerned about access to RNAS Yeovilton	2
Concerned about use of compact junctions	1
Proposed flyover at Podimore junction	1
Proposed speed limit	1
Opposed to junctions at Hazlegrove	1
Opposed to junction at Podimore	1
Support junction at Downhead	1
Proposed retaining east-west link road with no junctions off the new road at West Camel	1
Desire for safe non-motorised user crossings at Higher Farm Lane, Eastmead Lane, Camel Cross, Downhead Lane junction, Traits Lane, Camel Hill House / Gason Lane and Sparkford Ridge Copse	1
Concerned about bridleway provision	1
Process	12
Said no / none	6
Noted unclear information given	5
Frustrated with the roadshow process	1

5.1.26 Question 11 asked respondents how they heard about the consultation. It provided a series of tick box options, with a further option to state if they had found out by a means other than those listed in the question. Figure 5.15 presents a summary of responses to this question.

Figure 5.15 Responses to question 11- Do you have any other comments on our proposals?



5.1.27 All responses to the consultation under s47 of the PA 2008 received as letters and email were logged and PDF files created for all hard copy responses. These are provided in full in **Consultation Report Annex K (TR010036/APP/5.15)**.

5.1.28 Highways England did not receive any responses identifying themselves as being in relation to the consultation under s48 of the PA 2008.

5.2 Regard to responses (in accordance with s49 of the PA 2008)

5.2.1 S49 of the PA 2008 imposes a duty on the applicant 'to have regard to any relevant response' received under s42, s47 or s48 of the PA2008 within the specified deadline.

5.2.2 Highways England considers that the responses to the closed questions included in the questionnaire provided as part of the consultation under s47 of the PA 2008 support the submitted application.

5.2.3 A larger number of respondents agreed than disagreed with Highways England's proposals with regards Hazlegrove junction, Downhead junction and non-motorised users.

5.2.4 Similarly, for each scheme objective included in the questionnaire, a larger number of respondents felt that Highways England's proposal met the objective than disagreed.

5.2.5 Highways England has shown regard to all other issues raised during the statutory consultation, in accordance with s49 of the PA 2008. This is reported in detail in annex N, which includes tables summarising written consultation responses and evidencing what regard has been had to each of them.

5.2.6 Tables are included for each individual strand of statutory consultation (s42(a), s42(b), s42(d), s47 and s48).

5.3 Summary of scheme changes as a result of consultation

5.3.1 Table 5.8 sets out key design changes made as a result of responses received during the statutory consultation.

Table 5.8 Changes to the scheme as a result of consultation

No.	Element of the scheme & issue raised in consultation	Design change as a result of consultation response
1	The close proximity of the Vale Farm junction to the A303 eastbound off-slip is unacceptable.	<p>Highways England has amended to the design of this section of the Hazlegrove Roundabout, including a roundabout to address the comment raised.</p> <p>The diverge has been designed to a type A layout based on the traffic flow ranges contained within TD22 / 06 figure 2 / 5. The diverge has been designed for a rural all-purpose carriageway with a design speed of 120kph. As defined in TD22 / 06 table 4 / 4 an entry taper length of 150m and nose length of 85m has been provided.</p>

		<p>This link is ~230m long from the back of the nose of Hazlegrove eastbound off slip taper and adopts a design speed of 70kph with desirable minimum sight stopping distance of 120m achieved.</p> <p>A roundabout has replaced the T-junction to better serve traffic movements in this location and reduce the likelihood of collisions in this location by reducing the number of conflict points.</p> <p>The roundabout will act as a traffic calming measure and therefore encourage drivers to reduce their speed on the approach to it.</p>
2	It is not clear whether the Camel Hill link road is a slip road or interchange road, as it is too long to be a slip road.	<p>Highways England has amended the layout of Hazlegrove junction to be more compact, featuring a roundabout on the northern side of the A303.</p> <p>The extent of the slip road is defined from the back of the nose of the A303 eastbound diverge taper and the give way line on the newly provided roundabout, a length of ~230m.</p> <p>Camel Hill Link extents are defined from immediately east of the new roundabout to the give way line on the existing Sparkford Roundabout, a length of 690m.</p>
3	The Hazlegrove link road should be designed in accordance with TD40 / 94 Layout of Compact Grade Separated Junctions. It is not suitable for local traffic as turning traffic accessing and egressing Hazlegrove House would conflict with vehicles accelerating to re-join the A303.	<p>The layout of Hazlegrove Junction has been amended to address this comment.</p> <p>Access to Hazlegrove House has been removed from Hazlegrove Junction eastbound on-slip layout design.</p> <p>An alternative private means of access to Hazlegrove House is provided between the compact roundabout located to the western extent of Camel Hill Link and Hazlegrove Junction eastbound on-slip.</p> <p>Through this provision, both Hazlegrove House access and Hazlegrove eastbound on-slip have dedicated junctions / access.</p> <p>This has completely deconflicted local traffic wishing to access / egress Hazlegrove House with that of vehicles wishing to join / re-join the eastbound A303.</p>
4	The junction of the Camel Cross link with the old A303 is too close to the new junction,	Highways England has amended prioritisation at this junction in response to this comment.

