

AGENDA SUPPLEMENT (1)

Meeting: Cabinet
Place: Online
Date: Tuesday 1 June 2021
Time: 10.00 am

The Agenda for the above meeting was published on 21 May 2021. Additional documents are now available and are attached to this Agenda Supplement.

Please direct any enquiries on this Agenda to Stuart Figini, of Democratic Services, County Hall, Bythesea Road, Trowbridge, direct line 01225 718221 or email stuart.figini@wiltshire.gov.uk

Press enquiries to Communications on direct lines (01225)713114/713115.

This Agenda and all the documents referred to within it are available on the Council's website at www.wiltshire.gov.uk

6 **COVID-19 Final Update (Pages 3 - 18)**

Report of the Chief Executive

7 **Provisional Outturn 2020/21 (Pages 19 - 60)**

Report of the Chief Executive

8 **A350 Melksham Bypass Consultation Report (Pages 61 - 196)**

Report of the Chief Executive

DATE OF PUBLICATION: 24 May 2021

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Wiltshire Council

Cabinet

1 June 2021

Subject: COVID-19 Final Update

Cabinet Member: Cllr Richard Clewer, Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for MCI, Economic Development, Heritage, Arts, Tourism, Health & Wellbeing

Key Decision: Non-Key

Executive Summary

This report provides a summary of activity to mitigate the impact of the coronavirus in Wiltshire since the last update to Cabinet in March. Since the last report the roadmap for exiting lockdown has been followed with further relaxations coming into place.

Support for businesses, vulnerable groups, care homes and educational settings continues.

This will be the final update to cabinet as a separate report on this subject and work to address the legacy of the pandemic will be embedded into the council's new business plan.

Proposal(s)

Cabinet are asked to

- Continue to encourage all residents to download the NHS Test and Trace app on their phone.
- Continue to encourage all residents to answer a call received from 0300 456 0100 as it may be the local contact tracing team within the Council
- Continue to encourage all residents to follow national guidance
- Continue to encourage residents to attend for vaccination when invited and to continue to follow national guidance after vaccination
- Thank residents that voted in the recent elections and encourage use of a postal vote for the upcoming PCC election on 19 August
- To note the work underway as we approach the final stages of the government roadmap

Reason for Proposal(s)

Wiltshire Council continues to work closely with partners to deliver in a rapidly changing environment.

**Terence Herbert
Chief Executive**

1 June 2021

Subject: COVID-19 Final Update

Cabinet Member: Cllr Richard Clewer, Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for MCI, Economic Development, Heritage, Arts, Tourism, Health & Wellbeing

Key Decision: Non-Key

Purpose of Report

1. To provide a brief summary of the key activity mitigating the impact of the coronavirus in Wiltshire since the last update to Cabinet in March.

Background

2. As of 18 May, 4,452,527 people in the UK have tested positive for COVID-19. Further information is available [online](#). The data also suggest that there were a total of 127,694 deaths within 28 days of a positive test.
3. As of 18 May 2021 in Wiltshire there have now been 17,390 people who have tested positive for COVID-19 and the rate of cases per 100,000 in Wiltshire in the last 7 days was 11.6, which is below the national average of 22. Up to 30 April in Wiltshire there have been 844 registered deaths in total that included COVID-19 on the death certificate.

Main Considerations for the Council

4. On 17 May further relaxations came into force, with guidance emphasising personal responsibility within the rules. Groups of up to six people or two households can now meet indoors and overnight visits are allowed (ventilation is encouraged). People can meet in groups of up to 30 outdoors, and up to 30 can attend weddings and other life events. Maximum numbers attending funerals is now to be determined by venue size and care home residents can have up to five named visitors (providing they test negative). Pubs and cafes can serve customers indoors and museums and galleries have also reopened.
5. The final stage of relaxations set out in the roadmap is set for midsummer's day (21 June) contingent on the data continuing to move in the right direction. Government will make its decision on this the week beforehand (14 June). Wiltshire Council is working closely with its partners in English Heritage and Wiltshire Police to ensure that summer solstice events such as that at Stonehenge can go ahead if it is permitted to do so.
6. Elections for unitary divisions; city, town and parish council elections; the Swindon and Wiltshire Police and Crime Commissioner election; and various Neighbourhood Plan referendums took place at the start of May. These were

one of the largest set of elections in the country and a significant logistical challenge; however, Wiltshire Council ensured these were held in a COVID-19 secure way. Residents were encouraged to, where possible, vote by post and we will be continuing this messaging for the forthcoming PCC election to be held on 19 August.

Test and Trace and Isolate

7. Rates of successful contact tracing for COVID cases remain high across Wiltshire; as of 14th May 98% of Wiltshire cases are being successfully reached by either NHS Test and Trace or our Wiltshire Local Tracing Partnership, which is delivered by the Public Health team. Through contact tracing individuals are also provided access to support services to facilitate and support adherence to self-isolation requirements, increasing the ability of people to adhere to the self-isolation requirements and thus reducing risk of COVID-19 transmission in our communities.
8. Currently cases pass to our local tracing team if NHS Test & Trace are unable to reach individuals over 24-48 hours. Over the coming months we will continue to work closely with Public Health England and NHS Test and Trace to further build upon the success of our local tracing partnership by introducing Local 0, which enables our local tracing team to take on contact tracing responsibilities as soon as case details are uploaded onto the NHS Test and Trace system, with an aim to increase our 'rates of success' contact tracing even further.
9. People are reminded to provide full and accurate contact details when accessing COVID-19 testing and asked to answer the phone if NHS Test and Trace try to contact individuals via 0300 013 5000 or the local team via 0300 456 0100.

Community (asymptomatic) Testing

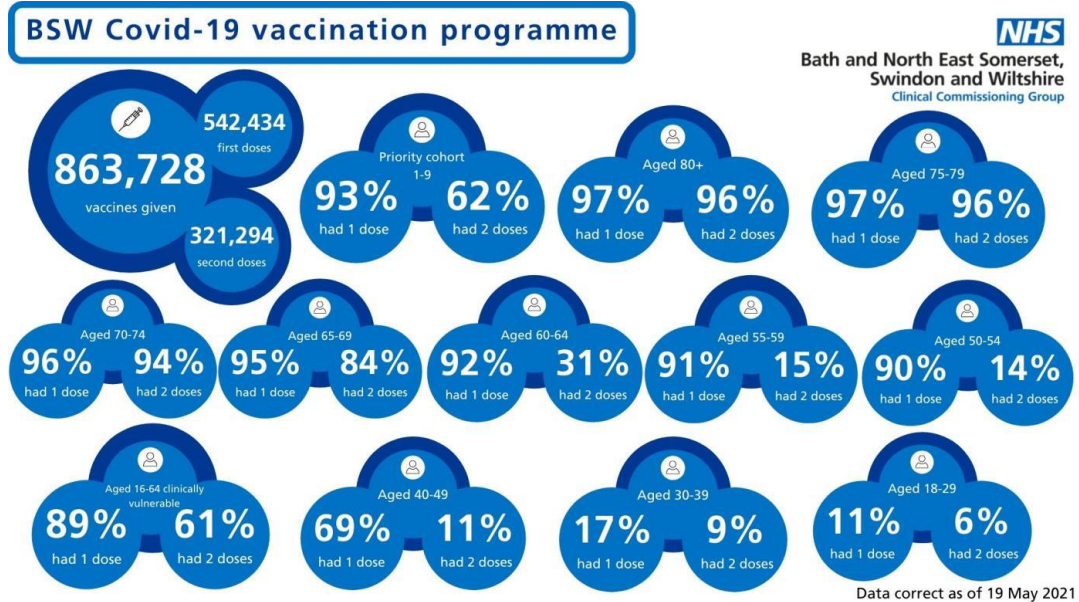
10. During the pandemic Wiltshire stood up an asymptomatic testing offer for its local communities to access, which included four asymptomatic test sites (ATS) operating across the county; Salisbury, Devizes, Chippenham and Trowbridge. The sites operate a booking process and used the self-administered lateral flow tests, which provide a result within 30 minutes. During their operation more than 4,000 tests completed. As the national testing programme developed, Wiltshire further enhanced the community testing offer by offering a 'collect' option for home testing using the lateral flow tests. The community collect model offered greater accessibility to our Wiltshire populations who wished to undertake the government's recommended twice weekly testing. Wiltshire has seven 'collect' sites across the county including Monkton Park, Bourne Hill, Devizes Leisure Centre, Calne Community Campus, The Vale Community Campus, Nadder Centre and Corsham Community Campus. To date, there have been 2,650 test kits handed out. Our community testing offer is supplemented by other collect options available through pharmacy collect, as well as symptomatic testing continuing to be available at The Beehive in Salisbury, The Avenue in Warminster and The Greyhound in Trowbridge.

Mass Vaccination

11. As of Wednesday 19 May, the **Page 5** Swindon and Wiltshire CCG vaccine teams have carried out a total of 863,728 vaccinations, made up of 542,434 first

doses and 321,294 second doses.

- In the week following the government’s announcement to open the vaccine invite to people in their 30s, almost one in five people aged between 30 and 39 in their region have received their first dose. More than two thirds of people in their 40s have also had their first vaccine, with a further one in ten having had both doses. Preparations to meet the government’s aim of now providing second doses within eight weeks of the first continue.



- Our Public Health colleagues are working together with BSW CCG, BaNES and Swindon on the Vaccination Bus. It started in Wiltshire on 10 May, travelling to areas where data showed lower vaccine uptake and increased hesitancy with the need for engagement within communities. The bus provided the opportunity for individuals to have extended conversations with clinicians and put forward their concerns. The project was not advertised publicly, the engagement has been through ongoing outreach work with community leaders, faith groups and public health workers.
- A volunteer from West Wiltshire Racial Equality Council attended for her second vaccine and our comms captured this to share. The bus also parked outside the Bangladeshi Centre in Melksham on Eid and vaccinated members of the mosque after morning prayers. 166 individuals were vaccinated in total from targeted areas and the feedback received was positive. Feedback below is from Studley Green Vaccination Clinic on 14 May.

Why did you decide to use the vaccination bus?
I have been worried about having the vaccine and have been thinking about it and talking to people about it. I have been hearing about all the work people have been doing. When I found out about the bus being here today, I thought that if health workers are going to all that effort, then I must go and have it to protect myself and my community.

- A vaccination narrowboat (Litania) started the return journey from Wootton Rivers to Darlington Wharf on 14th May to administer 2nd doses. Engagement work has been done along the Kennet and Avon canal by Julian House outreach workers and flyers have been left on boats. 261 live-aboard boaters are hoped to be fully vaccinated by 27th May.

16. Early stage planning discussions are in place regarding the Vaccination Bus attending to vaccinate factory workers who classically come under the 'hard to reach' and vulnerable categories. This project could lead to the bus attending other locations with staff deemed 'hard to reach'.

Outbreak Management

17. We are continuing to support settings such as businesses and educational settings (including early years) where outbreaks occur to reduce the spread of COVID-19. The number of outbreaks in the county are decreasing, however, we cannot be complacent as we will still see outbreaks once we progress along the government roadmap and restrictions are lifted.
18. Variants and mutations (VAM) of COVID-19 are one of the biggest concerns and requires us to work closely with Public Health England to help with contact tracing and testing where variants of concern (VOC) or variants under investigation (VUI) are identified. The opening up of international travel is likely to see the incidences of these increase and may result in localised surge testing.

Community spaces and engagement

19. On 29 March outdoor courts and pitches reopened for bookings under COVID-secure risk assessments. After 12 April, we began reopening council leisure centres and libraries and classes and our active health programme is back up and running as is Get Wiltshire Walking and our Running programme.

Wellbeing Hub

20. Since the end of February 2021 the government extended its clinically extremely vulnerable criteria and as a result the hub has had a significant increase in activity (over 9,000 new people identified as being CEV). The hub continued to identify and contact these people and offer them support as well as continuing to support members of the public who raise queries around current lockdown guidance and refer concerns or issues relating to business and organisations to the public protection/ public health team.
21. Since the shielding criteria ended on 23 April 2021 the hub has ceased contacting those individuals who are CEV as per government guidelines however, the hub still receives this data to enable us to respond rapidly should shielding be re-introduced. The hub is now embedded into Advice and Contact as we move to ensure the hub activity becomes business as usual.
22. The Wellbeing hub and community resilience partnership group (including voluntary and community sector organisations) met weekly during the initial response phase. These meetings have continued since their inception and continued to meet fortnightly to ensure a multiagency response is in place, however, as we move through the roadmap, these will move to monthly.

Care Homes

23. Following a successful vaccination programme and continued adherence to strict infection, prevention and control measures, resident and staff cases

remain low. The 7-day average of resident cases was 0 on 12 May while the equivalent staff average is 0.2. Only 6 homes had any reported cases.

24. In the week ending 12th May, for the fourth week running, we have had no Covid-19 deaths registered in the homes. Regular resident and staff testing, stringent infection prevention and control measures and safe visiting arrangements have all contributed to the decreasing case numbers across care homes, and care home staff are thanked for their continued efforts during what has been a challenging year.
25. We continue to work with care homes on the co-ordination of safe visiting following the 17th May roadmap milestone which allows residents to have up to 5 regular visitors (up from 2 currently) and also a number of activities are now permitted which would not require a 14-day isolation on return to the home, including attending medical appointments, visiting day centres and outdoor visits.

Health and Care

26. Since the previous cabinet report, COVID-19 infection rates have been decreasing steadily in the three acute hospitals and the numbers are now consistently within the range of 10-15 cases across all three settings. As a result, the number of individuals requiring a place in a designated setting on discharge has significantly reduced and can be accommodated within the community hospital settings. There remains however significant demand for community services to support urgent and emergency care and flow across Wiltshire. The HomeFirst pathway continues to experience increasing number of referrals and there may be a need to identify and source additional capacity to support an expected increase in demand this winter. Detailed demand and capacity planning is being undertaken currently to ensure these decisions in terms of community and bed-based care can be made in a timely way.
27. Updated Hospital Discharge guidance was recently [published](#) and further guidance is also anticipated. Guidance is expected to promote the requirement that the majority of people on discharge should return to their home and community. An update regarding associated funding to support the discharge pathways for the remainder of this financial year (beyond September) is also expected.
28. PPE drops will continue until the end of March 2022 and the Local Authority will continue to take delivery of PPE for local organisations that cannot access this via the PPE portal. Our current PPE supply continues to be healthy, and we can meet any increase demand that we may experience if there were to be any increase in infections. Monthly reviews continue with procurement to ensure commercial suppliers have adequate stocks/lead times with discussions regarding post Brexit. There are currently no concerns.

Education and Skills

29. During March there were 93 confirmed covid cases in education settings, 1935 pupils and 115 staff were required to isolate. These figures declined across April to 18 confirmed cases and 65 pupils and 7 staff being required to isolate. Secondary schools are continuing to use lateral flow tests with both pupils and staff to identify potential asymptomatic cases; primary schools are using these tests with staff only. Following a positive LFT, a PCR test is taken.

