

A350 Melksham Bypass

Melksham Area Board 8th Dec 2021

Scheme Update



December 2021

Wiltshire Council

Scheme update - areas to cover

- Background to scheme
- Recent consultation
- Outline Business Case
- National Highways study
- Latest position
- Next steps / timeline?

Background

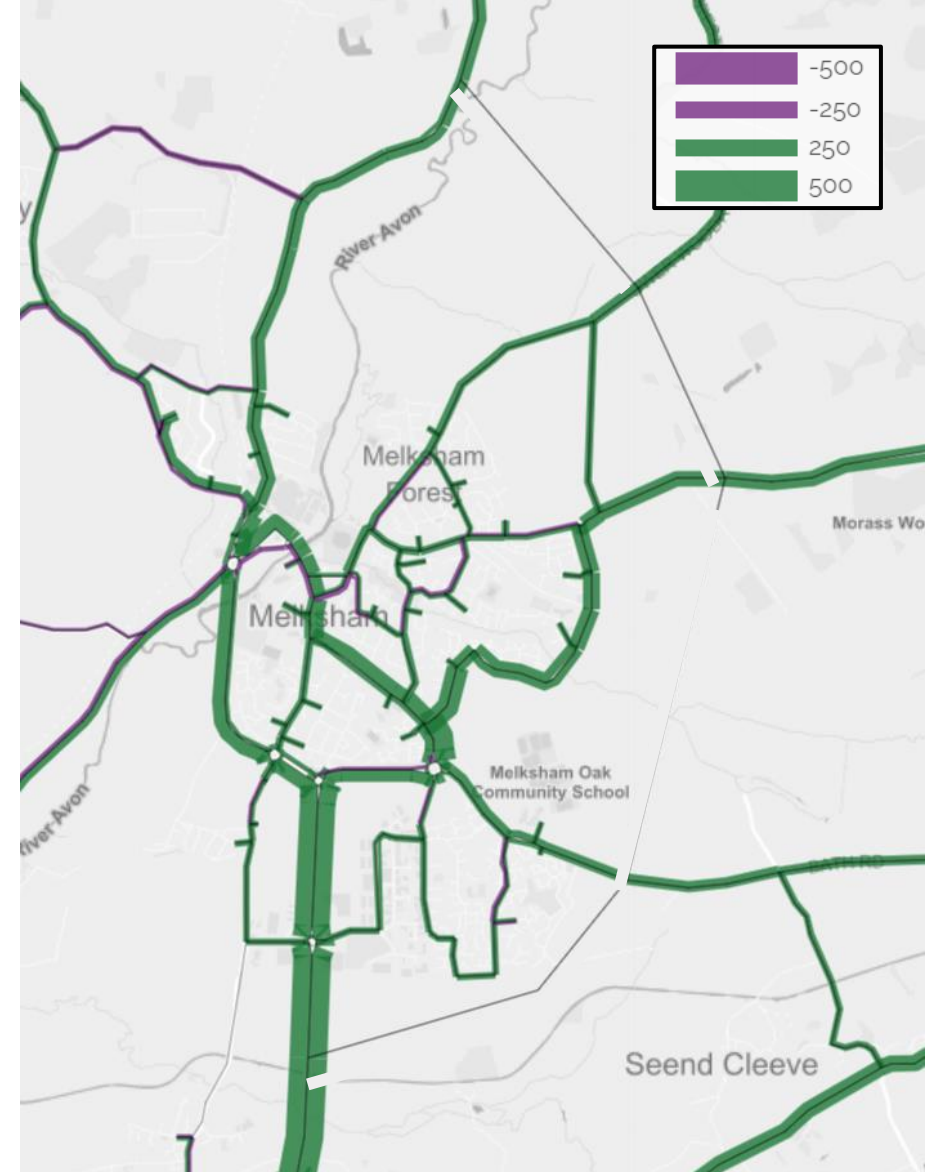
- The importance of the A350 to the local economy has long been recognised by Wiltshire Council
- Primary north-south route between M4 & Dorset Coast
- One of busiest routes in Wiltshire connecting principle settlements
- Sections of the A350 are subject to high traffic volumes, congestion and delays
- Funding from DfT to prepare Outline Business Case (OBC)



The A350 between the M4 and south coast

Background - Existing A350 issues

- Slow moving traffic / variable traffic conditions
- North – south through traffic delays
- Local traffic routing
- Road safety
- Severance
- Noise & air quality
- Future traffic growth



Forecast change in traffic flows, 2018 to 2036 (AM)

Background - Primary transport objectives

What are we trying to achieve?