	creating a risk of conflict with turning vehicles.	<p>The layout design has been changed from a t junction with priority given to traffic leaving / entering the A303, to a t junction with priority given to B3151. The change in junction form is considered to change driver behavior as they would be expecting to slow as they approach the give way line to the B3151 junction from the A303.</p> <p>The junction has also been moved approximately 50m further south and appropriate forward visibility is provided with verges widened at the junction to provide full visibility of 120m at the junction.</p> <p>Queuing off the A303 is not considered to be an issue due to the relatively low traffic flows.</p>
5	Downhead Lane junction is too close to the exit slip of the A303, creating the potential for conflict with turning vehicles.	<p>Highways England has amended the layout of this junction, creating a simpler layout overall, to address this comment.</p> <p>Downhead Junction link which provides access to Downhead Lane has been moved slightly north. It is designed in accordance with TD40 / 94 for which, the geometrical standards (30kph design speed) for the compact connector road have been established at a level of provision intended to maintain slow vehicular speeds through their length thereby improving safety for other road users.</p> <p>This means that speeds on the approach to Downhead Lane junction will be regulated with desirable minimum 50m sight stopping distance provided to and from Downhead Lane junction.</p>
6	The long, straight section of the Downhead link section of the Downhead Lane junction will encourage high vehicle speeds.	<p>Highways England has amended this section of the Downhead Lane junction so that it is no longer straight to address this comment.</p> <p>This length has now been shortened by ~215m. This link has been designed in accordance with TD9 / 93 and a 50kph design speed.</p> <p>The selection of this low design speed determines the geometric standard of the link which is appropriate for its rural location. This design standard inherently discourages high speeds as 50kph is the maximum safe speed drivers would be expected to adopt under favourable roadway and environmental conditions.</p>
7	The existing lay-by opposite the	This lay-by is removed from the scheme.

	eastbound side of the Sparkford bypass should be extinguished as a source of noise pollution.	
8	Give priority to the slip road exiting the A303 over the Steart Hill Road in order to simplify visitors' progress around this slip road system.	<p>The design has been amended to give priority to the A303 off-slip at the Downhead Lane junction with Steart Hill.</p> <p>This layout now leaves the proposed A303 and loops back over the proposed A303 to tie in to a new roundabout namely, Steart Hill roundabout on the retained A303. This provides direct connectivity from the eastbound A303 to the retained section of the A303 and B3151.</p>
9	The haul road should either use the route currently proposed for access to Blue Haze, use existing tracks through Steart Wood, or at least be moved closer to the northern boundary of Blue Haze.	The haul road has been moved closer to the northern boundary of Blue Haze, and its size has been reduced to a single lane in response to this comment.
10	The proposed siting of the haul road through Camel Hill Farm is not appropriate for landscape reasons.	Highways England engaged directly with the respondent and has amended the route of the haul road through Camel Hill Farm.

5.3.2 In addition, in response to comments stating that a transport assessment would be required to fully assess the impacts of the scheme, Highways England notes that PINS did not state that this would be necessary in its scoping opinion. Furthermore, the National Networks National Policy Statement does not require the production of a Transport Assessment. However, Highways England recognises the importance of providing the highways authority with clarity on where it can find the information it needs to assess the proposal. It has therefore worked with Somerset County Council to identify the traffic information which it requires to be included in the application, and ensured this is provided.

5.3.3 A number of comments suggested more detailed information about the environmental impacts of the scheme was required. This has been provided through the Environmental Statement submitted with the scheme. Where consultees made suggestions about the scope of information required, Highways England considered these comments as part of the preparation of the Environmental Statement.