30. Following the full return to school by all pupils, attendance has been monitored closely. Pupils with low attendance are being identified and support is being offered from the Education Welfare Service (EWS), SEND, school effectiveness and social care teams. Following the introduction of the Positive Return to Education Plan (PREP) by the Education Welfare Service (EWS) we have 34 pupils whose attendance is being supported with this approach.
31. The EWS continues to respond to notifications of Elective Home Education (EHE), the overall caseload stands currently at 713 with a rise of 19 across April. The EWS works with schools and families where it is identified that pupils may be removed from roll for the purposes of EHE so that families are fully informed of their responsibilities.
32. With the absence of formal examinations for GCSEs and A levels and statutory data submission for phonics, KS1 and 2, School Effectiveness are offering all primary schools the opportunity to submit their end of key stage data for internal analysis and school improvement purposes. This will be a voluntary offer and cannot be used for accountability. The same is also offered for KS4 and 5. This will allow all schools to have comparative data to other schools within Wiltshire and national benchmarks against all those schools who have also submitted.
33. Early Years Providers who have had to close due to an outbreak have been compensated for their lost private income hours through the Contain Outbreak Management Fund (COMF). This fund has also been used for PPE and cleaning in early years settings and out of school clubs as well as covering the 20% of costs not covered by the Job Retention Scheme for Clinically Extremely Vulnerable staff who have been unable to work.
34. All settings are currently open with only two reported cases of COVID in early years settings in the past eight weeks. Three and Four year old Early Years Entitlement attendance in settings was 94% of that in Spring 2020 (pre-COVID). 70% of children who are eligible for Early Years Entitlement for Two Year Olds (Better2gether Funding) are accessing a place.
35. There has been limited Holiday Club provision (5-11 year olds) available due to COVID secure reasons, as restrictions still apply. A brochure has been produced for each holiday period and has resulted in 30 additional children having access to childcare over each holiday period, mainly through childminders.

Post-16

36. The Careers Hub is currently performing above national average in the vast majority of areas and for overall performance averages. The Hub has provided Headteachers, Senior Leadership Teams and Career Leaders with a range of suitable activities to ensure that Year 11 and Year 13 pupils remain engaged with employability and transitions activities until the end of June. Data tracking tasks are underway to ensure that any young person without a secure September Guarantee place is identified and supported via the NEET Service (Employment and Skills team). Career Leaders have been supported by the local Get Ahead NEET programme to ensure that any pupil at risk of becoming NEET is supported prior to the end of this academic year.
37. The Careers Hub are providing a range of funded activities for all secondary schools and colleges, these include virtual employer encounters workshops, a

range of virtual work experience options, a virtual SEND conference, and a £1,000 bursary on evidence that a stable careers programme is in place. Additionally, a range of student facing activities are being delivered, these include a virtual 'Meet the Training Provider' event, a virtual Careers Fair and virtual motivational talks on progressing into the workplace or onto further study.

Inspections

38. Ofsted have completed 4 section 8 inspections during term 4. These inspections have been full one day on-site inspections looking at whether schools are taking effective action; they are ungraded. All Wiltshire schools that have been inspected have been judged as taking effective action. Good schools who have not been inspected during the 5 year window may also be inspected during the summer term.

Education Recovery

39. There has been no national prioritisation of any of the English curriculum areas from the DfE – this is due to the fact that both reading and writing are progressive skills-based curricula. However, as a local authority we have provided guidance and support for schools – through written materials and recorded webinars – to help leaders and teachers consider areas where children may have the biggest gaps and support for how these might be filled. This is all available via Right Choice. Training and CPD for teachers and Teaching Assistants has continued through lockdown with many webinars recorded and broadcast covering the core foundations in phonics, reading, writing and vocabulary.

40. The DfE issued guidance for Primary schools. This guidance prioritised the most important knowledge and understanding within each year group and important connections between these mathematical topics. A webinar was made available to all schools taking them through this guidance and advising them how to address their curriculum for the summer term. Resources have been made available through Right Choice to support schools with developing fluency and there are webinars available to support this.

41. To ensure smooth transition at the end of the year resources have been provided to encourage accurate transfer of information. A webinar has been recorded for transition to secondary schools and this is freely available so KS3 teachers are aware of what has been taught.

School Transport

42. Secondary age pupils are still required to wear a face-covering (subject to medical exemptions) whilst on transport, whether that is a dedicated vehicle or a public bus with communications to that effect sent to head teachers and operators asking for their support in achieving compliance. Home to school transport continues to operate fully. The duplicate vehicles continue in operation to ensure that social distancing can be maintained at peak time and that the general travelling public are separated from school pupils.

Digital Devices

43. A further 250 digital devices have been issued during April to disadvantaged and vulnerable children across our Secondary and Primary schools. This means we have distributed over 1,400 digital devices to school children on

the back of the DfE initiative launched in June 2020.

Free School Meals

44. 9,500 children eligible for Free School Meals were provided with funding during the Easter Break to cover lunches for 10 days. This funding was secured from the DfE and amounted to approximately £285,000 for the two week period. Each eligible child received £30 in total. Schools received the funding and made local decisions to provide the most suitable solution for the family situation.

Economy

45. The team have continued to provide a bespoke service to grants awarded to businesses:

- Small Business/ Retail Hospitality and Leisure and Discretionary Grants awarded £95M to 8209 businesses between April 2020 – September 2020.
- Local Restrictions Support Grant (November 2020-ongoing) has awarded £40.48M
- Additional Restrictions Grant (November 2020 – ongoing) has awarded £12.54M
- RESTART grants (April 2021- ongoing) have awarded £18M
- 25,959 grants have been made across these schemes.

46. In total: 34,168 grant awards have been made totalling £165M since April 2020. 40,000 responses have been sent to businesses.

47. Reopening advice and guidance for businesses has been updated at each step of the gov's roadmap and is published at <https://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/business-advice-support-covid19>. This includes, general guidance for businesses, specific guidance for pubs, bars and takeaways, plus hospitality, and hairdressers/barbers. More detailed guidance, such as checklists for safe reopening has also been provided.

48. Businesses have been provided with downloadable posters for and advice on changes to test and trace requirements, plus how to deal with cases and outbreaks among employees. These have been produced with public health and public protection, and has been widely and regularly publicised in media releases, on social media and in our weekly e-newsletter to more than 4,500 businesses.

Excess deaths

49. From the early onset of the pandemic Wiltshire Council proactively sought to ensure that we had enough capacity for the deceased across Wiltshire, in line with our recently updated plan for Excess Deaths. This process, although led by Wiltshire Council, was undertaken in partnership with Swindon Borough Council as this was seen as the most effective and efficient way to look after those who sadly passed away in our area. Alongside both councils, Wiltshire Police and the NHS (acute trusts) were key parts of this process, with a partnership approach pivotal in the whole process.

50. This detailed piece of work resulted in two temporary mortuary facilities established, one in Great Western Hospital and one in Salisbury District Hospital. These two facilities at one point had the capacity to hold over 1,300 deceased with later iterations settling with the joint capacity of 380 across both sites. These sites were in active use between December 2020 – April 2021, holding over 80 deceased at one time during this period.
51. The complex nature of responding to COVID-19 meant that not only did we need to provide a range of secure storage facilities, we were also required to provide welfare units, changing facilities, vehicle transport and staffing. Wiltshire Council staff were asked to volunteer to assist with these facilities with a small team of around 10 staff volunteers being trained in body transport and being utilised regularly through the operational period.
52. In addition to the facilities the Excess Deaths Cell also contacted over 40 Funeral Directors, over 50 Parish Councils and 4 Crematoriums every week to collect data to assist with Government information requests but also to ensure oversight of the operation of the whole system. This data collection and monitoring has been held up by MHCLG as an excellent example of good practice, with Wiltshire regularly returning the most comprehensive data within the region.
53. Moving forward the temporary mortuaries will be reduced in size as the contracts on resources come to an end but a capability will be retained in some form to ensure that we are ready should there be any increase in excess death rates in future.

Homelessness

54. Rough sleeping – so far 106 rough sleepers have been permanently accommodated since the start of the pandemic, some of which have had a history of entrenched rough sleeping. All rough sleepers have been offered accommodation, 16 are currently accommodated in temporary accommodation and 12 are on the street as they have refused the accommodation offer or have been asked to leave accommodation due to their behaviour. The Council has recently been successful in a bid for £ 547k to enhance the service to rough sleepers and this complements the £309,000 which has already been received in 2020/21 which funded the Rough Sleeping team of 8 staff as well as our 8 bed homeless project at The Haven. The four properties purchased with Next steps funding are ready to let and should be occupied by the time this report is considered.
55. General needs homeless remains below pre-pandemic levels . There are 70 homeless households in the Council's temporary accommodation. The main reason for homelessness over the pandemic period was relationship breakdown and being asked to leave by friends and family. The ban on evictions will be lifted from the 31/5/2021 and notice periods reduced from 6 to four months from 1st June which will be again reviewed in October. As this was one of the main reasons for households becoming homeless pre-pandemic there is a risk that this will lead to an increase in homeless presentations.
56. Homes 4 Wilts continues to experience a significant increased demand for affordable housing with a 52% increase compared to the position pre-pandemic. Although extra resources have been brought to bear on this increased work load there still exists a six week back log of housing application assessments. Over the pandemic period there were 1305

affordable homes let which was a 31% decrease from the year prior to the pandemic and this too will have impacted on the current number of households on the housing register of 4233 from 3562 in 19/20.

Organisational Recovery

57. The Organisational Recovery Programme continues to make good progress on council wide internal transformation activities. One of the main priorities for the programme is preparation for a managed return to workplaces when it is safe to do so and communication and engagement with staff in this process. An overview of work recently completed through the workstreams and a summary of future priorities are in **Appendix 1**.

Financial Implications

58. The financial year 2020/21 was like no other, with numerous funding streams being provided by Government to support Wiltshire businesses, residents and Communities as well as providing emergency funding to ensure the Council continued to provide services.

59. Grants received need to be accounted for to ensure compliance with any specific grant conditions as well as reporting requirements back to Central Government. In addition, the Council has been reporting back monthly to Central Government on the financial impact of the pandemic across the whole range of the Councils finances e.g. additional costs, lost income and changes in plans.

60. This has brought a significant level of complexity to the Councils finances, and the provisional outturn for 2020/21, reported to Cabinet as a separate item on the agenda, provides transparency and details on the financial position for the year.

61. An allocation of Contain Outbreak Management Funding (COMF) was made during the pre-election period in April, following consultation with the Leader and directors, as set out in the decision report [online](#). A return to DHSC on the allocation of this funding was required to be made by Easter Monday to ensure the Council was included in the allocations of the £400m national funding for 2021/22. It has now been confirmed that Wiltshire will receive a further £2.807m for COMF in 2021/22.

Legal Implications

62. The Council's legal team continues to provide advice on the application of new COVID-19 legislation and all aspects of recovery.

63. In the absence of any legislation enabling remote council meetings a [briefing note](#) to councillors on appropriate covid-secure arrangements for these meetings was issued. Full council was held on 18 May in the Civic Centre Trowbridge, live streamed to the internet with social distancing and other measures in place. MHCLG have committed to exploring a longer term solution for remote meetings to empower councils to make their own arrangements on this as necessary.

Safeguarding Implications

64. Children's safeguarding services have continued to be delivered in line with practice standards and statutory guidance. Face to face visiting to children has continued unless otherwise indicated by risk assessment. Our key performance indicators remain strong and compare favourably to regional and national averages.
65. As previously reported the Safeguarding Vulnerable People's Partnership, at our request, completed a COVID-19 Safeguarding Review. Through this, individual agencies reviewed their practice during the COVID-19 period to identify good practice and areas where they, or the partnership, could strengthen safeguarding practice. Coinciding with the review our Children's MASH saw an increase in contacts, this increase has been maintained and is reversing the trend seen earlier in the pandemic when there were a lower number of contacts made. The number of families and children referred in for support is now above the range that we would ordinarily expect and we are beginning to see an increase in the number of children at CIN and CP threshold and anticipate a rise in the number of children looked after.
66. As reported in March we continue to develop a range of additional supports for families and children, including the Light House Project (a new initiative in partnership with Oxford Health to deliver an intensive intervention program where long-term neglect is a concern) and the NSPCC Let the Light In Project (a bid to pilot a new intervention for children who have been sexually abused). Despite coinciding with the pandemic, year one of our Fostering Excellence programme has been a success and as a result we have an additional 20 foster carers available to care for Wiltshire Children. Work is ongoing with the CCG and other health partners to ensure mental health services are able to respond effectively to latent demand and increased acuity.
67. The Wiltshire Health Based Place of Safety at Green Lane Hospital continues to accommodate service users from BANES as well as Wiltshire and Swindon as agreed at the start of the pandemic to reduce pressure across the wider police, mental health and social care system. This has had a positive impact on service users across Bath and North East Somerset, Swindon and Wiltshire.
68. Both Mental Health and Learning Disability social care departments continue to report significant pressure on services due to the complex nature of people's presentations. This is closely monitored through the Bath and North East Somerset, Swindon and Wiltshire MH and LD recovery and restoration group as well as the Wiltshire MH/LD group.
69. While overall crime levels dropped by 16.5% in Wiltshire last year to the lowest level in the country (compared to a national decrease of 7.8%), domestic abuse-related crimes rose by 10 per cent, with a spike during the summer after the first lockdown ended. Wiltshire Council continues to work closely with Wiltshire Police and other partners to ensure appropriate support is provided to victims of domestic abuse, including safe accommodation services.

Overview and Scrutiny Engagement

70. This report will be considered by Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee on 25 May 2021, with members of the Executive and senior

officers in attendance to answer members' questions.

Procurement Implications

71. A sequential approach to supplier relief was agreed earlier on in the response phase of the pandemic, ensuring that suppliers were pointed to central Government support where possible first and work with us on an open book basis when necessary. The Council has established an internal Commercial Board to provide oversight and assurance on the end to end procurement process around future contract activity and management.

Equalities Impact of the Proposal

72. Work continues to understand the impact of the pandemic on those with protected characteristics. Equality implications are being considered in the Council's decision making and any change to service provision.

Environmental and Climate Change Considerations

73. An update on the council's response to the climate emergency was included on the February Council agenda. It sets out all the council's activity to tackle the climate emergency which has been undertaken in the context of the Covid-19 response and recovery and includes a climate strategy discussion document for comment. Responses from stakeholders so far indicate that they wish to retain some of the benefits of remote meetings which have occurred as a result of the pandemic to minimise travel. Delivery of the council's retrofit programme for council homes and buildings will support green jobs and a green economic recovery.

Risks that may arise as a result of a decision

74. Risks created by responding to COVID-19 are managed by Corporate Leadership Team and Extended Leadership Team as part of the overall management process. No decision required, so no risks arising.

Workforce Implications

75. Government guidance about employment matters affected by the pandemic continues to be applied. The COVID-19 policy implemented in March 2020 sets out information for staff, including the application of policies and procedures to support response and during recovery, and will continue to be reviewed and updated following consultation with the trade unions.

Conclusions

76. Wiltshire Council continues to play a critical role with its partners and the local community in responding to the impact of COVID-19 in the county.

Terence Herbert, Chief Executive

Report Author: David Bowater
21 May 2021

Appendices:

Appendix 1: Additional detail on work under Organisation Recovery.

