

# M5 Junction 25 Improvement Scheme

## Why are improvements needed?

- ▶ For vehicles leaving the M5 Southbound there is not enough room on the slip road.
- ▶ Significant delays on the A358 for vehicles coming from the Ilminster direction.
- ▶ An increase in delays leaving Blackbrook Business Park.
- ▶ Queues and delays on the Toneway for traffic leaving Taunton.

This leads to high levels of traffic congestion at peak times with queues frequently extending along the A358 towards Henlade and sometimes back on to the M5.

The junction will need improvement to accommodate the proposed level of growth in Taunton from now to 2028, estimated as an increase of total peak time traffic from the current 5,000 vehicles to 6,500 – 7,000 vehicles.



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## Once improved, the junction will...

- ▶ manage peak hour traffic congestion better
- ▶ help reduce journey times with improved accessibility to the roundabout.
- ▶ improve access to Taunton and the motorway
- ▶ benefit the economy by supporting the growth of employment and residential development across Taunton, which includes 13,000 new homes and 6,000 jobs

## How the scheme developed

**A range of potential solutions were explored, as there were a number constraints and issues to be considered. These include:**

- ▶ The proposed development of a Strategic Employment Site to the south east of the junction
- ▶ The growth aspirations for Taunton, including developments at Monkton Heathfield, Nerrols Farm, Comeytrowe and Staplegrove.
- ▶ Some entries are not signal controlled and have limited capacity when traffic using the roundabout is high (there are not enough gaps in the traffic to allow vehicles to enter the roundabout).
- ▶ The southbound slip road off the motorway is under pressure because of high traffic flow conflicting with the number of vehicles already using the roundabout.
- ▶ Achieving maximum value for the public investment, including the provision of additional capacity for the employment site and supporting Highways England on the A358 improvement scheme.
- ▶ At the A358 eastbound exit, the culvert that bridges the Broughton Brook is only wide enough for three lanes of traffic. The narrowing requires traffic to merge and limits the throughput of the whole roundabout because there is such a large demand for this exit. To widen the culvert, the A358 would need to be closed and the structure removed and replaced. This level of disruption would be unacceptable.
- ▶ The site is within Flood Zone 3 and we need to work with Environment Agency to provide adequate mitigation measures

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## The development process

### Stage 1

The culvert that bridges the Broughton Brook is only wide enough for three lanes of traffic, one of which is eastbound. This narrowing requires traffic to merge and limits the throughput of the whole junction because there is such a large demand for this exit. This preferred option removes this constraint and this action, combined with the other changes to the roundabout mean there is an increase in available capacity.

Westbound traffic diverted onto a new link

Joins the roundabout at M5 J25 between the existing A358 entrance and the southbound motorway on-slip.

Strategic Employment Site

This would be the cheapest way to deliver improvements to the traffic flow however it would not deliver some of the objectives of the scheme

### Stage 2

As option 1 but provides a roundabout as an access to the strategic employment site

Strategic Employment Site

Employment site traffic from Taunton will need to travel via the A358 and turn right at Ruishton Lane and past the Park and Ride; putting additional pressure on this junction. Traffic from the site travelling east along A358 will need to go all the way around the main roundabout. This compromises the benefits of the scheme.

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## The development process

### Stage 3

Eastbound single lane link from the main roundabout to the employment site reducing the pressure on A386 / Ruishton Lane / P&R junction. Good access from Taunton and M5 to the employment site.



A single lane link in the eastbound direction could be delivered by providing the infrastructure for this link only however in the longer term it is likely that the link will need to be a dual carriageway when it connects to an improved A358 (Highways England scheme). Providing the base infrastructure at this stage would be more cost effective and limit disruption in the longer term.

### Stage 4

Additional lane on the eastbound link between J25 and the SES access roundabout and makes the link between the SES junction and A358 / Ruishton Lane / Park and Ride junction two way.