5.3.4 These changes are also shown on Figure 5.16.

Figure 5.16 Location of design changes



5.3.5 The following significant comments did not result in design changes:

- Requests to remove Downhead Lane junction and Hazlegrove junction from the scheme. These have been retained as they are required to maintain access between local roads and the A303, and to enable local road and non-motorised users to cross the A303 once at-grade junctions are removed;
- Requests to retain the existing A303 as a parallel local road to assist local traffic flow and provide a diversionary route avoiding West Camel and Queen Camel in case the A303 is closed. Highways England has not been able to incorporate this suggestion into its design. An analysis of the environmental impact of the scheme had shown it would be marginally worse than the current proposal, due to the presence of the Camel Hill Transmitter Station Local Wildlife Site. There is uncertainty about the availability of MOD land, which would be necessary for the parallel local road proposal. It would not be possible to rely on the use of this land, and doing so would be a risk to the delivery of the scheme. Additionally, the cost of the parallel local road proposal, estimated at £180 million, was more than the £171 million estimated for the current proposal. Highways England recognises concerns about the impact of the scheme on traffic on local roads raised during the statutory consultation. However, Highways England's modelling show that the effect will not be great enough to be considered significant in transport assessment terms. Taken with the fact that the scheme is deliverable without the proposed alternative, Highways England would not be able to justify the inclusion of the parallel local road;
- Requests to provide through roads for businesses which currently have direct access to the A303. This is not possible while meeting the scheme's objective of removing at-grade accesses to the A303. Access to these properties will be maintained by the scheme;
- Requests for signage to support existing businesses. This is a matter for the detailed design of the scheme and will be considered at that time;
- Requests for additional or alternative crossing points for non-motorised users. Highways England considers that the non-motorised user crossing points incorporated in the Downhead Lane and Hazlegrove junctions will support patterns

of movement identified through the non-statutory consultation, and provide adequate means to enable non-motorised users to cross the A303 safely;

- Requests to place specific sections of the road in cuttings or on embankments. The use of cuttings and embankments in the scheme design has been determined by the topography of the upgraded A303's route. Where modelling conducted as part of the preparation of the Environmental Statement has shown this will have noise or visual impacts, appropriate mitigation such as use of false cuttings, bunds and planting has been included in the scheme design;
- Requests to put in place traffic-calming measures on local roads in the vicinity of the A303. These roads are not under the control of Highways England, but where comments are consistent with the results of traffic modelling on impacts on local roads, these comments will be reflected in discussions with the local highways authority, Somerset County Council;
- Requests to remove the skew bridge from Hazlegrove junction. A skew bridge has been retained in the final design of Hazlegrove junction. This is to ensure that the main parts of the junction are kept away from the most sensitive parts of Hazlegrove House (grade II Listed) registered park and garden;
- Requests that route option 2 as set out during the route options consultation is used instead of route option 1. This was not within the scope of the statutory consultation. Highways England has set out its reasons for selecting route option 1 in the Scheme Assessment Report, available in **Consultation Report Annex K (TR010036/APP/5.12)**; and,
- Requests to upgrade other sections of the A303 to dual carriageway. These are not within the scope of the scheme.

5.3.6 Full details of the regard that Highways England has had to all suggested scheme changes are set out in **Consultation Report Annex K (TR010036/APP/5.15)**, including the points summarised above, which includes tables summarising written consultation responses and evidencing what regard has been had to each of them.

6 Conclusion

6.1 Compliance with advice and guidance

- 6.1.1 Highways England has undertaken a consultation process which complies with the MHCLG guidance on the pre-application process (March 2015), as well as relevant advice from PINS.
- 6.1.2 Table 6.1 evidences how Highways England has complied with MHCLG guidance on the pre-application process (March 2015):

Table 6.1 Compliance with MHCLG guidance on the pre-application process (March 2015)