Appendix 1

Organisational Recovery

1. The Organisational Recovery Programme provides oversight, through 7 workstreams, of activities related to council wide internal transformation. It ensures that all improvement activity is reviewed against a set of principles to promote a joined-up approach, aligned to Our Identity and delivery of the council's business plan.
2. Good progress continues to be made across all workstreams despite a reduction in capacity to support and facilitate on-going redeployment activity and the preparation for and delivery of the elections and councillor induction.
3. A major focus of the programme since March has been the preparation for the return to workplaces and the launch of pilots of new workspaces (hybrid meeting rooms, collaboration spaces and bookable desks) within the main hubs. The pilots went live on 17 May and a "return to workplaces" webinar held on 19 May was attended by nearly 800 staff.
4. The priorities for this workstream going forward are to evaluate the pilots and work with services to design future workplace layouts in hubs and to safely extend access to buildings in line with the government roadmap and public health advice.
5. Communication and engagement with staff will continue during this period with further webinars planned that will enable staff to receive updates on the progress and ask questions.
6. Major milestones within other workstreams since March include:
 - Customer experience workstream - the award of contracts to support with digital payments compliance and automation
 - Inclusion workstream - the re-establishment of the EDI steering group and the roll out of new inclusion training for senior managers, and launch of reverse mentoring scheme pilot
 - High performing culture workstream
 - Our Identity survey has been completed and feedback is being used to identify priority actions
 - Business Intelligence – two use cases have been developed and a community of practice is well established and identifying further opportunities
 - Evolve (SAP replacement) – tender evaluations are currently taking place
 - Wellbeing and Engagement workstream – a third engagement & wellbeing survey has now been launched.
7. Programme priorities for the coming months include:

Customer Experience workstream:

- Completing the Civica upgrade for digital payments
- Next phase of process automation to commence
- Scoping use of text/SMS notifications to customers across a number of services

Inclusion workstream

- Extension of Early Resolution pilot, and review of current grievance policy
- Evaluation of reverse mentoring scheme pilot

Agile workstream:

- Embedding learning from redeployment activity during pandemic into launch of an agile workforce pool
- Review of unsocial, standby and callout policies to support new operating models
- Kickstart placements to be advertised and recruited
- Digital skill gap analysis to be completed

Workplaces and workspaces workstream (in addition to the priorities outlined above related to return of staff to workplaces):

- Phase 3 of MS Teams telephony roll out and decommissioning of mitel phones
- Sharepoint migration continues

High Performing Culture workstream:

- Extension of 360 appraisals to senior leaders
- Development of a performance dashboard
- Launch of an updated leadership and management programme
- Business intelligence - extension of Use Case portfolio
- Evolve – benefits realisation work, award of tender and preparations for implementation to begin

Wellbeing and Engagement workstream:

- Analysis of engagement & wellbeing survey results to identify themes and actions
- Refresh of the Wellbeing Strategy
- Support for staff returning to workplaces

Commercial workstream:

- Skills analysis and development of training
- Completion of process mapping and improvement work

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Wiltshire Council

Cabinet

1 June 2021

Subject: Financial Year 2020/21 – Provisional Outturn Position

Cabinet Member: Cllr Pauline Church – Cabinet member for Finance and Procurement, Commissioning, IT, Digital and Commercialisation

Key Decision: Non Key

Executive Summary

This report sets out the provisional outturn position for services as at 31 March 2021 for the financial year 2020/21 for revenue as well as an update on the financial impact of COVID-19. Capital will be reported to Cabinet at their meeting on 13 July 2021 along with the final outturn position which will include the Collection Fund and the Treasury Management outturn position for 2020/21. The report also contains two recommendations on Capital Schemes to take forward to allow these schemes to progress.

COVID-19 Financial Impact

The report provides details on the financial impact to the Council of responding to the COVID-19 pandemic for the 2020/21 financial year. It gives detail on the Council's latest monthly submission to the Government that sets out the impact on the Council's finances.

Provisional Revenue Outturn position 2020/21

This report sets out the provisional revenue financial position for services. It sets out the movement from the quarter three (Q3) budget monitoring report, following the approval to set aside £13.571m in two new earmarked reserves, one for Latent Demand and a Collection Fund Volatility reserve as well as £4.165m in the Budget Equalisation Reserve approved as part of the quarter two (Q2) budget monitoring report.

These sums have been set aside to mitigate risk and known pressures that will arise in future years and to balance the budget for 2021/22 financial year. The approvals have effectively reset the budgets for services by transferring all the variances, the overspends and underspends, and putting the net position into the Latent Demand reserve.

The narrative in this report therefore sets out the variances in the financial performance from Q3 to the Q4 position. The overall financial variances for the financial year can be seen in Appendix A.

After receiving £32m of emergency funding to support the Council in managing the response to COVID-19, an estimated £6.4m from Government to offset income losses as a result of lockdown interventions, additional furlough grant claimed and the revision of the timing of latent demand, the Q4 outturn position has again improved. The provisional Q4 position shows an additional underspend of £16.246m following the requests approved as part of the Q2 and Q3 budget monitoring reports.

This improved position allows for the setting aside of an additional £2.937m in the Latent Demand reserve to help mitigate the risk of additional demand above that on which the budget was set.

An additional £6.648m to be transferred to earmarked reserves as detailed within the report, and a further £3.261m to the budget equalisation reserve to help support the budget setting process for 2022/23.

A further £2m is to be set aside to fund the estimated impact of the pay award in 2021/22 and £1.4m transferred to the General Fund reserve to increase the Council's financial resilience now and also allows for the contribution that was planned for 2022/23 to be removed and reduce the current estimated £45m budget gap.

The additional underspend of £16.246m for Q4, together with the £17.736m underspend at Q3, which has already been transferred to earmarked reserves, will see the Council underspend by £33.982m for the financial year 2020/21. However, a significant proportion of this one off funding will be required to meet a range of costs and pressures, some of which maybe recurring, in the following financial year. Therefore, this report has prudently set out proposals to set aside these funds to ensure the financial sustainability and resilience of the Council to continue to deliver services over the medium term.

Proposal

Cabinet is asked to note:

- a) the Section 151 officer's summary of the impact of COVID-19 on the Council's 2020/21 budget;
- b) the provisional revenue budget outturn position for the financial year 2020/21;
- c) the contributions to and from earmarked reserves as planned;

Cabinet are asked to approve:

- d) the transfer of an additional £2.937m to the Latent Demand reserve;
- e) the transfer in total of £3.912m to new earmarked reserves as detailed in the report and Appendices B & C, as follows:
 - i. National Assessment & Accreditation System (NAAS) £0.163m;

- ii. School Improvement, Monitoring & Brokerage Grant £0.220m;
- iii. Early Years Professional development programme £0.062m;
- iv. Neighbourhood Planning £0.164m;
- v. Local Plan £0.323m;
- vi. Highways & Environment £3.007m;
- vii. Car Parking Machines £0.034m;

f) the transfer of £2.675m to the Capital Financing reserve;

g) the transfer of the balance of the £6.661m provisional underspend as follows:

- i. £1.4m to be transferred to the General Fund reserve;
- ii. £2m to be set aside for the estimated pay award for 2021/22;
- iii. £3.261m to the Budget Equalisation reserve;

h) £0.470m of Capital Approval for Salisbury Car Park & Maltings is brought forward from 2022/23 into 2021/22 and allocated to the River Park Bridge works.

Reason for Proposal

To inform effective decision making and ensure sound financial management as part of the Councils overall control environment.

To inform Cabinet on the provisional revenue outturn position for the Council for the financial year 2020/21, including delivery of approved savings.

To improve the Councils financial resilience by increasing the balance on the General Fund reserve now and setting aside funds in earmarked reserves to prudently assist in managing the Councils future pressures and budget gap.

Terence Herbert – Chief Executive

**Andy Brown – Corporate Director Resources & Deputy Chief Executive
(S.151 Officer)**

Wiltshire Council

Cabinet

1 June 2021

Subject: Financial Year 2020/21 – Provisional Revenue Outturn Position

Cabinet Member: Cllr Pauline Church – Cabinet member for Finance and Procurement, Commissioning, IT, Digital and Commercialisation

Key Decision: Non Key

Purpose of Report

1. To advise Members of the provisional outturn position for financial year 2020/21 (31 March 2021) for revenue with the necessary approvals as appropriate. Figures remain provisional as certain entries to the accounts are dependent on information still being gathered, most notably on the Collection Fund, the account that contains all the council tax and business rates transactions, is yet to be finalised and will be reported to Cabinet in July.
2. To provide an update on the financial impact on the Council of responding to the COVID-19 pandemic and details on Government support.

FINANCIAL IMPACT OF THE COVID-19 EMERGENCY

Government Funding for the COVID-19 Emergency

3. The total level of general emergency funding received by Wiltshire from government to support the council in the financial impact of the emergency response to COVID-19 was £31.942m.
4. Other funding includes the scheme to compensate Councils for an element of lost income from services such as Car Parking. The council has claimed just over £5.4m for the period April 2020 to November 2020. The final claim is still to be calculated; at this stage a prudent forecast is included of a further £1m.
5. As part of the government response to the economic impact of COVID-19 and lockdown restrictions, additional business rates mandatory reliefs were announced for some business sectors. These mandatory reliefs are usually fully funded by government by way of a section 31 grant and are then paid in the following year when the deficit is realised. To ensure councils did not run into any cashflow problems as a result of the reduce Business Rates income Central Government paid an amount during the year. Due to the timing differences any loss will be recognised in the following years, with some losses being mandated to be spread across the following three financial years. The payment of the grant

during the year will result in significant additional grant in excess of budget but it will be requested to set this aside once the Collection Fund is finalised to fund the deficit as it is recognised in future years.

6. Significant further revenue funding has been received and can be seen in table 1 below. Some of this funding is where the council are simply acting as the paymaster where other funding is to fund specific service provision.
7. The Council has submitted claims to HMRC against the furlough scheme. This scheme was originally expected to end in October 2020 and has been extended a couple of times. More recently it has been extended to 30 September 2021 and the council continues to assess the ability to access this scheme. The total claim and grant received for the financial year is just in excess of £2.5m split between £2.274m for the council and £0.256m for Wiltshire maintained schools. The schools' element of this funding has been passed directly to those schools.
8. An analysis of the total funding for Wiltshire, broken down between that which the Council has utilised to fund specific service provision and the overall financial impact as well as that funding which has been passported on e.g. to businesses is detailed in table 1 below.

Table 1 – Funding Received from Government

Fund Description & National Funding	Wiltshire Allocation	Wiltshire Council	To be Passported
	£m	£m	£m
Business Grants (£12.3bn)	£108	-	£108
Additional Business Grants	£17	-	£17
Business Grants (£4.6bn)	£39	-	£39
Business Rate Reliefs (£9.7bn)*	£67	-	£67
Emergency Funding (£4.7bn)	£32	£32	-
Infection Control Fund (tranche 1 & 2 - £1.1bn)*	£11.7	-	£11.7
Hardship Funding (£0.5bn)*	£3.2	-	£3.2
Test and Trace (£0.3bn)	£1.6	£1.6	-
Bus Subsidy (£0.2bn)*	£0.8	-	£0.8
Business Support New Burdens Grants	£0.2	£0.2	-
Emergency Assistance Grant (£63m)	£0.4	£0.4	-
Dedicated Home to School and College Transport Funding*	£0.9	-	£0.9
Contain Outbreak Management Fund*	£11.5	-	£11.5
Compliance & Enforcement Grant*	£0.2	-	£0.2
COVID Winter Grant*	£0.8	-	£0.8
COVID Mental Health Grant	£0.1	£0.1	-
Self-Isolation payments Grant*	£0.3	-	£0.3
Shielding Grant*	£0.5	-	£0.5
Total Revenue Funding	£295.2	£34.3	£260.9

* the asterisk grant figures, together with the £34.3m funding for Wiltshire Council, and the £12.6m contribution from CCG provides the total £143m funding used to offset the financial impact reported to Government, as detailed in table 3 below.

Estimated Impact and Return to Government

9. Monthly returns have been made to MHCLG that set out the financial impact of responding to COVID-19. As the year has progressed these submissions have become more consistent. Government will continue to request these returns for at least the first quarter of the 2021/22 financial year to assess on-going impacts.
10. The Council has continued to refine the model and update the financial impacts in the modelling however the drivers of the financial pressures facing the Council continue to be additional spend, lost income e.g. car parking, council tax and changes to Council plans that can no longer be delivered e.g. saving plans.
11. An element of the financial pressure remains attributable to the losses forecast for the Collection Fund although this pressure has reduced, and more detail of those forecast losses will be included in the financial report next month.
12. It should be noted that estimates continue to include uncertainty and an element of judgement about the underlying cause of the pressure, whilst some are known and can be more confidently estimated e.g. lost income. Additional uncertainty remains for the next financial year with the world-wide infection rates and the impact of different variants not clear and uncertainty on the timing and impact of lockdown measures lifting.
13. The underlying assumptions around income losses within the return have not changed significantly and the actual losses of income for the last quarter are slightly better than originally estimated.
14. The estimated total gross financial impact of COVID-19 for the Council is £131m, which is a small increase of £1m on the estimate provided to Government in December.
15. Table 2 below provides a high-level summary of the twelfth submission to Government.

Table 2 – April 2021 Submission to MHCLG on impact of COVID-19

	MHCLG APRIL 2020						MHCLG DEC 2020	
	2019/20 FY TOTAL	2020/21				FY TOTAL	TOTAL	TOTAL
		Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4		IMPACT	IMPACT
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	
Additional Spend								
Adult Social Care	0.000	4.372	3.760	2.979	3.848	14.958	13.014	
Children's Social Care	0.000	0.316	0.774	1.060	1.050	3.200	0.657	
Education / Home to School Transport	0.000	0.000	0.154	0.463	0.251	0.869	0.736	
Housing/Cultural/Environmental	0.101	1.115	1.330	1.051	0.134	3.630	4.647	
Other (e.g. contracted relief)	0.063	1.761	0.352	0.238	0.614	2.964	2.727	
Saving Plans	0.000	1.689	1.680	1.670	1.669	6.708	7.790	
Test & Trace/Infection Control	0.000	2.360	3.933	6.228	0.915	13.435	13.435	
Estimated Spend	0.164	11.612	11.982	13.688	8.481	45.927	43.006	
Income Lost								
Council Tax / Business Rates	0.000	26.469	14.760	14.760	14.760	70.750	70.750	
Highways & Transport (inc car parking)	0.081	2.092	1.171	0.733	1.405	5.401	5.976	
Cultural & Related (inc Lesiure)	0.095	1.383	1.224	1.536	1.437	5.580	6.196	
Planning	0.000	0.297	-0.101	0.012	-0.208	0.000	0.563	
Other Sales, Fees and Charges	0.000	0.921	0.932	-0.627	0.437	1.664	1.674	
Commercial	0.000	0.110	0.071	0.024	-0.093	0.113	0.113	
Other (bad debt, returns)	0.000	0.075	0.075	0.174	1.176	1.500	1.500	
Estimated Lost Income	0.176	31.349	18.132	16.612	18.915	85.008	86.771	
Total Financial Impact	0.340	42.960	30.114	30.299	27.396	130.770	129.777	

16. With £131m of grants from Government, a £12.6m contribution from the CCG relating to hospital discharges Table 3 shows that the estimated impact in Council finances in this financial year, related to COVID-19, is estimated to be fully covered by the current funding.
17. This is before the £6.4m estimated receipt of funding expected through the income loss scheme. This leaves a surplus in funding in this financial year further and is reported later in the report in terms of the Councils overall financial position.