- Reduced journey times and improved reliability north - south along A350
- Reduced journey times and improved reliability east – west through Melksham
- Provide enhanced opportunities for walking & cycling
- Safety – reduce personal injury rates and severity
- Reduce the severance effect of the existing A350 route

2nd non-statutory consultation

What did we do?

- Launched Melksham Area Board 23rd June 2021 - 28 advanced questions & responses
- Concluded 8th August 2021
- 4 x press releases 24th May / 1st June / 7th July / 22nd July
- 2 x Webinars 8th July / 13th July - 118 written questions & responses
- You-tube “flythrough video” of emerging route posted 7th July - 10,000+ views
- 2 x Library drop-in sessions 30th July / 6th Aug
- Attended local Parish Council meetings
- Received 760 on-line questionnaire responses
- 480 written submissions – 5,970 comments
- Reported to Wiltshire Cabinet 30/11/21

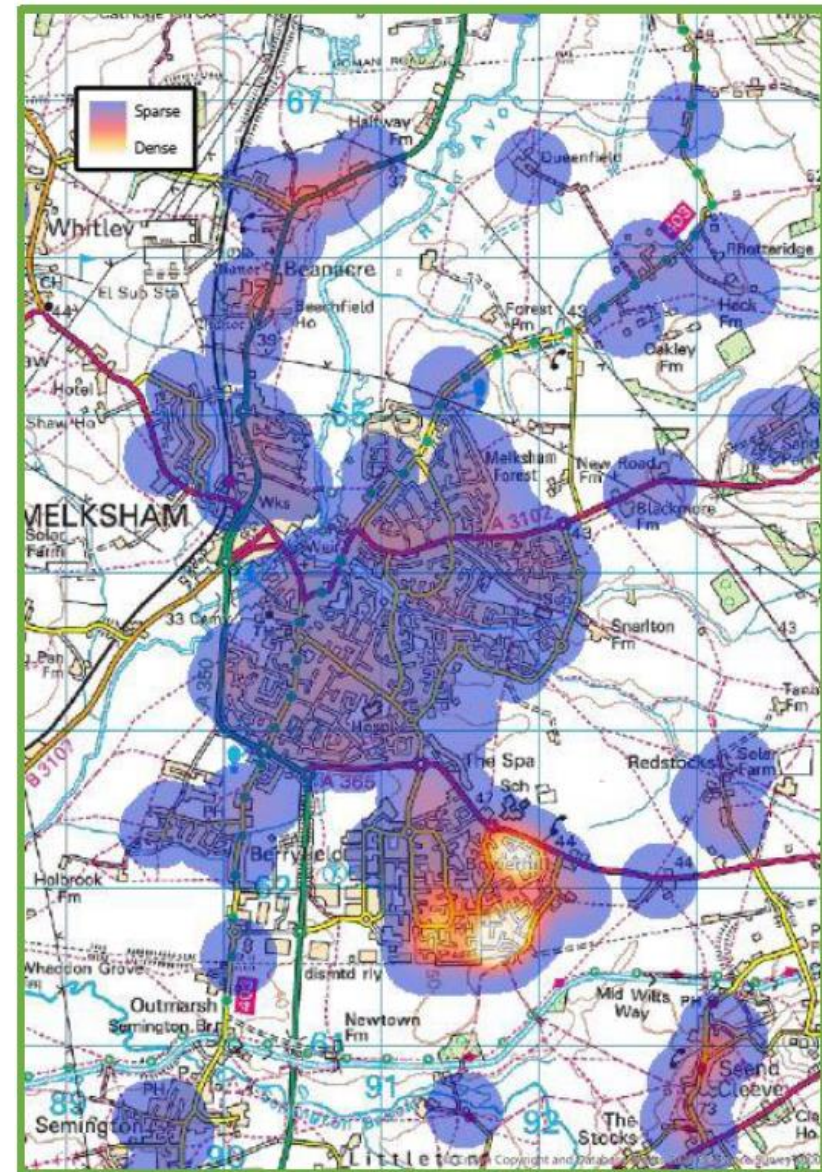


Consultation Report front cover

2nd non-statutory consultation

Key findings / messages?