Para:	Requirement:	Evidence of compliance:
17	When circulating consultation documents, developers should be clear about their status, for example ensuring it is clear to the public if a document is purely for purposes of consultation.	Documents produced as part of the consultation clearly stated their status. Letters issued to consultees as part of the s42 and s47 consultations set out that they contained details of statutory consultation. The status of the consultation booklet is set out in its page 5, and the status of the consultation questionnaire on its page 1. Copies of these documents can be found in Consultation Report Annex K (TR010036/APP/5.12) .
18	Early involvement of local communities, local authorities and statutory consultees can bring about significant benefits for all parties.	Highways England engaged early with the local community, local authorities and statutory consultees. Establishing a series of technical working groups enabled Highways England to seek input from local authorities and statutory consultees when developing its proposals for statutory consultation. Highways England also met with parish councils along the route of the scheme prior to statutory consultation. Details of early engagement are set out in tables 2.1 and 2.4.
19	The pre-application consultation process is crucial to the effectiveness of the major infrastructure consenting regime. A thorough process can give the Secretary of State confidence that issues that will arise during the 6 months examination period have been identified, considered, and – as far as possible – that applicants have sought to reach agreement on those issues.	Highways England has conducted a thorough consultation process which has allowed it to identify, consider and, as far as possible, seek to reach agreement on issues likely to arise during the 6 month examination. The early engagement and non-statutory consultation set out in chapter 2 of this report provided Highways England with the opportunity to identify and consider issues early in the development of the scheme. The statutory consultation set out in chapter 4 of this document built on this understanding and further identify and consider issues likely to arise. Consultation Report Annex N

Para:	Requirement:	Evidence of compliance:
		(TR010036/APP/5.15) includes evidence of how Highways England has considered issues raised through the statutory consultation. Where appropriate, Highways England has prepared SoCGs with relevant statutory consultees to demonstrate areas of agreement.
20	<p>Experience suggests that, to be of most value, consultation should be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Based on accurate information that gives consultees a clear view of what is proposed including any options; • Shared at an early enough stage so that the proposal can still be influenced, while being sufficiently developed to provide some detail on what is being proposed; and • Engaging and accessible in style, encouraging consultees to react and offer their views. 	<p>For both the non-statutory consultation and statutory consultation, Highways England shared information at an early enough stage to allow the proposal to be influenced, while being sufficiently developed to provide some detail on what is being proposed. In each consultation, Highways England developed a clear scope for what could be influenced by consultees. For the non-statutory consultation, this was to feedback on the 2 route options, and to support design development of the scheme by gathering information on how consultees used the existing A303. For the statutory consultation, this was to provide feedback on the design of the upgrade, including the location, purpose and layout of junctions, provision for non-motorised users, and environmental impact and mitigation. For each consultation, Highways England published a booklet written in an engaging and accessible style, setting out what it was possible to influence at that stage, providing accurate information that gave consultees a clear view of what was proposed, and encouraging them to react and offer their views. A copy of the booklet produced for the non-statutory consultation is included with Consultation Report Annex A (TR010036/APP/5.2). A copy of the booklet produced for the statutory consultation is included in Consultation Report Annex K (TR010036/APP/5.12).</p>
25	<p>Consultation should be thorough, effective and proportionate. Some applicants may have their own distinct approaches to consultation, perhaps drawing on their own or relevant sector experience, for example if there are industry protocols that can be adapted. Larger, more complex applications are likely to need to go beyond the</p>	<p>Highways England has conducted a thorough, effective and proportionate consultation. The 43 days provided to comment for consultation under s42, s47 and s48 of the PA 2008 was greater than the 28 calendar days required to be provided for comments as prescribed by s45(2) of the PA 2008. Based on Highways England's experience of the sector and developing highways schemes, it considered this period of comment proportionate to the scale and</p>

Para:	Requirement:	Evidence of compliance:
	statutory minimum timescales laid down in the Planning Act to ensure enough time for consultees to understand project proposals and formulate a response. Many proposals will require detailed technical input, especially regarding impacts, so sufficient time will need to be allowed for this. Consultation should also be sufficiently flexible to respond to the needs and requirements of consultees, for example where a consultee has indicated that they would prefer to be consulted via email only, this should be accommodated as far as possible.	complexity of the scheme. Highways England has also been conscious of the need to be sufficiently flexible to respond to the needs and requirements of consultees. As set out in 4.5.12, we provided a variety of means to respond to the statutory consultation, including completing a questionnaire online, completing and returning a hard copy of the questionnaire, submitting comments by letter, or submitting comments by email. We also provided a variety of means of finding out about the proposal, including attending a consultation event, looking on the consultation website, going to a public information point, or contacting Highways England directly. Details of this are set out in section 4.5.
26	The Planning Act requires certain bodies and groups of people to be consulted at the pre-application stage, but allows for flexibility in the precise form that consultation may take depending on local circumstances and the needs of the project itself. Sections 42 – 44 of the Planning Act and Regulations set out details of who should be consulted, including local authorities, the Marine Management Organisation (where appropriate), other statutory bodies, and persons having an interest in the land to be developed. Section 47 in the Planning Act sets out the applicant's statutory duty to consult local communities. In addition, applicants may also wish to strengthen their case by seeking the views of other people who are not statutory consultees, but who may be significantly affected by the project.	Highways England has identified and consulted with parties prescribed by s42, s43 and s44 of the PA 2008, as well as the local community as prescribed in s47 of the PA 2008 and defined in the SoCC. Details of how Highways England consulted in accordance with each of these sections of the PA 2008 are set out in chapter 4 of this report. In addition, Highways England sought the views of a range of groups which were not statutory consultees, but were deemed to have a potential interest. Details of these are set out in Consultation Report Annex M (TR010036/APP/5.14) .
27	The Planning Act and Regulations set out the statutory consultees and prescribed people who must be consulted during the pre-application process. Many statutory consultees are responsible for consent regimes	Statutory consultees such as the Environment Agency, Natural England and Historic England were engaged with early in the development of the scheme, prior to the non-statutory consultation. Early engagement is set out in table 2.1. These bodies were included in the