Table 3 – Net Financial Impact of COVID-19

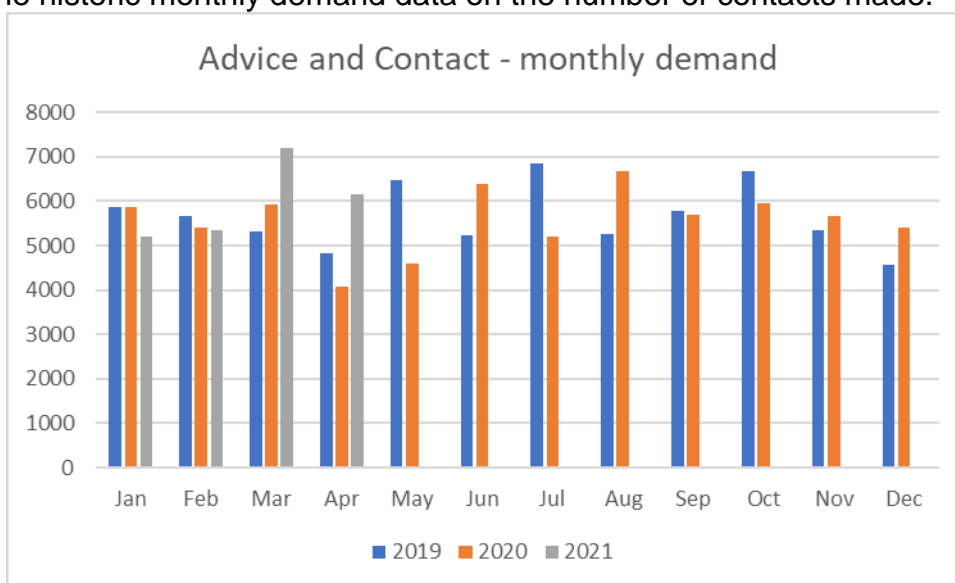
NET FINANCIAL IMPACT	£m
Total Financial Impact	131.110
COVID Grants & income receivable	
Passported	
Rough Sleepers	-0.015
Bus Subsidy	-0.804
Infection Control	-11.692
Hardship Grant	-3.222
Additional Dedicated Home to School and College Transport Funding	-0.868
COVID Winter Grant	-0.801
Self Isolation Pay	-0.314
Shielding Grant	-0.521
Contain Outbreak Management Fund	-11.536
Compliance & Enforcement	-0.202
Business Rates S31 Grant	-67.000
Wiltshire Council	
Covid 19 Grant	-31.942
Test & Trace	-1.587
Business Grants Support Grant	-0.225
Emergency Food Grant	-0.411
COVID Mental Health Grant	-0.085
CCG	-12.630
Grants & income	-143.854
NET FINANCIAL IMPACT	-12.744

PROVISIONAL REVENUE OUTTURN POSITION 2020/21

Timing Impact of COVID-19 and Latent Demand

18. The Council approved a net budget for 2020/21 of £344.023m at its meeting on 25 February 2020. The following paragraphs focus on provisional outturn variances against the reset budget based on most recent information, although some technical accounting areas are still being worked through.
19. The forecasts include the reported financial impact of COVID-19 as per the return to Government, and then include other variances from within the Council to provide an overall position for the Council.
20. The Q3 report forecasts were the best estimates at that point in time, and the variance in the last quarter has therefore been impacted by the third lockdown and further funding streams being received in Q4 most notably the Contain Outbreak Management Fund (COMF). The COMF is specific funding given to local authorities to fund activities that contain the virus, and the Council has utilised this to help fund the deployment of existing staff as well as specific programmes of work.

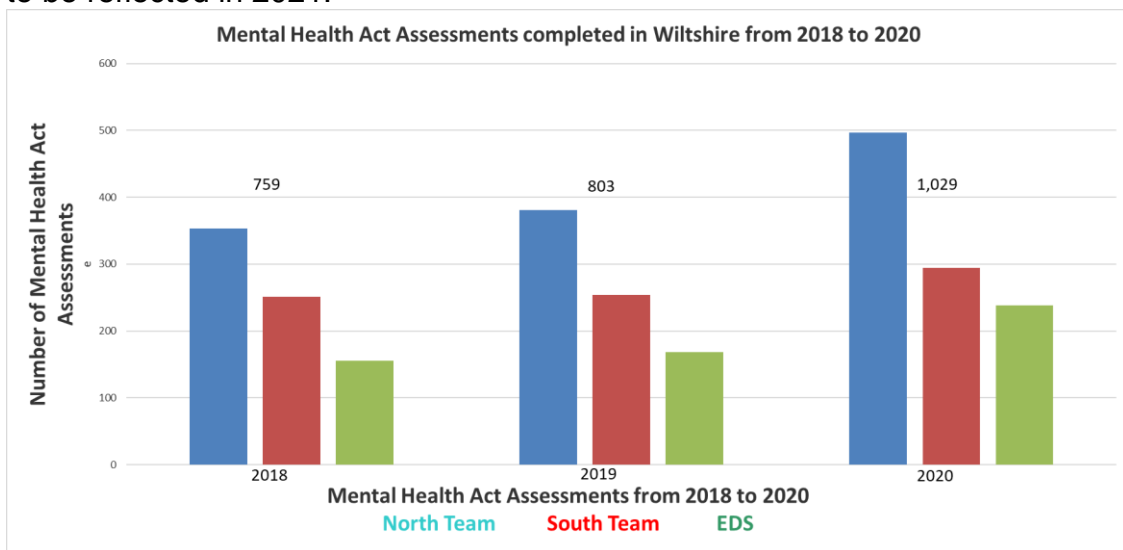
21. Overall, these factors have improved the position for the Council as at the year end, but this should be contexed that this is a matter of timing with future requirements and demands on the COVID-19 funding and support received being required to be met.
22. The proposals for transfers to earmarked reserves reflect this timing position with nearly £18m related to COVID-19 grants that will be utilised in the forthcoming year.
23. In addition, the previous forecasts anticipated an element of demand arising for services that, as a result of the third lockdown, have either yet to materialise or have been held back.
24. The demand may not have materialised in terms of actual costs arising, owing to the lead in time from initial demand contact to cost, during the financial year but there is evidence to suggest that as we approached the end of the financial year the data trends are pointing towards a potential rising tide of demand coming through as we have progressed through the road map.
25. Monthly demand for Advice and Contact for Adult Social Care services has seen a significant spike in March 2021 compared to last year, indicative that pent up demand for Councils services is now being released. The graph below provides the historic monthly demand data on the number of contacts made.



26. The number of Education Health Care Plans (EHCP) has continued to rise. In Wiltshire the number of EHCPs has more than doubled from 1,982 in 2015 to 4,105 as at March 2021. Each child or young person with an EHCP is allocated a SEND lead worker (SLW) and as a result of the increase in EHCPs, the caseload for the SLW has increased steadily. The number of requests for assessments has been high, with a significant peak in March, reflecting a national trend with an increase of over 30% in requests reported in England for this month.
27. Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) contacts are continuing to be higher compared to 2019/20 which was the highest year in the last 6. Recent weekly

contacts have seen the highest number of weekly contacts in the past 3 years at over 400 with a baseline expectation of 305 per week and we have exceeded this in each of the last four weeks. More than one month's data is required to understand the current trend and whether this is the start of a perceived surge.

28. In mental health services we are aware that the Community Mental Health Services, run by AWP and who account for the majority of our referrals into the mental health social work teams, are predicting a 30% increase on Early Intervention and Intensive Support services. There is also evidence that there has been an increase in demand for mental health services from third sector organisations directly as a result of the pandemic, this is being borne out in increase activity through Advice and Contact for mental health support.
29. We have also seen a fluctuating picture in mental health act assessments, where they have risen and fallen due to lockdown, however, in 2020 we undertook over 200 more mental health act assessments than we did in 2019 which indicates the complexity of our service users who live in the community and who have significant and serious mental health conditions, who will therefore, need support from our social work team and are likely to have care and support needs under the Care Act, 2014 (this activity covers both children and adults) and continues to be reflected in 2021.



Revenue Budget

30. The following elements of this report reflect the management responsibility in line with the approved management hierarchy. The breakdown of the provisional outturn position is set out in table 4 below.

Table 4 – Provisional 2020/21 Summary Position

Summary Position	Original Budget	Revised Actual - Outturn	Variance at Q3	Variance at Q4
	£ m	£ m	£ m	£ m
Corporate Director - People	219.290	227.568	(2.032)	0.462
Corporate Director - Resources	33.768	32.805	(0.211)	(1.522)
Corporate Director - Place & Environment	85.180	91.119	12.572	(6.769)
Chief Executive Directorates	12.893	14.609	0.022	(0.235)
Corporate	33.922	24.889	2.492	(4.349)
General Fund Total	385.053	390.990	12.843	(12.413)
COVID-19 Emergency Grant Funding	0.000	(15.838)	(23.498)	(3.419)
Income Losses Scheme	0.000	(6.414)	(6.000)	(0.414)
General Fund Total	385.053	368.738	(16.655)	(16.246)
Collection Fund	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
General Government Grants	(41.029)	(40.960)	(1.081)	0.000
NDR Levy	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Total General Fund impact on 2020/21	344.024	327.778	(17.736)	(16.246)

Overview of provisional outturn position 2020/21

31. Overall, this provisional outturn report presents an underspend of £16.246m for Q4, this is on top of the transfer to earmarked reserves approved as part of the Q3 budget monitoring report of £17.736m to help manage pressures in the following financial year and beyond, most of which is directly attributable to the impact of COVID-19. The financial position includes the balance of the £32m of emergency government funding, the £6.14m estimated funding on the income loss scheme and £2.3m furlough grant.
32. The detail of the provisional outturn position can be seen in Appendix A. Of this outturn variance of £16.246m it is recommended that £6.648m is set aside in specific earmarked reserves, with £3.973m to fund activity that is planned during the next financial year and £2.675m in the Capital Financing reserve to provide additional capacity in this revenue reserve for future capital investment. It is also recommended that £2.937m is added to the Latent Demand reserve to provide additional funding capacity to manage demand in the following financial years that exceeds the level on which the budget was based.
33. The balance remaining of the underspend is £6.661m and it is recommended that £1.4m of this underspend be transferred to the General Fund Reserve to provide additional capacity and resilience to support the Councils ongoing financial position and allow for the planned and budgeted contribution in the financial year 2022/23 to be removed.

34. It is also recommended that £2m be set aside to fund the estimated pay award for 2021/22. Following the Chancellor of the Exchequers announcement at the budget the pay award was originally expected to be for staff on the lower pay scales only. The pay award is negotiated between the Local Government Employers and the Trade Unions and currently an offer of 1.5% on all NJC pay points has been made by the National Employers.
35. The balance of £3.261m is then proposed to be transferred into the budget equalisation reserve to help support the budget setting process for 2022/23.

Table 5 – Provisional Underspend 2020/21 approvals

Description	£m
Draft Outturn position 2020/21	(16.246)
Other Earmarked Reserves Requests	
- New Reserves	3.973
- Capital Financing	2.675
Latent Demand	2.937
General Fund	1.400
Pay Award 2021/22	2.000
Budget Equalisation	3.261
Balance	0

The detail of these recommendations can be seen in Appendix B

36. The Collection Fund has not been finalised yet so the final figures on Council Tax and Business Rates are not included at this stage. A significant deficit is expected and although arisen in this financial year it will be recognised in the following financial years and will be partly funded by s31 grants from Central Government received in 2002/21 financial year and the funding set aside in the Collection Fund Volatility reserve. It remains unclear how long the economic impact of COVID-19 will impact on the Collection Fund and how quickly the economy will bounce back so that income from local taxation returns to pre-COVID-19 levels. It is also not clear whether any compensation schemes may continue if the impacts continue longer than this financial year.
37. As part of other mitigations, additional spending controls were implemented with the largest financial impact as a result of the external recruitment freeze and the details provided in the individual service details.
38. Details of significant variances within service areas since Q3 are included below.

CORPORATE DIRECTOR - PEOPLE

Table 6

Summary Position	<i>Original Budget</i> £ m	<i>Revised Actual - Outturn</i> £ m	<i>Variance at Q3</i> £ m	<i>Variance at Q4</i> £ m
Family & Childrens	52.613	51.226	(0.362)	(1.523)
Education & Skills	16.961	24.555	(0.761)	(0.506)
Learning Disabilities & Mental Health	72.264	70.581	(3.693)	0.020
Access & Reablement	49.536	52.582	2.997	1.548
Commissioning - Adults	23.257	24.742	0.173	1.230
Commissioning - Childrens	4.659	3.882	(0.386)	(0.307)
General Fund Total	219.290	227.568	(2.032)	0.462

Children & Young People with Social Care Needs: Budget £52.749m – £1.523m underspend

39. This is a volatile, demand driven area. The children in care and special educational needs and disability placement budgets had some additional budget pressure due to several factors including social distancing measures however, these were offset by the significant reduction in numbers of children in care.
40. As planned, £0.031m was drawn down during the year to fund support for care leavers, this reserve was created from a 2019/20 grant allocation.
41. The referrals into children's social care over the past year has reduced whilst children have not been in school. The original demand modelling scenario work anticipated significant cost pressure in 2020-21 whilst we haven't yet seen the significant increase, we are still anticipating a rise in demand and complexity.
42. A review of the modelling is currently taking place with Police and CCG colleagues. It is anticipated that there will be future significant increase in safeguarding work as a result of latent and new demand and pressure following extended periods of relative isolation for children and families throughout 'lockdown' and this will now create financial pressure in future years. Future anticipated overspend due to either, increased numbers of children in care or, complexity of children for this increased expenditure which will have a higher weekly cost will be funded from transfers from the latent demand reserve.
43. Despite the pandemic good progress has been made with the Fostering Excellence project which has continued throughout the COVID-19 period. We anticipate reaching the Fostering Excellence end of year target with net growth in excess of 20 foster carers.
44. A number of savings to fund schemes were delayed due to the response to COVID-19 taking priority, however mitigations were put in place in an attempt to reduce cost such as the avoidance of agency social worker costs. In the event, it was possible to hold vacant posts until they could be offered to graduates who are due to join the Council this summer as part of our grow your own recruitment strategy.

45. Vulnerable families were supported through COVID-19 grants made available for this purpose and so support budgets were not required at the same level.
46. As a result, it is requested that Cabinet approve a transfer to the latent demand reserve of £1.360m to fund the anticipated future activity. The DfE have confirmed they recognise that the COVID-19 outbreak will have impacted on delivery of the national assessment & accreditation system (NAAS), a system to enable child and family social workers to develop skills and knowledge to improve outcomes and it is therefore requested that Cabinet approve a transfer of £0.163m to a new earmarked reserve to allow these funds to be drawn down in the 2021-22 financial year.

Education & Skills (School Effectiveness, SEN & Inclusion): Budget £25.061m – £0.506m underspend

47. The impact of the pandemic on schools not operating as they would normally extend to the amount of service being purchased from the local authority. The impact on reduced income is £0.195m. This has been more than mitigated by work with schools being delayed due to school closure as a result of the pandemic, holding staff vacancies and delaying expenditure to offset costs. In addition, several savings to find schemes were delayed due to the response to COVID-19 taking priority, there were however mitigations in place to replace these. It has been necessary to prioritise supporting schools to open for pupils during the pandemic and as a result the Schools improvement monitoring and brokerage workplan has been delayed and Cabinet are requested to approve a transfer of £0.220m to support this work in the next financial year.
48. The early years providers have been largely open to children during the pandemic, even when schools were closed. As a result of this and the lockdown measures in place, the early years professional development programme was not able to be rolled out and Cabinet are requested to approve a transfer of £0.062m to allow this activity to take place during 2021-22 financial year.
49. All 5-16-year-old school children with an education care and health plan (EHCP) are entitled to free school transport. The budget was increased significantly in 2020-21 to keep pace with demand however that rate of increased demand has not come to fruition – this will be largely due to the pandemic but could also be, a more general flattening of the rising trend in this area. It is requested that Cabinet approve a small adjustment of £0.029m to the latent demand sum transferred.