- Divergence of opinion between those who support the need for an improvement to the A350 and those who do not
- Concerns regarding potential impacts on countryside habitats and the environment. Also carbon and climate change implications
- Concerns regarding noise and air quality impacts
- Concerns regarding impacts on wildlife
- Importance held by local communities regarding access to the countryside
- Concerns regarding impacts on mental and physical well being
- Alternative route suggestions

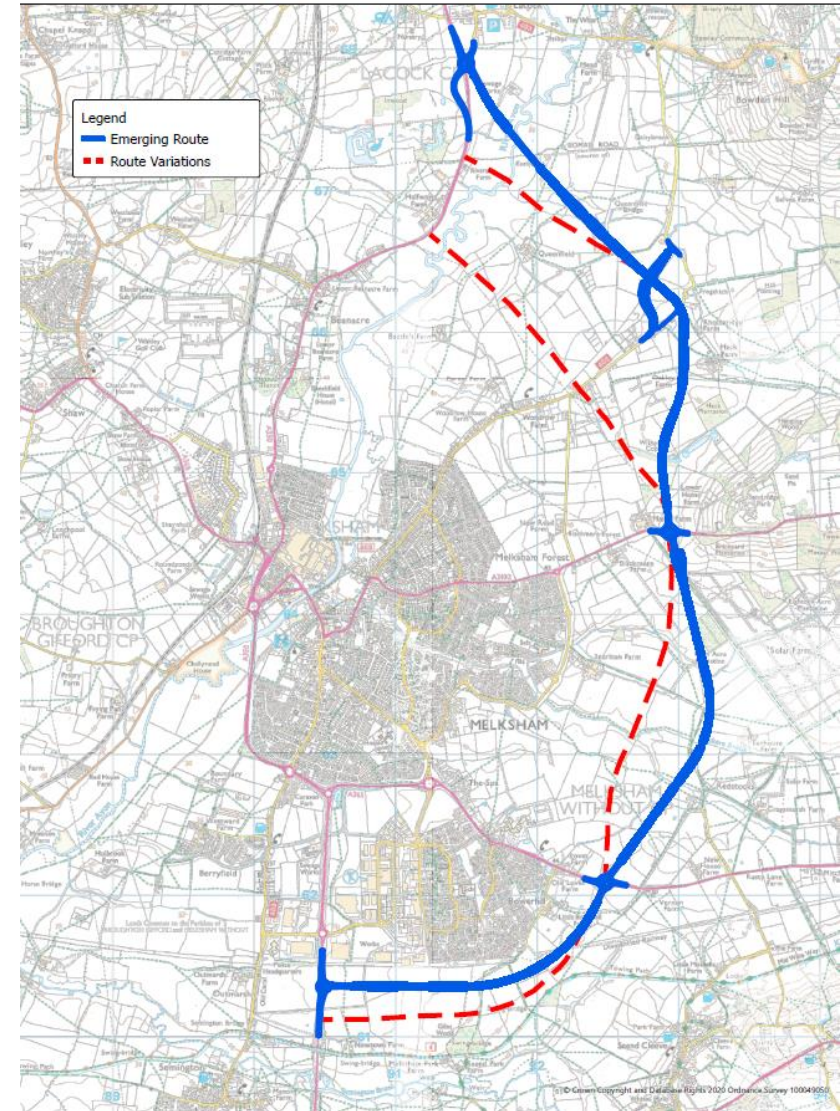


Heat map showing local response coverage

2nd non-statutory consultation

Route variations

- North - suggestions for alternative “pylon route”
- East – suggestions to move route further from Redstocks
- South – suggestions for route to be moved further from Bowerhill with screening
- Further consultation needed



Emerging route with potential variations

Outline Business Case

- Working to complete OBC based on emerging route
- OBC includes for:-
 - Full eastern bypass – approx. 9km in length with four major junctions
 - Modification and enhancement to Public Rights of Way along the route
 - Supplementary highway improvements at A350 Littleton Roundabout and A3102 / A342 junction
 - Complementary walking / cycling measures (approx. value £5m)
- Revised construction cost estimate now £146m, with projected outturn £235m
- Benefit to Cost Ratio (BCR) in 1.5 – 2.0 range.
- Feedback anticipated from DfT during spring 2022