Para:	Requirement:	Evidence of compliance:
	where, under section 120 of the Planning Act, decisions on those consents can be included within the decision on a Development Consent Order. Where an applicant proposes to include non-planning consents within their Development Consent Order, the bodies that would normally be responsible for granting these consents should make every effort to facilitate this. They should only object to the inclusion of such non-planning consents with good reason, and after careful consideration of reasonable alternatives. It is therefore important that such bodies are consulted at an early stage. In addition, there will be a range of national and other interest groups who could be make an important contribution during consultation. Applicants are therefore encouraged to consult widely on project proposals.	non-statutory public consultation set out in section 2.1, and continued to be engaged in the period between this and the statutory consultation as set out in table 2.4. They were then consulted under s42 of the PA 2008 as set out in section 4.3. In addition, Highways England sought the views of a range of groups which were not statutory consultees, but were deemed to have a potential interest. Details of these are set out in Consultation Report Annex M (TR010036/APP/5.14) .
29	Applicants will often need detailed technical input from expert bodies to assist with identifying and mitigating the social, environmental, design and economic impacts of projects, and other important matters. Technical expert input will often be needed in advance of formal compliance with the pre-application requirements. Early engagement with these bodies can help avoid unnecessary delays and the costs of having to make changes at later stages of the process. It is equally important that statutory consultees respond to a request for technical input in a timely manner. Applicants are therefore advised to discuss and agree a timetable with consultees for the provision of such inputs.	Highways England sought technical input from relevant expert bodies at every stage of scheme development. This included through the early engagement set out in table 2.1, during the non-statutory consultation set out in section 2.1, continuing to meet in the period between the non-statutory and statutory consultations as set out in table 2.4, and during the statutory consultation set out in chapter 4. To support these organisations in providing input in a timely manner, Highways England established a series of technical working groups as set out in table 2.4. These provided a framework and timetable for technical discussions.
38	The role of the local authority in such discussions should be to provide	Highways England engaged early with host local authorities to seek expertise on these issues.

Para:	Requirement:	Evidence of compliance:
	expertise about the make-up of its area, including whether people in the area might have particular needs or requirements, whether the authority has identified any groups as difficult to reach and what techniques might be appropriate to overcome barriers to communication. The local authority should also provide advice on the appropriateness of the applicant's suggested consultation techniques and methods. The local authority's aim in such discussions should be to ensure that the people affected by the development can take part in a thorough, accessible and effective consultation exercise about the proposed project.	This included early engagement and the production of a non-statutory SoCC prior to the non-statutory consultation, as set out in table 2.1. Highways England then established a communications working group involving local authority officers to seek expertise on these issues prior to the statutory consultation, as set out in table 2.4. As prescribed by s47 of the PA 2008, Highways England prepared a SoCC setting out how it proposed to consult, about the proposed application, people living in the vicinity of the land and consulted with each local authority that is within s43(1) of the PA 2008 on the SoCC. The regard that Highways England had to responses received as part of this consultation is set out in table 4.1.
41	Where a local authority raises an issue or concern on the Statement of Community Consultation which the applicant feels unable to address, the applicant is advised to explain in their consultation report their course of action to the Secretary of State when they submit their application.	The regard that Highways England had to responses received as part of this consultation is set out in table 4.1.
50	It is the applicant's responsibility to demonstrate at submission of the application that due diligence has been undertaken in identifying all land interests and applicants should make every reasonable effort to ensure that the Book of Reference (which records and categories those land interests) is up-to-date at the time of submission.	Highways England has diligently sought to identify all land interests and ensure that the Book of Reference (TR010036/APP/4.3) remains up to date. Details of this are set out in 4.3.5 and the Book of Reference (TR010036/APP/4.3) .
54	In consulting on project proposals, an inclusive approach is needed to ensure that different groups have the opportunity to participate and are not disadvantaged in the process. Applicants should use a range of methods and techniques to ensure that they access all sections of the community in question. Local authorities will be able to provide	Highways England has adopted an inclusive approach to consultation to ensure that different groups have the opportunity to participate and are not disadvantaged in the process. The SoCC included proposals to support the participation of hard to reach groups in the consultation, and Highways England incorporated local authority feedback on this subject into the SoCC. Details of the approach set out in the SoCC are included in table 4.7, and details of the regard Highways