Learning Disabilities and Mental Health: Budget £70.561m – (£0.020m) overspend

50. Overall Learning Disabilities and Mental Health budgets have overspent by £0.020m.
51. Within this, there were staff redeployments to COVID-19 hubs, with costs amounting to £0.076m that were covered by COVID-19 specific grants. There were increases in the costs of direct care that amounted to £0.096m.

Access and Reablement: Budget £51.034m – £1.548m overspend

52. Access and Reablement budgets overspent by £1.548m. The most significant of the factors behind this overspend is in respect of out of hospital costs. The picture of spend on older people care in 2020/21 was very much complicated by complex funding arrangements for hospital discharges. In particular, there was considerable uncertainty in predicting the level of discharges there would be, and what the cost of meeting the on-going care needs after the initial discharge period ended would be.
53. With effect from 1st September people discharged from hospital had their costs covered by the NHS for the first 6 weeks, and then, after a period of 6 weeks, transfer to their normal funding arrangements. Costs were held separately from the main departmental budgets, in a separate COVID-19 cost centre and a figure of £1.753m built into the projected costs as being the impact on the Council of the post discharge arrangements. This projected impact was held separately from the main Adult Social Care budgets during the year to aid accounting for Business as Usual as opposed to COVID-19 specific expenditure. It is estimated that the additional cost actually amounted to c £3.126m. This figure takes a prudent view of costs that might still be claimable against the NHS discharge fund.
54. The difference between the projected costs of £1.753m and the actual costs of £3.126m (£1.373m) largely accounts for the increased costs in the care budget of £1.598m. As part of year end accounting processes these costs have transferred to the Access and Reablement area.
55. The overspend on these care costs was slightly offset by an underspend caused by staff redeployments to COVID-19 hubs, with costs amounting to £0.050m that were covered by COVID-19 specific grants.

Adults Commissioning: Budget £23.512m – £1.230m overspend

56. There are 2 significant budget variations within the Commissioning budget overspend of £1.230m.
57. The first is that in December the Commissioning service renegotiated the block contract for Residential care with Order of St John, reducing the number of beds bought. As many of these beds were empty, this led to a saving, which in 2020/21 amounted to £0.350.
58. The second is that the Commissioning budget assumed income of £1.664m from the Better Care Fund and Improved Better Care Fund but which were not in the end committed, due to the ongoing focus in the year on Hospital Discharge arrangements. This is therefore fundamentally a presentational issue.

59. Other minor variations, including £0.037m underspend due to staff redeployments to COVID-19 hubs, with costs covered by COVID-19 specific grants, mean that the Commissioning budget overspend by £1.230m

Children’s Commissioning: Budget £4.189m – (£0.306m) underspend

60. Children’s Commissioning have put mitigation plans in place to delay expenditure and hold vacant posts where safe and practical to do so. In addition, contracts have been renegotiated to achieve on going savings. The result is an underspend of £0.306m.

61. During the year, pre agreed use of earmarked reserves totalling £0.124m relating to three separate grants was drawn down. It is requested that Cabinet approve a transfer of £0.202m created from this underspend to the latent demand reserve

CORPORATE DIRECTOR – RESOURCES

Table 7

Summary Position	<i>Original Budget</i> £ m	<i>Revised Actual - Outturn</i> £ m	<i>Variance at Q3</i> £ m	<i>Variance at Q4</i> £ m
Finance & Procurement	6.240	6.786	0.400	(0.177)
Programme Office & Systems Thinking	1.233	0.949	0.228	(0.469)
Housing & Commercial Development	15.704	14.598	(0.872)	(0.529)
Digital & Information	10.591	10.472	0.033	(0.347)
General Fund Total	33.768	32.805	(0.211)	(1.522)

Finance & Procurement: Budget £6.963m – Variance (£0.177m) underspend

62. The outturn variance of £0.177m underspend is made up of a combination of over and underspends.

63. £0.469m overspend is in relation to the Monkton Park PFI. The PFI earmarked reserve for future liability to cover the difference between the contract costs and PFI credits was exhausted in 2019/20. For 2020/21 this is being offset by underspends in the service. This pressure will need to be addressed for 2021/22 budget and for future years for the remainder of the PFI which runs until 2026/27.

64. The underspends offsetting the PFI pressure are from staffing budgets across the service as a result of holding vacancies and charging staff time to capital programmes where appropriate, unbudgeted income received in Procurement from the chasing up of bad debt and duplicate invoices and Housing benefits recovery being better than forecast in period 9.

65. As planned and reported in the budget monitoring forecasts this year, draw down of earmarked reserves held for Insurance and Schools PFI have been made of £0.826m and £0.030m respectively.

Programme Office & Systems Thinking: Budget £1.418m – (£0.469m) underspend

66. Following the decision to defer £100m of capital programmes, the service was unable to recharge staff to internal programmes of work and alternative funding streams as originally anticipated when the budget was set. In addition, internal restructures have been paused due to COVID-19 and therefore savings have not been made as anticipated, vacancies have been held to mitigate this and staff have been deployed on to COVID-19 activities. It is requested that Cabinet approve a transfer to the latent demand reserve from this underspend of £0.250m.

Housing Services and Commercial Development: Budget £15.127m – (£0.529m) underspend

67. The Outturn variance of £0.529m underspend is largely in Strategic Asset Management & Facilities Management. The impact of COVID-19 on both spending and income has been significant across the service, with a considerable amount of saving being realised and confirmed since the Q3 monitoring forecast due to the third lockdown.

68. Large numbers of operational buildings were closed for considerable lengths of time during the year meaning operating costs for buildings were reduced in many areas, and the lockdown meant that demand on some SAM&FM budgets used corporately by council services was dramatically reduced.

69. The most significant saving has been on utilities as a result of the third lockdown. In total throughout the year £1.058m was saved on utilities as buildings remained closed, this was a significant amount in the third lockdown through the winter months, dramatically reducing the cost of heating and hot water.

70. Increases in COVID-19 cleaning costs were £0.073m, lower than the Q3 forecast as many buildings remained closed and generated cleaning savings which partly offset the additional cleaning costs in the open buildings.

71. As planned and reported in the budget monitoring forecasts this year, the following movements have been actioned on earmarked reserves. £0.384m has been transferred into the Flexible Housing Support Grant earmarked reserve, this grant is being used to fully fund the Rough Sleeper Housing team and is being set aside to cover these costs in future years. £0.111m has been drawn down from the PFI Housing earmarked reserve to equalise the impact on revenue and cover the difference between the contract payments and PFI credits.

72. Additional costs are expected in 2021/22 associated with the recommissioning of closed buildings and the undertaking of non-essential repairs that have been delayed from 2020/21. It is therefore recommended that the outturn underspend of £0.529m is transferred into the Latent Demand reserve to manage these costs as they arise in 2021/22.

Digital and Information: Budget £10.819m – (£0.347m) underspend

73. The Outturn variance of £0.347m underspend is largely due to savings on telephony as a result of renegotiating the contract which has seen a significant reduction in charges. The saving was not included in the Q3 forecast as there was uncertainty over timing and the actual figure that would impact on the 2020/21 budget. This saving has been factored into 2021/22 budget.

74. As planned and reported in budget monitoring forecast this year, £0.400m has been drawn down from the Content Management System (CMS) - Single View of the Customer earmarked reserve to offset the salary costs for implementing the replacement of the CMS system.

CORPORATE DIRECTOR – PLACE & ENVIRONMENT

Table 8

Summary Position	Original Budget £ m	Revised Actual - Outturn £ m	Variance at Q3 £ m	Variance at Q4 £ m	Total Variance £ m
Economic Development & Planning	2.957	2.352	0.117	(1.276)	(1.159)
Communities & Neighbourhood	32.264	35.712	5.900	(3.456)	2.444
Highways & Environment	49.959	53.055	6.555	(2.037)	4.518
General Fund Total	85.180	91.119	12.572	(6.769)	5.803

Economic Development & Planning: Budget £3.628m – (£1.276m) underspend

75. The Outturn variance of £1.276m underspend is largely due to a significant increase in income from planning applications in the last quarter of 2020/21.

76. Income budgets for Development Management, Building Control and Local Land charges had been forecast to underachieve from the impact of COVID-19, this was being offset by savings in establishment and non-essential spend across Economic Development and Planning as part of the spend control measures.

77. However, Development Management and Building Control both saw significant activity in the last quarter, this activity could not have been forecast at Q3. The final outturn income positions were £0.380m overachievement of income of Development Management, £0.161 loss of income on Building Control and £0.119 loss of income on Local Land Charges.

78. As planned and reported in budget monitoring forecast this year, £0.274m has been transferred into Porton Science Park earmarked reserve which was approved by Cabinet as part of the business case for the Science Park. It creates a sinking fund for future capital maintenance from the surplus the site has generated in year. In addition, an amount is being set aside to help manage the first year running cost of Phase Two until the site is fully operational and covering its costs.

79. It is recommended that the following earmarked reserves are created from part of the reported outturn variance.
80. The underspend on the Local Plan budget is as a result of delays to the recently completed public consultation. The delay pushed back commissioning of transport, viability and climate evidence. This work will now take place in 2021/22 so it is recommended that the £0.323m underspend is set aside in an earmarked reserve to cover these costs when they occur.
81. Wiltshire Council receive Neighbourhood Planning Grant from central government to support the authority in the Neighbourhood Planning process. Plan making does not follow financial years and in 2020/21 we have received more grant than costs in that financial year. It is recommended the £0.164m balance of grant is transferred to an earmarked reserve to cover these costs when they occur in future years.

Communities and Neighbourhood: Budget £39.168m – (£3.456m) underspend

82. The Outturn variance of £3.456m underspend reflects the Directorate's work to minimise spend and maximise the impact of grant funding alongside changing assumptions from the Q3 forecast of a challenging year.
83. The Outturn variance on Libraries, Heritage and Art is £0.303m underspend. £0.200m of this is due to staff costs for staff working on COMF being badged against the grant. The remaining variance is from staff savings from continuing to hold vacancies, paying variable contract staff for hours due to be worked rather than average and supplies and services savings from the services not being open to the Public.
84. The Outturn variance on Leisure is £1.940m underspend. Staff have been exceptionally flexible and taken on redeployment to support the pandemic response throughout the year. At the time of forecasting for the Q3 report Government had not confirmed that the Furlough scheme would be extended and continue for the third lockdown. The forecast was therefore amended for Income but assumed Furlough grant would end. This accounts for circa £0.5m of the variance.
85. The Q3 forecast assumed that variable contracted staff would be paid based on an average of the hours they had previously worked as this was the approach for the first lockdown. However, this decision was amended for subsequent lockdowns and variable contracted staff were paid based on the hours due to be worked. This decision was not taken until after the forecast for Q3 was completed. This together with vacancies being held for longer due to the third lockdown accounts for circa £0.8m of the variance.
86. In the final quarter of the year staff costs for those working on COMF were badged specifically to the grant. This accounts for circa £0.1m of the variance.

87. The remaining variance is from further savings arising as a result of the third lockdown for example greater savings from the buildings closures in terms of cleaning, supplies and services, sports programmes not running and the difference between forecast income and actual income.
88. The total income collected for in house Leisure centres for 2020/21 was £1.171m against a Budget of £7.769m, so a loss of income of £6.598m. The Council received £2.015m Furlough grant for in house Leisure centre staff and has also claimed Loss of Income grant through the Government scheme which will cover part of these losses, this grant is reported separately so that actual variances are reported. The service is now working hard to bring back membership and mitigate losses in 2021/22
89. As planned and reported in budget monitoring forecast this year, £0.016m has been transferred into Sports & Physical programme earmarked reserves for Free Gym Referral programme and Disability Sports programme, this is to ensure the funding is ringfenced for these programmes as intended. £0.025m has been drawn down from Leisure Salisbury Athletic Track Maintenance earmarked reserve to cover the costs incurred in 2020/21.
90. The Outturn variance on Transport is £0.352m underspend this reflects challenging changes and the difficulties of forecasting an uncertain year. Duplicate buses and taxis have been required to manage social distancing, this additional cost has been underwritten in periodic grants from government, the forecast was adjusted each term when Government announced the level of funding the Council would receive.
91. As planned and reported in budget monitoring forecast this year, the following has been transferred into earmarked reserves. £0.671m for Supported Bus Service, this is the balance of unspent DfT grant, the Bus Network programme was delayed due to the impact of COVID-19. The grant conditions allow for the grant to be used in 2021/22, the earmarked reserve will ensure the programme continues and will cover the costs when they occur in 2021/22.
92. £1.2m for Rural Mobility Fund and £0.005m for Rural Mobility Fund Business case. These grants were awarded by DfT on the 31/03/2021 for the year 2021/2022. The earmarked reserve will roll the grant forward to 2021/22 to cover the costs of the programme as they occur.
93. The Outturn variance on Rights of Way, Countryside and Street Scene is £0.479m underspend. This is largely due to an underspend on the Idverde contract as a result of further reductions in the level of routine activity in the last quarter of the year, including cancellations of litter picks on the A303 and A36 trunk roads, and the extent to which staff would continue to be furloughed by the contractor. It is recommended that the variance on the Idverde contract of £0.293m is set aside in the Latent Demand reserve to allow for additional activity in 2021/22 which we are already seeing the impact of particularly in terms of litter picking.

94. As planned and reported in budget monitoring forecast this year, £0.006m has been transferred into Woolmore Farm ROW earmarked reserves for the future management of Slow Worms. This funding was secured from Persimmon Homes to relocate and manage an area for slowworms and ensure funds are available when costs are incurred.

95. The outturn variance on Public Protection is £0.304m underspend. This is largely due to establishment savings being greater than forecast at Q3 as the service were unable to recruit as planned in Q4 and income picking up particularly in pest control, resulting in a better position than forecast.

96. The Outturn variance on Customer Services is £0.078m underspend. This is largely due to staff costs for staff working on COMF being badged against the grant.

Highways and Environment: Budget £55.092m – (£2.037m) underspend

97. The Outturn variance on Highways is £0.308m underspend, this is largely due to further savings on establishment and contract consultancy as a result of the spend control measures.

98. The Outturn variance on Car Parking is £0.993m underspend. This is due to Income in Q4 being better than forecast. Lockdown three allowed for more Businesses to be open with restrictions than previous lockdowns so the impact seen on car parking was less than forecast. The total income collected for car parking for 2020/21 was £3.849m against a Budget of £8.385m, so a loss of income of £4.536m. The Council have claimed Loss of Income grant through the Government scheme which will cover part of these losses, this grant is reported separately so that actual variances are reported.

99. It is recommended £0.034m is transferred into an earmarked reserve for Contactless Parking Machines. Cabinet agreed to begin a replacement programme but due to delays as a result of COVID-19 the machines have not yet been delivered. Orders have been placed for seven machines. This earmarked reserve will cover the cost of these machines when incurred in 2021/22.

100. The Outturn variance on Waste is £0.735m underspend. As planned and reported in budget monitoring forecast this year, £0.168m has been transferred into Lot1 Contract Sinking Fund earmarked reserve, which is required as part of the deed of variation to the contract to ensure funds are available at the end of the contract term for the final payment for the MRF equipment. This amount is budgeted for and will be transferred each year for the life of the contract.

101. It is recommended that £3.007m is transferred to an earmarked reserve for Highways & Environment for future risks and activity.