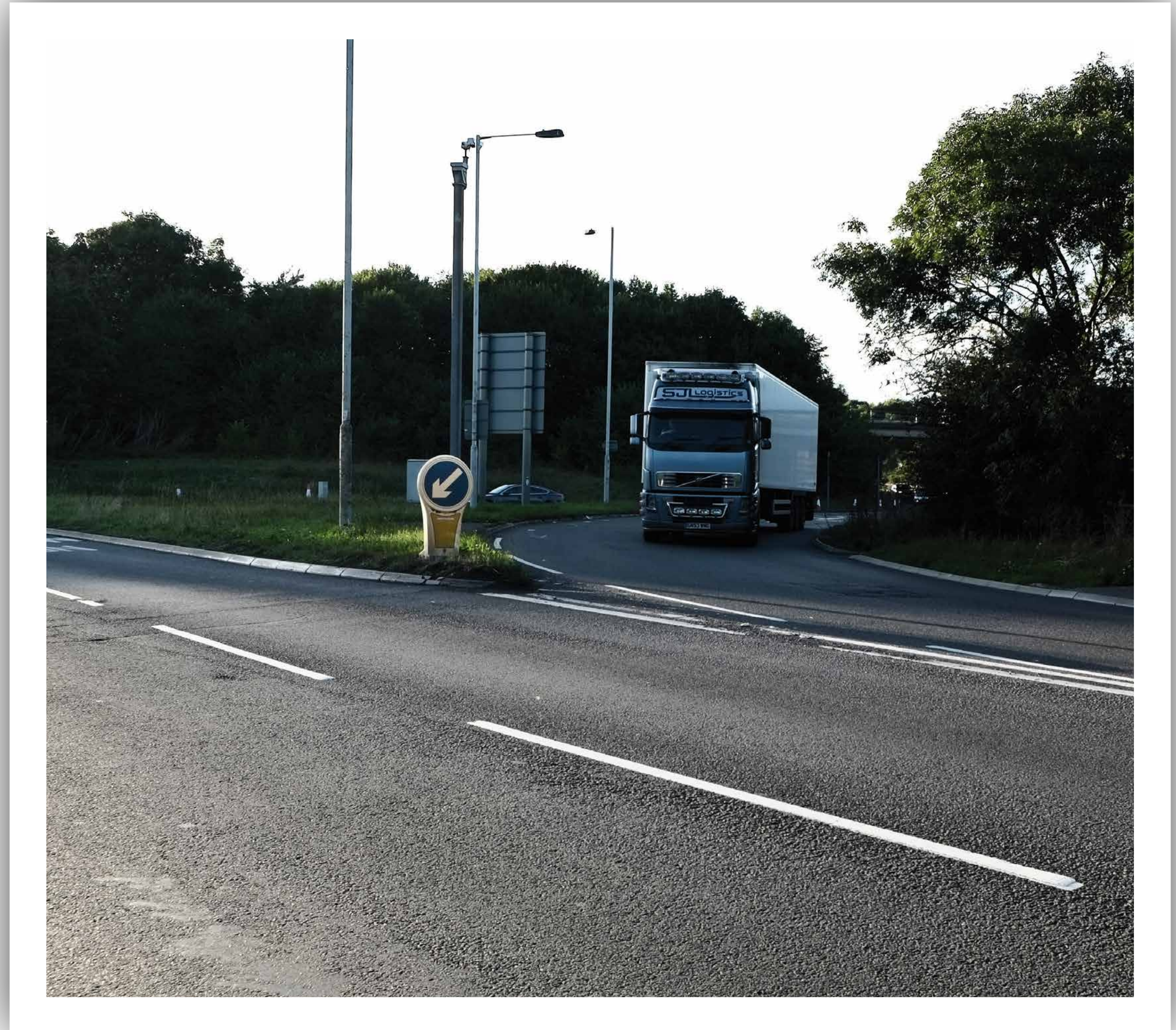


Benefits - Long term saving to the public purse as it would be more expensive for HE to deliver the dualling in the future than the additional cost to SCC / LEP at this time.

Should HE need to deliver the dualling, it would be disruptive to the traffic, potentially having a significant impact on the operation of J25.

## What happens next?

- ▶ We will pull all the feedback we have received together and feed this into the design where appropriate
- ▶ We will apply for Planning Permission
- ▶ We will begin looking for a partner to undertake the final design and then build the scheme
- ▶ We will continue to work closely with stakeholders including Highways England, Environment Agency, Taunton Deane Borough Council and Summerfield Developments.



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