Para:	Requirement:	Evidence of compliance:
	advice on what works best in terms of consulting their local communities given their experience of carrying out consultation in their area.	England had to local authority comments on this area are included in table 4.1.
55	Applicants must set out clearly what is being consulted on. They must be careful to make it clear to local communities what is settled and why, and what remains to be decided, so that expectations of local communities are properly managed. Applicants could prepare a short document specifically for local communities, summarising the project proposals and outlining the matters on which the view of the local community is sought. This can describe core elements of the project and explain what the potential benefits and impacts may be. Such documents should be written in clear, accessible, and non-technical language. Applicants should consider making it available in formats appropriate to the needs of people with disabilities if requested. There may be cases where documents may need to be bilingual (for example, Welsh and English in some areas), but it is not the policy of the Government to encourage documents to be translated into non-native languages.	For each consultation, Highways England published a booklet written in an engaging and accessible style, setting out what it was possible to influence at that stage, providing accurate information that gave consultees a clear view of what was proposed, and encouraging them to react and offer their views. A copy of the booklet produced for the non-statutory consultation is included with Consultation Report Annex A (TR010036/APP/5.2) . A copy of the booklet produced for the statutory consultation is included in Consultation Report Annex K (TR010036/APP/5.12) . Copies of consultation materials were available in alternative formats on request.
57	The Statement of Community Consultation should act as a framework for the community consultation generally, for example, setting out where details and dates of any events will be published. The Statement of Community Consultation should be made available online, at any exhibitions or other events held by applicants. It should be placed at appropriate local deposit points (for example libraries, council offices) and sent to local	As set out in 4.2.4, Highways England included a framework for community consultation in the SoCC, including where details and dates of events would be published. The SoCC was made available on the consultation website, at all exhibitions, and placed at local deposit points as set out in table 4.2.

Para:	Requirement:	Evidence of compliance:
	community groups as appropriate.	
58	Applicants are required to publicise their proposed application under section 48 of the Planning Act and the Regulations and set out the detail of what this publicity must entail. This publicity is an integral part of the public consultation process. Where possible, the first of the 2 required local newspaper advertisements should coincide approximately with the beginning of the consultation with communities. However, given the detailed information required for the publicity in the Regulations, aligning publicity with consultation may not always be possible, especially where a multi-stage consultation is intended.	Highways England publicised the proposed application under s48 of the PA 2008 by publishing notices in the <i>London Gazette</i> , the <i>Times</i> , the <i>Western Daily Gazette</i> and <i>Somerset County Gazette</i> on Thursday 18 January and Thursday 25 January 2018. This was the period immediately preceding the beginning of statutory community consultation. These notices are included in Consultation Report Annex L(TR010036/APP/5.13) .
68	To realise the benefits of consultation on a project, it must take place at a sufficiently early stage to allow consultees a real opportunity to influence the proposals. At the same time consultees will need sufficient information on a project to be able to recognise and understand the impacts.	<p>For both the non-statutory public consultation and statutory consultation, Highways England shared information at an early enough stage to allow the proposal to be influenced, while being sufficiently developed to provide sufficient information on what is being proposed to enable consultees to recognise and understand its impacts.</p> <p>In each consultation, Highways England developed a clear scope for what could be influenced by consultees. For the non-statutory consultation, this was to feedback on the 2 route options, and to support design development of the scheme by gathering information on how consultees used the existing A303. For the statutory consultation, this was to provide feedback on the design of the upgrade, including the location, purpose and layout of junctions, provision for non-motorised users, and environmental impact and mitigation.</p> <p>For each consultation, Highways England published a booklet written in an engaging and accessible style, setting out what it was possible to influence at that stage, providing accurate information that gave consultees a clear view of</p>