102. There have been some presentational changes which has resulted in costs previously being reported under COVID-19 now being reported under Highways & Environment. The final variance for Waste would be the same as reported and agreed by cabinet at Q3.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE DIRECTORATES

Table 9

Summary Position	Original Budget £ m	Revised Actual - Outturn £ m	Variance at Q3 £ m	Variance at Q4 £ m
Legal & Governance	5.925	5.881	0.205	0.234
Human Resources & Org Development	3.071	4.101	(0.489)	(0.641)
Public Health	0.418	0.817	0.396	0.000
Directors & Members	3.479	3.810	(0.090)	0.172
General Fund Total	12.893	14.609	0.022	(0.235)

Legal, Electoral and Registration: Budget £5.647m – £0.234m overspend

103. The outturn variance on Legal, Electoral and Registration is £0.234m overspend. This is largely in underachievement of income in Legal and Registration services due to the impact of COVID-19 being greater than forecast as at P9 and a return of a Highways Bond.

104. As planned and reported in budget monitoring forecast this year, £0.200m has been transferred into the Elections earmarked reserve to fund Elections costs in 2021/22.

Human Resources & Organisational Development Services: Budget £4.742m – (£0.370m) underspend

105. The underspend has been delivered as a result some revenue costs being charged to the capital budget for Organisational Development (OD) & People Change and the Evolve programme (to procure a new Enterprise Resource Planning business applications system) for those HR & OD staff involved in supporting these programmes of work. The capital budget for the OD & People Change programme ends on 31 March 2022 and the costs will be set against revenue from that point despite the programme of work continuing. In addition, some vacancies have been held as there has been a reduction in demand for some learning & development and recruitment services as a result of the pandemic. This reduction is not expected to continue.

106. The service has also seen a reduction in the services being delivered to external organisations and therefore a reduction in trading income was received. The current estimate of reduced income is £0.165m however, this is more than mitigated by the steps outlined above. It is requested that Cabinet approve a transfer to the latent demand reserve from this underspend of £0.274m.

Public Health: Budget £0.817m – £0.000m variance

107. The Public Health budget balances at year end, as any over or underspend is met by a transfer to or from an earmarked reserve. In 2020/21 the balanced position is after transferring an underspend of £2.527m to the Public Health reserve.

108. This is a considerable change from the forecast in Q3, where an overspend of £0.396m was forecast. There are 3 main factors that explain this change.

109. Firstly, £1.051m of expenditure was chargeable to COVID-19 grants, and expenditure was therefore removed from the Public Health budget. Secondly, demand for services, in particular Sexual Health services and Safer Communities services was considerably lower due to the impact of lockdown on people's behaviour; this led to reduced expenditure of £1.080m. Thirdly, the overspend of £0.396m was covered by a budget virement.

CORPORATE EXPENDITURE

Table 10

Summary Position	Original Budget £ m	Revised Actual - Outturn £ m	Variance at Q3 £ m	Variance at Q4 £ m
Movement on Reserves	(0.674)	(1.400)	2.574	0.000
Financing & Investment Income & Expenditure	23.148	19.174	(2.054)	(3.598)
Restructure & Contingency	5.323	1.313	0.872	(0.828)
Corporate Levies	6.125	5.802	1.100	0.077
Income Losses Scheme	0.000	(6.414)	(6.000)	(0.414)
Covid	0.000	(15.838)	(23.498)	(3.419)
General Fund Total	33.922	2.637	(27.006)	(8.182)

Financing & Investment Income & Expenditure: Budget £22.772m – (£3.598m) underspend

110. During the year £2.675m of gainshare income from the Wiltshire online capital project for Phase 1 and 2 was received. It is recommended to transfer this balance into Capital Financing earmarked reserve.

111. The remaining variance on Financing & Investment Income and Expenditure (previously named Capital Financing) is £0.923m underspend. This is largely due to interest received being higher than forecast at Q3 as a result of higher cash balances than forecast due to the amount of grant funding received from government as detailed in the COVID-19 section of the report and reduced asset disposal costs as a result of less properties being sold.

Restructure & Contingency: Budget £2.141m – (£0.828m) underspend

112. The forecast variance for Restructure and Contingency is due to fewer redundancy costs than previous years. As the council was in emergency response, a recruitment freeze was implemented to mitigate costs and restructures were minimised to maximise the support available to manage the workforce in a flexible way to focus on priorities and as a result redundancy costs were much lower than anticipated.

General Government Grants: Budget (£40.960m) – balanced position

113. At this stage of the year end process the position for General Government Grants is reported as balanced. This will change when the Collection Fund is finalised, and any variance will be reported to Cabinet at its meeting on 13 July 2021.

Corporate Levies: Budget £5.725m – £0.077m overspend

114. The forecast variance for Corporate Levies is a small overspend of £0.077m. This is due slightly less income from the Renewable Energy Business Rates than originally forecast.

COVID-19 Budget (£12.419) – (£3.419m) underspend

115. The net position of £12.419m Income is contributing to balancing the Council's overall position, the outturn variance is £3.419m underspend.

116. General and specific COVID-19 Grants, where spend can be separately reported are included in this budget.

117. The costs reported under the COVID-19 line are costs incurred as a direct result of COVID-19 and where actuals have been assessed as directly attributable to COVID-19 and could be separately identified from service spend. Grants and costs that cannot be easily separated or identified have been included within the service positions.

118. Costs include PPE, additional cleaning to open Buildings safely, additional IT costs to improve and facilitate working from home, the setting up of a temporary morgue, the direct additional costs of reopening HRC's for example traffic management and new processes, Waste collection contractor costs in relation to increased agency and overtime in managing operations while staff are self-isolating/shielding, setting up and supplies for the Wiltshire Wellbeing Hub providing emergency food parcels and supplies to the most vulnerable, supporting adult care providers.

119. £2.276m of the outturn underspend variance is as a result of presentational changes where actual costs could not be separated to be reported under COVID-

19 as originally anticipated. These costs are now shown under Highways & Environment and directly offset this underspend.

120. £1m underspend is in relation to Hospital Discharges, at Q3 it was prudently forecast that there may be £1m costs that could not be recovered from NHS. However, all costs have been recovered.

121. The remainder £0.143m is a combination of spend being categorised against service budgets and costs coming in less than forecast at Q3.

122. Previous budget monitoring reports assumed that all COVID-19 grants would be fully spent and where they were not, they would be set aside at year end. As planned, these balances have been set aside in earmarked reserves to fund approved activity against these grants and total £17.868m.

123. £9.212m has been transferred into COVID-19 Business Grants earmarked reserve, which is the balance of funding for the Discretionary Business Grant schemes for 2020/21 and will be required in full in 2021/22 for Business grants.

124. £8.041m has been transferred into COVID-19 COMF earmarked reserve this is the balance of funding on the COMF grant and will roll funds forward for commitments that have been made for 2021/22.

125. Other small balances of unspent grant have been transferred into the following earmarked reserves: £0.080m has been transferred in COVID-19 Wellbeing for Education earmarked reserve; £0.346m has been transferred into COVID-19 Vulnerable earmarked reserve; and £0.189m has been transferred into COVID-19 Compliance earmarked reserve.

Income Losses Scheme Budget (£6.000m) – (£0.414m) underspend

126. The outturn variance on Income Losses Scheme is still a forecast figure at this stage as the final grant claim is still to be completed.

127. The original forecast was that the Council would be able to claim £6m from Government for the Income losses scheme, this estimate was before the third lockdown.

128. The Council has already claimed £5.414m to cover the period April 2020 to November 2020. It is difficult to forecast the final claim at this stage as further analysis is required to ensure all aspects of the scheme are included. Savings within the specific services must be fully identified and disclosed and as identified in the report above some income streams have shown significant recovery in the last quarter.

129. Within the report it is estimated that the Council would be able to claim a further £1m from the scheme at this stage. The final figure will be presented with final outturn in July 2021.

Dedicated Schools Grant – Total Grant £375.433m - £7.906m net overspend

130. The variance for dedicated schools grant (DSG) is an overall £7.906m overspend, analysed as below;

	Final Variance £M	Note
Schools Block (all schools)	(2.838)	Planned underspend to offset some HNB pressure
High Needs Block (all schools)	11.507	Demand for pupils with additional learning needs
Central Schools Services Block	(0.068)	Small variance
Early Years Block	(0.695)	Local changes to funding formula for closed settings – DfE clawback arrangements in 21-22 where numbers significantly differ.
TOTAL	7.906	

131. The overspend on high needs block (HNB) is driven by demand from parents and schools for support for vulnerable children with SEN & disability, reflected in increased numbers of education health and care plans (EHCP) which, have risen by 6.34% in the last financial year. The rate of growth slowed during the pandemic however, numbers of requests for assessment increased dramatically in March which could be due to the pause during lockdown or an indication that learners are struggling with their return to education post pandemic.

	1st April 2020	31st March 2021	Increase in EHCPs	% Increase in growth
Children & Young People with an EHCP	3,860	4,105	245	6.34%

132. The overspend is aligned with the national picture for many other local authorities and the Government's acknowledgement of this is evident at the national level with additional funding for the 2020/21 high needs block of £780m. The 2021-22 allocations have been published during the summer which includes

a further £5.5m increase for Wiltshire. This will come some way to alleviating the pressure for future years it will not however, assist with current or previous years' overspends. Lobbying continues to request support and additional funding at national level.

133. The DSG is ringfenced and is separate to local authority budget. Any underspend or overspend is also ringfenced. At the end of the financial year, the DSG reserve balance has a deficit of £19.933m following a positive prior year early years adjustment. The local authority has a 10-year recovery plan centred around inclusion which is being implemented in partnership with education leaders, however the deficit lies with Wiltshire Council whilst the recovery plan is delivered. Additional funding is key to meeting the needs of Wiltshire pupils.

DSG Reserve (held in the council's balance sheet) and actions

Balance brought forward from 2019-20	£11.350m
Early Years previous year adjustment	(£0.539m)
Variance (all blocks) for 2020-21	£7.906m
DSG Deficit carried forward 2020-21	£18.717m

There is much activity in this area nationally and locally;

134. The DfE launched a consultation on high needs block funding earlier this year, we await the outcome with interest.

135. The DfE's SEN Review has been postponed for several years however; the latest anticipated date is late in 2021.

136. School Leaders have raised the profile of the funding challenges with Wiltshire's MPs who have been supportive and raised with central government.

137. Officers are taking part in national and south west comparator research which when available, will show the extent of the national issue. Best practice and savings approaches are being shared with peers.

138. Recently, the f40 group who represent the 42 lowest funded authorities in the country have made representation to the DfE regarding the financial pressures on local authorities as a result of inadequate funding and a pre-response to the long awaited DfE SEN review.

139. The Society of County Treasurers are currently conducting a consultation questionnaire to enable them to understand the national pressures and raise with central government, to which we have submitted the position and issues specific for Wiltshire.

140. Wiltshire is taking steps to address the demand for specialist placements; significant Council investment in the System of Excellence and new Silverwood Special School places in the north of the county, the 150 place free special school in the south, expansion of specialist places within our schools and the flexible use

of capital receipts by the council to fund a series of projects to facilitate change both internally and to influence partners. These and the savings planned from them do not lead to a balanced position within the 10-year recovery period. Savings are limited by many external factors and include a parent's legal right to state parental preference and recourse to a tribunal. Our local authority position is that we cannot sustain the DSG deficit.

141. The DfE require a DSG Management Plan which was shared at February Cabinet. Officers are meeting with the DfE in June to discuss the plan. As the situation stands both locally and for most other local authorities, the pupil driven needs cannot be met without an appropriate level of funding. In addition, over a third of the high needs block funding formula is largely based on historical data from 2014 and in Wiltshire, the significant rise in the numbers of children with EHCPs since this date is driving much of this overspend. The DfE have confirmed this will be considered as part of the SEN review. In addition, the DfE has confirmed that Wiltshire is ranked 66th from 149 local authorities on the list of proportional ranked deficits and therefore our deficit is not sufficient to benefit from the "additional dedicated schools grant funding" being used to support those six with the largest proportionate deficits this financial year.

Housing Revenue Account (HRA) – Total income £27.150m - £1.2m net draw from reserve

142. Due to the ring-fenced nature of the Housing Revenue Account, at the end of any financial year the balance outstanding is offset by a transfer to or from the ring-fenced HRA reserve. For 2020/21 an amount of £4.312m was budgeted to be drawn from the reserve. It should be noted however that the provisional outturn position indicates that a draw from the HRA reserve of approximately £1.2m will be required. This improvement is mainly due to a £1.299m reduction to the provision for bad debts on the balance sheet (following a review); a variance of £1.668m from budget. The remainder is mainly due to the effect of COVID-19 lockdown on the service which resulted in lower activity levels of the Repairs and Maintenance team with reduced material costs and lower staff costs of the Systems and Support team as many of them were redeployed into the Welfare Hub and funded by COVID-19 grants. The lockdown also resulted in lower levels of resident engagement which in turn resulted in lower numbers of small improvement bids being granted. As a result of reduction in draw from the HRA reserve there is an opportunity to review the 30-year HRA business plan. This is anticipated to take place during 2021/22.

SAVINGS DELIVERY 2020/21

143. The Council had a savings requirement of £14.682m within its 2020/21 budget which was approved by Council in February 2020. The deliverability of these proposals has been monitored during the year and it was flagged that the COVID-19 response has seen resource focused away from savings delivery and, quite rightly, on service delivery during the response phase however savings delivery has been reported direct to the Corporate Leadership Team (CLT) as part of financial performance management.

144. At this stage of the year the deliverability of the savings is either delivered (blue) or undelivered (red) and can be seen in Appendix D. This position is included in the General Fund figures set out in this report.
145. Of the £14.682m savings proposals £8.400m (57.2%) are assessed as being delivered (blue) and £6.282m (42.8%) of savings targets are assessed as red meaning they have not been delivered. This is in line with the forecasts during the year.
146. Some of the savings that were agreed as part of the 2019/20 budget to be delivered in 2019/20 remain undelivered along with an amount from 2018/19 (£0.657m). Of a total of £5.590m that was deemed undelivered at the beginning of the financial year £3.006m has now been delivered, which leaves £2.584m (46.2%) remaining undelivered.
147. The delivery of savings remains an important element of financial performance management and a focus for the Council and the status of savings will be considered as part of the financial recovery and future year financial planning processes to ensure the budget remains robust and deliverable. Base budget pressure associated with the non-delivery of savings have been addressed as part of the budget setting process for 2021/22.

CAPITAL RECEIPTS FLEXIBILITIES 2020/21

148. The government allows Local Authorities to fund transformational activity that is designed to deliver ongoing revenue savings and/or transform service delivery to reduce costs or reduce demand for services in the future. This is known as Capital Receipts flexibilities. It is important that any Local Authority using this flexibility is transparent in reporting its plans and the individual projects that are to be funded or part funded and report the previous years' activity and whether the planned savings and/or service transformation have been or are being delivered as planned.
149. The outturn position for the current financial year, 2020/21 is shown in the table below. The table also sets out whether any underspend will be carried forward into 2021/22. Any spend against these budgets will be reported as part of budget monitoring during the year.