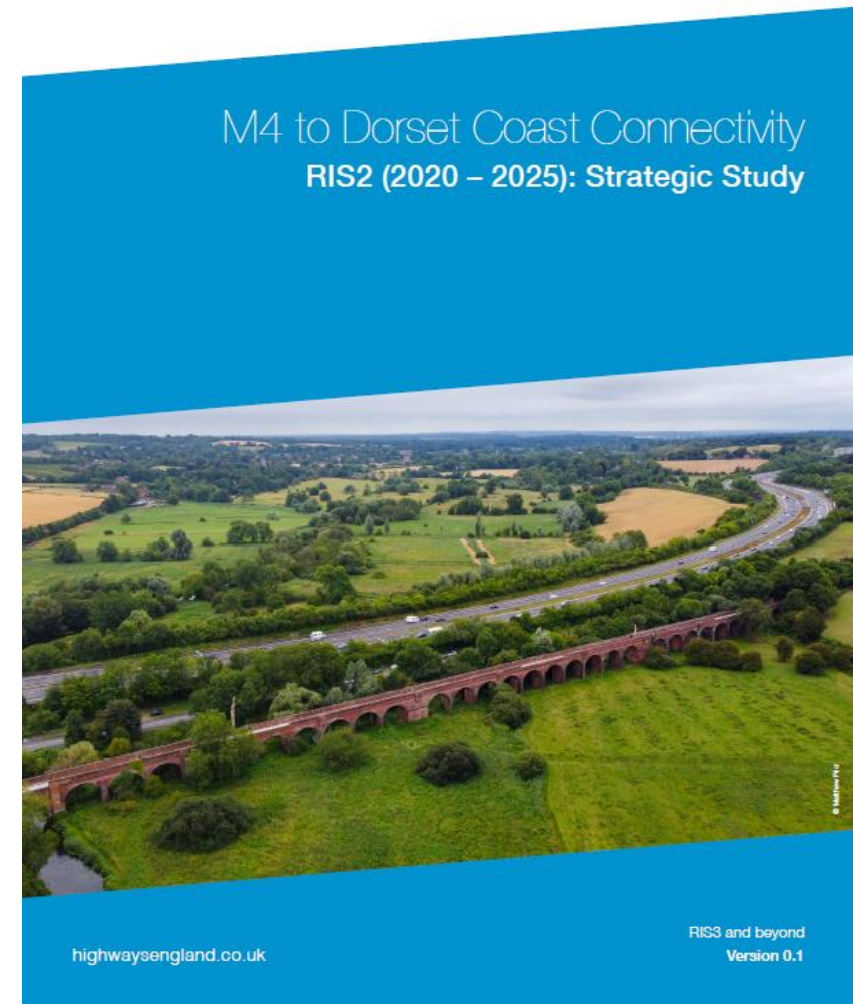
Outline Business Case

Five main aspects to OBC:-

- **Strategic Case**
 - Performance against scheme objectives and wider priorities
- **Economic Case**
 - Overall value for money consideration
- **Financial Case**
 - Affordability of the scheme
- **Management (delivery) Case**
 - How will the scheme be managed and delivered
- **Commercial Case**
 - Procuring the delivery approach

National Highways Study

- Strategic study into road connectivity between M4 and Dorset coast
- Expected to consider relative merits and performance of alternative route corridor scenarios
- Will an alternative to the current A46 / A36 route perform better?
- Includes A350 within study area
- May have implications for A350 route in general and Melksham scheme
- National Highways aiming to report late summer 2022



National Highways info document

Wiltshire Council

Latest position

Wiltshire Council Cabinet received a report on the Melksham A350 improvement scheme at its meeting on 30 November 2021. Cabinet resolved that :-

1. The response to the second public consultation and the views of the town and local parish councils and others are noted and taken into account in the scheme development
2. In view of the comments made in response to the consultations the route variants should be the subject of further investigation and consultation as appropriate after the OBC has been approved
3. The possibility of improving walking and cycling facilities in the area in conjunction with the scheme or separately should continue to be explored
4. Further consideration should be given to the scheme when the results of National Highways' M4 to Dorset Connectivity study and the DfT's comments on the OBC are available.

Next key steps (short term)

OBC to be submitted to DfT

December 2021

Develop Carbon Management Plan to supplement OBC
(new requirement from DfT)

January – March 2022

Monitor any feedback from DfT and respond to any
technical queries / challenges they may raise

from January 2022

Undertake further non-statutory consultation in connection
with suggested route variants

say May / June 2022

Consider feedback / output from National Highways study
and what implications that may have for A350 Melksham Scheme

Late summer 2022

Indicative timeline (longer term)

Outline Business Case approval	Autumn 2022
Environmental investigations & survey works	From Autumn 2022
Detailed design development	From Autumn 2022
Planning submission including Environmental Impact Assessment	Winter 2024
Full Business Case development	2026
Construction period	2026 – 2028
Scheme opening	2028