Para:	Requirement:	Evidence of compliance:
		what was proposed, and encouraging them to react and offer their views. A copy of the booklet produced for the non-statutory consultation is included with Consultation Report Annex A (TR010036/APP/5. 2) . A copy of the booklet produced for the statutory consultation is included in Consultation Report Annex K (TR010036/APP/5.12) .
72	The timing and duration of consultation will be likely to vary from project to project, depending on size and complexity, and the range and scale of the impacts. The Planning Act requires a consultation period of a minimum of 28 days from the day after receipt of the consultation documents. It is expected that this may be sufficient for projects which are straightforward and uncontroversial in nature. But many projects, particularly larger or more controversial ones, may require longer consultation periods than this. Applicants should therefore set consultation deadlines that are realistic and proportionate to the proposed project. It is also important that consultees do not withhold information that might affect a project, and that they respond in good time to applicants. Where responses are not received by the deadline, the applicant is not obliged to take those responses into account.	<p>The 43 days provided to comment for consultation under s42, s47 and s48 of the PA 2008 was greater than the 28 calendar days required to be provided for comments as prescribed by s45(2) of the PA 2008. Based on Highways England's experience of the sector and developing highways schemes, it considered this period of comment proportionate to the scale and complexity of the scheme.</p> <p>Highways England recognises the importance of not withholding information that might affect a project. As set out in 4.5.8, Highways England published a document summarising provisional local traffic information on Wednesday 31 January 2018. This was made available on the consultation website and at public information points, and at all consultation events. It should be noted that Highways England did not undertake to provide this information in the SoCC.</p> <p>While this was published after the start of the consultation period on Friday 26 January 2018, it was made available for a period of 38 days during the consultation period. This is greater than the 28 calendar days required to be provided for comments as prescribed by s45(2) of the PA 2008.</p>
73	Applicants are not expected to repeat consultation rounds set out in their Statement of Community Consultation unless the project proposals have changed very substantially. However, where proposals change to such a large degree that what is being taken forward is fundamentally different	None of the changes made in response to feedback from either round of consultation have been to such a large degree to justify additional consultation.

Para:	Requirement:	Evidence of compliance:
	from what was consulted on, further consultation may well be needed. This may be necessary if, for example, new information arises which renders all previous options unworkable or invalid for some reason. When considering the need for additional consultation, applicants should use the degree of change, the effect on the local community and the level of public interest as guiding factors.	
77	Consultation should also be fair and reasonable for applicants as well as communities. To ensure that consultations is fair to all parties, applicants should be able to demonstrate that the consultation process is proportionate to the impacts of the project in the area that it affects, takes account of the anticipated level of local interest, and takes account of the views of the relevant local authorities.	Highways England has sought to ensure that the consultation process is proportionate to the impacts of the project in the area that it affects, takes account of the anticipated level of local interest, and takes account of the views of the relevant local authorities. Prior to both the non-statutory and statutory consultation, Highways England engaged with relevant local authorities to seek their views on whether its proposals for consultation were proportionate and took into account the likely level of local interest. Details of the regard Highways England had to local authority comments are included in table 4.1.
84	A response to points raised by consultees with technical information is likely to need to focus on the specific impacts for which the body has expertise. The applicant should make a judgement as to whether the consultation report provides sufficient detail on the relevant impacts, or whether a targeted response would be more appropriate. Applicants are also likely to have identified a number of key additional bodies for consultation and may need to continue engagement with these bodies on an individual basis.	Details of the regard that Highways England has had to consultation responses is set out in Consultation Report Annex N (TR010036/APP/5.15) . As set out in table 2.4, Highways England continued to engage with a number of stakeholders following the close of consultation, particularly where it felt agreeing a SoCG was likely to be helpful.