Table 11 – Capital Receipts Flexibilities

Directorate	Description	Current Approval 2020/21 £m	2020/21 Actual	2020/21 over/(under)s pend	Will this be required to be rolled over?
HR/OD	Organisational Development Transformation	1.000	0.297	-0.703	Yes
Other	Business Intelligence	1.000	0.000	-1.000	Yes
Children's & Families	Fostering Excellence	0.868	0.868	0.000	No
Children's & Families	Fostering Excellence Allowances	0.740	0.146	-0.594	Yes
Children's & Families	FACT Transformation	0.599	-0.040	-0.639	Yes
Children's & Families	Early Help Support Hub	0.200	0.000	-0.200	Yes
Children's & Families	Contextual Safeguarding	0.170	0.000	-0.170	Yes
Children's & Families	Transport Co-Ordinator	0.070	0.000	-0.070	Yes
Children's & Families	Supporting the Parents of under 1s	0.250	0.000	-0.250	Yes
Education & Skills	SEN & Inclusion Transformation	1.378	0.333	-1.045	Yes
ICT	Business Intelligence Hub	0.081	0.000	-0.081	No
Adults	Adult Transformation Phase 2	0.483	0.011	-0.472	No
Adults	Adult Social Care Transitions	0.056	0.010	-0.046	No
Housing & Commercial Development	Service Devolution & Asset Transfer	0.411	0.230	-0.181	No
Community & Neighbourhood	Leisure Insourcing Transformation	0.000	0.026	0.026	Yes
Other	Organisational Recovery	0.000	0.000	0.000	n/a
Other	Other Transformational Schemes to be considered	0.532	0.000	-0.532	No
TOTAL		7.838	1.881	-5.957	

RESERVES POSITION AND FORECAST

150. Reserves are an important element of the Council's finances and a sufficient level of balances should be held, to mitigate risks within the budget and operations of the Council.

151. The level of both general fund reserves and earmarked reserves currently held by the Council are low in comparison to other local authorities and this exposes the Council to a reduced ability to manage financial shocks. It is planned to report on the forecast balance of reserves on a quarterly basis, to increase the visibility of reserve balances, and further reports will continue to include forecasts and track changes to those forecasts.

152. As part of the outturn reporting for 2019/20 reserves balances were reported and the balances for General Fund Reserve stood at £15.456m and the balance for Earmarked Reserves excluding Dedicated Schools Grant Reserves was £27.202m. Including the DSG reserves and Schools Balances the Earmarked Reserves balance was £23.916m,

153. At the beginning of the year there was no plan to contribute to or draw from the General Fund Reserve, except for any final outturn balance remaining. The outturn position allows for a contribution to the General Fund Reserve of £1.4m which will increase the balance to £16.856m. This will provide additional capacity and resilience within this reserve to support the financial position in the forthcoming year, support the financial risks within the budget and allow lead in time for recovery, and will also allow for the planned and budgeted contribution in the

financial year 2022/23 to be removed. This will reduce the budget gap in 2022/23 by £1.4m to approximately £44m.

154. As part of the quarter 2 budget monitoring report £4.165m was set aside in a new earmarked Budget Equalisation reserve. This reserve has been fully used to support the 2021/22 budget. As part of the quarter 3 budget monitoring report an additional amount of £4.958m for Latent Demand and £8.613m for Collection Fund Volatility was also set aside to manage these specific financial impacts in future years. The Latent Demand reserve will be drawn down when evidence is presented that shows demand exceeds the metrics on which the budget was based, including the demand built into the budget for 2021/22. The Collection Fund reserve will be used over the next 3 years to manage the deficit from 2020/21 financial year that is anticipated.
155. As part of the year end processes transfers to and from existing earmarked reserves are carried out in line with previous approvals. These can be seen in detail in Appendix C with a total of £5.840m being set aside and £2.173m being drawn to fund spend in year with a net overall increase in earmarked reserves of £3.667m.
156. The total amount of COVID-19 grant funding that has not yet been spent is £17.868m is being transferred to reserves as set out in previous budget monitoring reports.
157. In addition to these previous approvals it is requested to transfer an additional £2.937m to the latent demand reserve as detailed in the narrative within the service paragraphs. This will provide more resilience and capacity to manage demand should it present above budgeted levels not only for 2021/22 financial year but also future years.
158. It is also requested to create new earmarked reserves totalling £6.649m. The detail of these request can be seen in the service narrative and in Appendix B & C and is listed below for ease:

Table 12

Service	Name	£m
Family & Children's	National Assessment & Accreditation System (NAAS) Grant	0.163
Education & Skills	School Improvement, Monitoring & Brokerage Grant	0.220
Education & Skills	Early Years Professional Development Programme	0.062
Economic Development & Planning	Neighbourhood Planning	0.164
Economic Development & Planning	Local Plan	0.323
Highways & Environment	Highways & Environment	3.007
Highways & Environment	Car Parking Machines	0.034
Financing & Invest Income & Expenditure	Gainshare Income	2.675
	TOTAL	6.649

159. When setting the budget for 2021/22 an assessment on the level of risk and therefore the level of general fund reserves and earmarked reserves has been made, and supports the approach of setting these balances aside this year for use in the following financial year and future alongside the plan for increasing the general fund reserve over time. The approach for increasing this reserve over time is pragmatically balanced off against the needs of service provision during Wiltshire's recovery.

160. During the 2020/21 the level of reserves has been considered and opportunities when arisen taken to increase balances. There has been an increase in transparency on reporting reserves during the year and it is expected to continue to report on these balances. It can be seen in the below table the opening and closing balances on earmarked reserves, and the anticipated use in 2021/22:

Table 13 – Earmarked Reserves

Description	£m
Opening Balance - as at 01/04/2020	(23.916)
Budget Equalisation (Q2 & Q4)	(7.426)
Pay Award 2021/22	(2.000)
Latent Demand (Q3 & Q4)	(7.895)
Collection Fund Volatility (Q3)	(8.613)
Planned net contribution from reserves	7.562
COVID-19 Grants	(17.868)
New reserve requests	(6.649)
Collection Fund section 31 grant (<i>estimated</i>)	(34.765)
Dedicated Schools Grant	7.341
Closing Balance - as at 31/03/2021	(94.229)
Anticipated Use 2021/22	
- Budget Equalisation	4.165
- Pay Award	2.000
- Latent Demand (<i>estimated at budget setting</i>)	3.000
- Collection Fund Volatility	4.279
- COVID-19 Grants	17.868
- Collection Fund section 31 grant (<i>estimated</i>)	34.765
- Others (<i>estimated at budget setting</i>)	1.199
Balance	(26.954)

161. Once the Collection Fund has been finalised it is likely that a significant amount of S31 grant received in the year will be transferred to an earmarked reserve to help manage the deficit that is expected on this fund. Due to technical regulation the deficit is not realised during the year that it is incurred and central government awarded significant s31 grant to ensure council's did not incur significant cashflow issues as a result of the losses in the Collection Fund, due mainly to additional Business Rate reliefs that were applied.

CAPITAL PROGRAMME

162. Capital Outturn will be presented to Cabinet at its meeting on 13 July 2021. The following re-allocation of capital approval is required in advance of the July meeting so that project can commence as planned in June 2021 and not be further delayed.

163. £0.470m of the Salisbury Car Park & Maltings capital budget funded by borrowing is required to be brought forward from 2022/23 into 2021/22 and allocated to the specific River Park Bridge works project. This will allow this specific project to be reported separately and work is planned to start in June 2021.

Overview & Scrutiny Engagement

164. Regular reports are taken to Overview & Scrutiny relating to the Council's financial position.

Safeguarding Implications

165. None have been identified as arising directly from this report.

Public Health Implications

166. None have been identified as arising directly from this report.

Procurement Implications

167. None have been identified as arising directly from this report.

Equalities and diversity impact of the proposals

168. None have been identified as arising directly from this report.

Environmental and Climate Change Considerations

169. None have been identified as arising directly from this report.

Risks Assessment

170. If the Council fails to take actions to address forecast shortfalls, overspends or increases in its costs it will need to draw on reserves. The level of reserves is limited and a one-off resource that cannot be used as a long term sustainable strategy for financial stability.

171. Ongoing budget monitoring and management forms part of the control environment and is a mitigating process to ensure early identification and action is taken. This control has been effective during the year and as a result the risk managed, with the effect of significant amounts being set aside in reserves to help support financial risks in future years.

Financial implications – Section 151 Officer Commentary

172. The financial year 2020/21 has been like no other, and the numerous funding mechanisms from Government e.g. emergency grants, specific grants, passported grants to businesses, income loss schemes, tax compensation scheme and furlough have resulted in a complex set of management accounts being reported, with many variables making up the overall bottom line.
173. Given the position being reported at the outset of the financial year the position being reported now is vastly improved and would not have been achieved without the emergency funding provided by the Government but also through the Councils early cost control measures.
174. However, the provisional outturn represents a moment in time, and we are still in the midst of a pandemic. It would be easy to think that the financial position of the Council is stable, when the reality is one of significant uncertainty, the beginning indications of a rising tide of latent demand and the stark reality that the current estimated budget gap in financial year 2022/23 is £45m.
175. Table 13 in the report demonstrates quite starkly the timing factor. At the end of the 2020/21 financial year it is estimated that we will have transferred over £70m into earmarked reserves, with a closing balance standing at over £94m. However, fast forward a year to the end of financial year 2021/22 and, after taking into account the planned spending and use of those earmarked reserves, our forecast balance will be closer to the level where we started the 2020/21 financial year at around £27m.
176. Therefore the right thing for the Councils financial stability is to prudently put funding aside now to manage some of the on-going pressures and risks as a result of COVID-19, such as latent demand and the deficits on council tax and business rates, previously not experienced, and ensuring the Council is better positioned financially for the future.
177. Whilst the budget for next year is balanced uncertainty still exists for the next financial year with the world-wide infection rates and the impact of different variants not clear, the impact of the roll-out of the vaccines and the reach into all elements of the community and uncertainty on the timing and impact of lockdown measures lifting.
178. Added to that the as yet unclear impact of the erosion of the Councils base level of funding through council tax and business rates, as well as the ongoing shifts in behaviour and knock on impact to its income streams combined with the almost inevitable latent demand for services that will come through, will further compound the financial pressures being estimated and faced.
179. We will be undertaking a base budget review to review the assumptions and data that was used to set the 2021/22 budget, the current position following the 2020/21 outturn and the latest forecasts and assumptions as we close Q1 for 2021/22. The latent demand reserve is held for the organisation as a whole and will only be released by Cabinet when services can demonstrate and evidence that

demand has arisen which is over and above that which was assumed at the time of setting the budget and was also as a result of being suppressed during lockdown or is required as a service intervention.

180. We also continue to work closely with Government on the Councils longer term financial position, as well as working with colleagues in the sector to put the case forward to Government on further funding, funding reforms and targeted support.

Legal Implications

181. None have been identified as arising directly from this report.

Proposals

182. Cabinet is asked to note:

- a) the Section 151 officer's summary of the impact of COVID-19 on the Council's 2020/21 budget;
- b) the provisional revenue budget outturn position for the financial year 2020/21;
- c) the contributions to and from earmarked reserves as planned;

183. Cabinet is asked to approve:

- d) the transfer of an additional £2.937m to the Latent Demand reserve;
- e) the transfer in total of £3.912m to new earmarked reserves as detailed in the report and Appendices B & C, as follows:
 - i. National Assessment & Accreditation System (NAAS) £0.163m;
 - ii. School Improvement, Monitoring & Brokerage Grant £0.220m;
 - iii. Early Years Professional development programme £0.062m;
 - iv. Neighbourhood Planning £0.164m;
 - v. Local Plan £0.323m;
 - vi. Highways & Environment £3.007m;
 - vii. Car Parking Machines £0.034m;
- f) the transfer of £2.675m to the Capital Financing reserve;
- g) the transfer of the balance of the £6.661m provisional underspend as follows:
 - i. £1.4m to be transferred to the General Fund reserve;
 - ii. £2m to be set aside for the estimated pay award for 2021/22;
 - iii. £3.261m to the Budget Equalisation reserve;

- h) £0.470m of Capital Approval for Salisbury Car Park & Maltings is brought forward from 2022/23 into 2021/22 and allocated to the River Park Bridge works.

Reasons for Proposals

184. To inform effective decision making and ensure a sound financial control environment.

Background Papers and Consultation

Budget monitoring reports Q2 & Q3

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Appendices:

Appendix A: Service Provisional Outturn Variance – Full Year
Appendix B: Service Provisional Outturn Variances - recommendations
Appendix C: Earmarked Reserves
Appendix D: Savings Delivery 2020/21

APPENDIX A – SERVICE PROVISIONAL OUTTURN VARIANCE 2020/21 – FULL YEAR POSITION

	<i>Original Budget</i>	<i>Revised Actual - Outturn</i>	<i>Variance at Q3</i>	<i>Variance at Q4</i>	<i>Total Variance</i>
	<i>£m</i>	<i>£m</i>	<i>£m</i>	<i>£m</i>	<i>£m</i>
Corporate Director People					
Family & Childrens	52.613	51.226	(0.362)	(1.523)	(1.885)
Education & Skills	16.961	24.555	(0.761)	(0.506)	(1.267)
Learning Disabilities & Mental Health	72.264	70.581	(3.693)	0.020	(3.673)
Access & Reablement	49.536	52.582	2.997	1.548	4.545
Commissioning - Adults	23.257	24.742	0.173	1.230	1.403
Commissioning - Childrens	4.659	3.882	(0.386)	(0.307)	(0.693)
Corporate Director Resources					
Finance & Procurement	6.240	6.786	0.400	(0.177)	0.223
Programme Office & Systems Thinking	1.233	0.949	0.228	(0.469)	(0.241)
Housing & Commercial Development	15.704	14.598	(0.872)	(0.529)	(1.401)
Digital & Information	10.591	10.472	0.033	(0.347)	(0.314)
Corporate Director Place & Environment					
Economic Development & Planning	2.957	2.352	0.117	(1.276)	(1.159)
Communities & Neighbourhood	32.264	35.712	5.900	(3.456)	2.444
Highways & Environment	49.959	53.055	6.555	(2.037)	4.518
Chief Executive Directorates					
Legal & Governance	5.925	5.881	0.205	0.234	0.439
Human Resources & Org Development	3.071	4.101	(0.489)	(0.641)	(1.130)
Public Health	0.418	0.817	0.396	-	0.396
Directors & Members	3.479	3.810	(0.090)	0.172	0.082
Corporate					
Movement on Reserves	(0.674)	(1.400)	2.574	-	2.574
Financing & Investment Income & Expenditure	23.148	19.174	(2.054)	(3.598)	(5.652)
Restructure & Contingency	5.323	1.313	0.872	(0.828)	0.044
Corporate Levies	6.125	5.802	1.100	0.077	1.177
Covid	-	(15.838)	(23.498)	(3.419)	(26.917)
Income Losses Scheme	-	(6.414)	(6.000)	(0.414)	(6.414)
General Government Grants	(41.029)	(40.960)	(1.081)	-	(1.081)
Wiltshire Council General Fund Total	344.024	327.778	(17.736)	(16.246)	(33.982)

**APPENDIX B – SERVICE PROVISIONAL OUTTURN VARIANCE 2020/21 –
RECOMMENDATIONS**

	<i>Variance at Q4</i>	<i>Other Earmarked Reserve requests</i>	<i>Latent Demand reserve contributions</i>	<i>Other balances for decision</i>
	£m	£m	£m	£m
	(underspend)/ overspend			
Corporate Director People				
Family & Childrens	(1.523)	0.163	1.360	-
Education & Skills	(0.507)	0.282	0.029	0.195
Learning Disabilities & Mental Health	0.020	-	-	(0.020)
Access & Reablement	1.548	-	-	(1.548)
Commissioning - Adults	1.230	-	-	(1.230)
Commissioning - Childrens	(0.306)	-	0.202	0.105
Corporate Director Resources				
Finance & Procurement	(0.177)	-	-	0.177
Programme Office & Systems Thinking	(0.469)	-	0.250	0.219
Housing & Commercial Development	(0.529)	-	0.529	-
Digital & Information	(0.347)	-	-	0.347
Corporate Director Place & Environment				
Economic Development & Planning	(1.276)	0.487	-	0.789
Communities & Neighbourhood	(3.456)	-	0.293	3.163
Highways & Environment	(2.037)	3.041	-	1.272
Chief Executive Directorates				
Legal & Governance	0.234	-	-	(0.234)
Human Resources & Org Development	(0.641)	-	0.274	0.367
Public Health	-	-	-	-
Directors & Members	0.172	-	-	(0.172)
Corporate				
Movement on Reserves	-	-	-	-
Financing & Investment Income & Expenditure	(3.598)	2.675	-	0.923
Restructure & Contingency	(0.828)	-	-	0.828
Corporate Levies	0.077	-	-	(0.077)
Covid	(3.419)	-	-	1.143
Income Losses Scheme	(0.414)	-	-	0.414
General Government Grants	-	-	-	-
Wiltshire Council General Fund Total	(16.246)	6.648	2.937	6.661