6.1.3 Highways England has also considered the advice given in PINS' *Advice note fourteen: Compiling the Consultation Report*. Details of compliance with this text is included in the table below:

Table 6.2 Compliance with the Planning Inspectorate's advice note 14 compiling the consultation report

Advice:	Evidence of compliance:
Explanatory text should set the scene and provide an overview and narrative of the whole pre-application stage as it relates to a particular project. It would assist if a quick reference guide in bullet point form, summarising all the consultation activity in chronological order, is included near the start of the report.	This is provided in section 1.3.
The applicant should include a full list of the prescribed consultees as part of the consultation report.	This is provided in annex G .
A short description of how s43 of the Act has been applied in order to identify the relevant local authorities should be included, this could be supported by a map showing the site and identifying the boundaries of the relevant local authorities.	This is set out in 4.3.3 and 4.3.4.
Where compulsory acquisition forms part of the draft DCO the consultees who are also included in the book of reference for compulsory acquisition purposes should be highlighted in the consolidated list of prescribed consultees.	This is set out in <i>Consultation Report Annex H (TR010036/APP/5.9)</i> .
It would be helpful to provide a summary of the rationale behind the SoCC methodology to assist the Secretary of State's understanding of the community consultation and provide a context for considering how consultation was undertaken.	This is set out in 4.2.3.
Any consultation not carried out under the provisions of the Act should be clearly indicated and identified separately in the report from the statutory consultation. This does not necessarily mean that informal consultation has less weight than consultation carried out under the Act, but identifying statutory and non-statutory consultation separately will	Non-statutory public consultation is set out separately to statutory consultation, in chapter 2 of this document.

Advice:	Evidence of compliance:
assist when it comes to determining compliance with statutory requirements.	
<p>The summary of responses, if done well, can save a significant amount of explanatory text. We advise that applicants group responses under the 3 strands of consultation as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • S42 prescribed consultees (including s43 and s44); • S47 community consultees; and • S48 responses to statutory publicity. <p>This list should also make a further distinction within those categories by sorting responses according to whether they contain comments which have led to changes to matters such as siting, route, design, form or scale of the scheme itself, or to mitigation or compensatory measures proposed, or have led to no change.</p>	<p>The summary of responses in section 5.1 distinguishes between s42 prescribed consultees, s47 community consultees and s48 responses to statutory publicity. Details of whether comments have led to changes or no change are set out in section 5.3.</p>
<p>A summary of responses by appropriate category together with a clear explanation of the reason why responses have led to no change should also be included, including where responses have been received after deadlines set by the applicant.</p>	<p>This is set out in overview in section 5.3, and in detail in Consultation Report Annex K (TR010036/APP/5.12).</p>

- 6.1.4 Highways England considers that it has met the statutory requirements of the pre-application process. As set out in section 1.3, we have undertaken a programme of non-statutory and statutory consultation.
- 6.1.5 At each stage of consultation, Highways England has considered and complied with relevant advice and guidance. The information included in tables 6.1 and 6.2 supports this through direct reference to MHCLG's and PINS' guidance on the pre-application process.
- 6.1.6 As well as preparing this report, Highways England has set out how it has complied with guidance and advice on consultation in the s55 checklist that is also part of the DCO application documents.

7 List of annexes:

Consultation Report Annex A (TR010036/APP/5.2): Public consultation brochure

Consultation Report Annex B (TR010036/APP/5.3): The Infrastructure Planning (EIA Regulations) 2017: Regulation 8(1) letter to PINS and acknowledgement

Consultation Report Annex C (TR010036/APP/5.4): Copy of the draft SoCC provided to local authorities

Consultation Report Annex D (TR010036/APP/5.5): Letter to local authorities for SoCC consultation

Consultation Report Annex E (TR010036/APP/5.6): Response from local authorities on the draft SoCC

Consultation Report Annex F (TR010036/APP/5.7): Published SoCC with location and date

Consultation Report Annex G (TR010036/APP/5.8): List of statutory consultees compared to PINS Scoping list and Schedule 1 of the (APFP Regs)

Consultation Report Annex H (TR010036/APP/5.9): List of land interests consulted

Consultation Report Annex I (TR010036/APP/5.10): S42 letters and enclosures with date

Consultation Report Annex J (TR010036/APP/5.11): S46 letter and the enclosures sent to PINS (with date)

Consultation Report Annex K (TR010036/APP/5.12): S47 consultation material

Consultation Report Annex L (TR010036/APP/5.13): S48 newspaper notices with locations and dates

Consultation Report Annex M (TR010036/APP/5.14): List of any additional consultation recipients (noting their interest)

Consultation Report Annex N (TR010036/APP/5.15): Tables evidencing regard had to consultation responses (in accordance with s49 of the Planning Act 2008)