APPENDIX C – EARMARKED RESERVES

Service Area	Reserve	Opening Balance £'m	Actioned in Year £'m	Approved Transfer in Year £'m	Approved Withdrawal In Year £'m	New Request £'m	Closing Balance £'m
Corporate	Covid 2019/20 Emergency Grant	(11.079)	11.079	-	-	-	-
Corporate	Budget Equalisation	-	(4.165)	-	-	(3.261)	(7.426)
Corporate	Pay Award 2021/22	-	-	-	-	(2.000)	(2.000)
Corporate	Latent Demand	-	(4.958)	-	-	(2.937)	(7.895)
General Government Grants	Collection Fund Volatility	-	(8.613)	-	-	-	(8.613)
Covid	Covid Wellbeing for Education Return	-	-	(0.080)	-	-	(0.080)
Covid	COVID 19 Business Grants	-	-	(9.212)	-	-	(9.212)
Covid	COMF	-	-	(8.041)	-	-	(8.041)
Covid	Covid Vulnerable	-	-	(0.346)	-	-	(0.346)
Covid	Covid Compliance	-	-	(0.189)	-	-	(0.189)
Children's Commissioning	Mental Health Local Transformation Plan	(0.166)	0.150	-	-	-	(0.016)
Learning Disabilities & Mental Health	Syrian Refugee Programme	(0.696)	-	(0.294)	-	-	(0.991)
Housing & Commercial Development	Flexible Housing Support Grant	(0.566)	-	(0.384)	-	-	(0.950)
Economic Development & Planning	Porton Science Park	-	-	(0.274)	-	-	(0.274)
Communities & Neighbourhood	Leisure	-	-	(0.016)	-	-	(0.016)
Communities & Neighbourhood	Passenger Transport	-	-	(1.876)	-	-	(1.876)
Communities & Neighbourhood	Woolmore Farm Rights of Way - Slow Worms	-	-	(0.006)	-	-	(0.006)
Communities & Neighbourhood	Museum Development	-	-	(0.024)	-	-	(0.024)
Communities & Neighbourhood	Area Board	-	-	(0.070)	-	-	(0.070)
Highways & Environment	Waste Lot 1 MRF Equipment Sinking Fund	-	-	(0.168)	-	-	(0.168)
Legal & Governance	Elections	-	-	(0.200)	-	-	(0.200)
Public Health	Public Health Grant	(0.839)	-	(2.527)	-	-	(3.366)
Family & Childrens	Support for Care Leavers	(0.043)	-	-	0.031	-	(0.012)
Commissioning - Adults	IBCF	(0.455)	-	-	0.385	-	(0.070)
Commissioning - Childrens	Controlling migration fund	(0.198)	-	-	0.102	-	(0.095)
Commissioning - Childrens	Practitioner Training Grant	(0.022)	-	-	0.012	-	(0.010)
Commissioning - Childrens	Strategic Leadership Fund	(0.010)	-	-	0.010	-	(0.000)
Finance & Procurement	Insurance	(3.485)	-	-	0.826	-	(2.659)
Finance & Procurement	PFI Schools	(3.181)	-	-	0.030	-	(3.152)
Housing & Commercial Development	PFI Housing	(2.663)	-	-	0.111	-	(2.553)
Digital & Information	CMS Single View of the Customer	(0.741)	-	-	0.400	-	(0.341)
Communities & Neighbourhood	Leisure Salisbury Athletics Track Maintenance	(0.038)	-	-	0.025	-	(0.013)
Communities & Neighbourhood	English Heritage Monument Funding	(0.019)	-	-	0.014	-	(0.005)
Restructure & Contingency	Salisbury Recovery	(0.500)	-	-	0.228	-	(0.272)
Family & Childrens	NAAS Grant	-	-	-	-	(0.163)	(0.163)
Education & Skills	School Improvement, Monitoring & Brokerage Grant	-	-	-	-	(0.220)	(0.220)
Education & Skills	Early Years Professional Development Programme	-	-	-	-	(0.062)	(0.062)
Economic Development & Planning	Neighbourhood Planning	-	-	-	-	(0.164)	(0.164)
Economic Development & Planning	Local Plan	-	-	-	-	(0.323)	(0.323)
Highways & Environment	Highways & Environment	-	-	-	-	(3.007)	(3.007)
Highways & Environment	Car Parking Machines	-	-	-	-	(0.034)	(0.034)
Financing & Investment Inc. & Exp.	Gainshare Income	-	-	-	-	(2.675)	(2.675)
Education & Skills	Building Bridges	(0.031)	-	-	-	-	(0.031)
Finance & Procurement	Local Welfare Provision Grant	(0.077)	-	-	-	-	(0.077)
Housing & Commercial Development	Rough Sleeper Grant	(0.166)	-	-	-	-	(0.166)
Housing & Commercial Development	Flexible Housing Support Grant	(0.287)	-	-	-	-	(0.287)
Housing & Commercial Development	Homelessness Reduction	(0.121)	-	-	-	-	(0.121)
Housing & Commercial Development	Community Housing Fund	(0.462)	-	-	-	-	(0.462)
Economic Development & Planning	One Public Estate	(0.465)	-	-	-	-	(0.465)
Economic Development & Planning	Future High Street Fund	(0.105)	-	-	-	-	(0.105)
Communities & Neighbourhood	Public Art Grant	(0.009)	-	-	-	-	(0.009)
Communities & Neighbourhood	Sports Development	(0.058)	-	-	-	-	(0.058)
Communities & Neighbourhood	Street Games	(0.001)	-	-	-	-	(0.001)
Communities & Neighbourhood	Heritage Lottery Fund - Windrush	(0.007)	-	-	-	-	(0.007)
Communities & Neighbourhood	World Heritage Site Trust Transition	(0.028)	-	-	-	-	(0.028)
Communities & Neighbourhood	Lord Methuen Charitable Trust	(0.001)	-	-	-	-	(0.001)
Highways & Environment	Play Area Asset Transfers	(0.059)	-	-	-	-	(0.059)
Human Resources & Org Development	Skills for Care Grant	(0.018)	-	-	-	-	(0.018)
Corporate	Wiltshire Foundation Trust	(0.052)	-	-	-	-	(0.052)
Restructure & Contingency	Enabling Fund	(0.140)	-	-	-	-	(0.140)
General Government Grants	Business Rates Equalisation Fund	(0.309)	-	-	-	-	(0.309)
General Government Grants	LA EU Exit Preparation Grant	(0.105)	-	-	-	-	(0.105)
General Government Grants	Collection Fund S31 Grant - <i>estimated</i>	-	-	(34.765)	-	-	(34.765)
Local Authority	Total Earmarked Reserves (excluding DSG)	(27.202)	(6.507)	(58.473)	2.173	(14.847)	(104.856)
Education & Skills	Locally Managed Schools Balances	(8.091)	-	-	-	-	(8.091)
Education & Skills	DSG Reserve	11.377	7.341	-	-	-	18.717
TOTAL Earmarked Reserves		(23.916)	0.834	(58.473)	2.173	(14.847)	(94.229)

APPENDIX D - SAVINGS DELIVERY 2020/21 (page 1/2)

2020/21 Savings Delivery				
Service Area		Total Saving (£ m)	Delivered (£m)	Red (£ m)
Corporate Director People				
Family & Childrens	Prior Years	-1.333	-0.812	-0.521
	2020/21	-1.357	-0.076	-1.281
	Total	-2.690	-0.888	-1.802
Education & Skills	Prior Years	0	0	0
	2020/21	-0.065	-0.045	-0.020
	Total	-0.065	-0.045	-0.020
Learning Disabilities & Mental Health	Prior Years	-0.527	-0.527	0
	2020/21	-0.991	-0.020	-0.971
	Total	-1.518	-0.547	-0.971
Access & Reablement	Prior Years	0	0	0
	2020/21	-6.000	-4.800	-1.200
	Total	-6.000	-4.800	-1.200
Commissioning - Adults	Prior Years	0	0	0
	2020/21	-0.487	-0.120	-0.367
	Total	-0.487	-0.120	-0.367
TOTAL		-10.759	-6.4	-4.359
Service Area		Total Saving (£ m)	Delivered (£m)	Red (£ m)
Corporate Director Resources				
Finance	Prior Years	0	0	0
	2020/21	-0.100	-0.100	0
	Total	-0.100	-0.100	0
Housing & Commercial Development	Prior Years	0	0	0
	2020/21	-0.754	-0.504	-0.250
	Total	-0.754	-0.504	-0.250
Digital & Information	Prior Years	0	0	0
	2020/21	-0.647	-0.357	-0.290
	Total	-0.647	-0.357	-0.290
TOTAL		-1.501	-0.961	-0.540

APPENDIX D - SAVINGS DELIVERY 2020/21 (page 2/2)

Service Area		Total Saving (£ m)	Delivered (£m)	Red (£ m)
Chief Executive Directorates				
Legal & Governance	Prior Years	0	0	0
	2020/21	-0.002	0	-0.002
	Total	-0.002	0	-0.002
Human Resources & Org Development	Prior Years	0.000	0	0
	2020/21	-0.123	-0.123	0
	Total	-0.123	-0.123	0
Public Health	Prior Years	0	0	0
	2020/21	-1.004	0	-1.004
	Total	-1.004	0	-1.004
Directors & Members	Prior Years	-0.500	-1	0
	2020/21	-0.025	-0.025	0
	Total	-0.525	-0.525	0
	TOTAL	-1.654	-0.648	-1.006
Chief Executive Directorates				
Highways & Environment	Prior Years	0	0	0
	2020/21	-0.088	-0.088	0
	Total	-0.088	-0.088	0
Communities & Neighbourhood	Prior Years	-0.380	-0.098	-0.282
	2020/21	-0.560	0	-0.548
	Total	-0.940	-0.110	-0.830
Economic Development & Planning	Prior Years	0	0	0
	2020/21	-0.025	0	0
	Total	-0.025	0	0
	TOTAL	-1.053	-0.223	-0.830
Corporate / Cross Cutting				
Corporate / Cross Cutting	Prior Years	-2.850	-1	-1.781
	2020/21	-2.455	-2.105	-0.350
	Total	-5.305	-3.174	-2.131
GRAND TOTAL				
GRAND TOTAL	Prior Years	-5.590	-3.006	-2.584
	2020/21	-14.682	-8.400	-6.282
	Total	-20.272	-11.406	-8.866
		Prior Year %	53.8%	46.2%
		2020/21 %	57.2%	42.8%
		Total %	56.3%	43.7%

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Wiltshire Council

Cabinet

1 June 2021

Subject: A350 Melksham Bypass Consultation Report – Report on Public Consultation

Cabinet Member: Cllr Mark McClelland – Cabinet Member for Transport, Waste, Street Scene and Flooding

Key Decision: Key

Executive Summary

The A350 Melksham Bypass is a Large Local Major scheme which has been awarded development funding by the Department of Transport (DfT) to take it to Outline Business Case (OBC) stage. It would be a major improvement to the important A350 route which provides vital transport links between the M4, the towns of western Wiltshire and the south coast.

A range of options for the scheme were the subject of a public consultation earlier this year. Further scheme development and assessment work has since been undertaken, taking into account the response to the consultation, in order to prepare a short list of options for further consultation.

There were 1,018 responses to the public consultation questionnaire, the majority of which were from individuals (962) with a small number from businesses or organisations (42). Most of the responses were local from Melksham or within five miles. There were also 175 written and email responses to the consultation. The town and local parish councils and other organisations also provided their views on the long list of options (see **Appendices 1 and 2**). Most respondents supported the need for an improvement to the A350 at Beanacre and Melksham (594 Yes/406 No), but there was not overwhelming support for a particular option.

A sifting process has been undertaken to identify the most suitable options for further consultation.

The options for workplace parking levy or road user charging (Options 1 and 2) had little public support. The other non-road options – heavy goods vehicles restrictions, bus and train service improvements, walking and cycling (Options 3, 4, 5 and 6), had good levels of public support but on their own none of them would not meet the transport objectives of the scheme.

Improving the existing A350 route (Options 7a, 7b and 7c), especially through Beanacre and at the northern end of Melksham to the standard required to meet the needs of the major road network and future traffic growth was not considered to be a

feasible option to meet the objectives.

The western routes (Options 8a, 8b, 9a, 9b and 9c) do not appear to offer significant environmental or construction benefits over the eastern options and they had less public support than the eastern routes.

The eastern routes generally performed well in operational and cost terms, with varying environmental impacts. The short eastern routes (Options 10a and 10b) would be cheaper with less impact on the countryside but would have less economic benefits and would increase severance on the eastern side of the town.

The longest eastern route connecting to the A361 (Option 10d) would be the most expensive. There were considerable concerns expressed by some of the public and local parish councils about the environmental impact of this option.

The long eastern bypass (Option 10c) appears to offer good value for money and with suitable mitigation measures could offer a feasible route and following the sifting process of the options it is proposed that this one should be developed further.

Alternative routes and variants of the consultation proposals were suggested by the public during the consultation and these have been investigated; however, most are considered not to offer suitable alternatives to the identified routes in meeting the transport objectives.

It is proposed to carry out further consultation on the eastern route (Option 10c) and potential variants of the route at the northern end. Various detailed comments were received in connection with the scheme, proposed junctions, landscaping and rights of way which will be explored in more detail in the next stage of the design and consultation process.

The comments on the initial consultation included suggestions for walking and cycling improvements, which could be included as part of the scheme or progressed separately, and these will also be investigated further.

There are many factors that need to be considered in determining the details of a scheme of this type, including the transport objectives, landscape, archaeology, ecology, air quality, flood risk, environment including climate change impact, cost and benefits. The final scheme could be a variation of those being consulted on as the design will inevitably be refined in response to the consultations.

It is proposed to carry out further non-statutory consultations on a short list of options for the eastern route which will be used to help inform the business case. Statutory consultations will take place later in the scheme development, following approval of the OBC by DfT, when the scheme would be designed in detail and a planning application submitted. It is likely that statutory orders, including compulsory purchase orders, would be required, and the scheme could be the subject of a public inquiry.

Proposals

It is recommended that:

- (i) The response to the initial public consultations and the views of the town and local parish councils are noted and taken into account in the scheme development.
- (ii) The following options should not be included in the short list of options for further consultation for the reasons set out in the report:
 - Non-road options (Options 1 to 6)
 - Improvement of the existing road (Options 7a, 7b and 7c)
 - Western routes (Options 8a, 8b, 9a, 9b and 9c)
 - Short eastern routes (Options 10a and 10b)
 - Longest eastern route (Option 10d) and its variants
- (iii) Further public consultation should be undertaken on a short list of options comprising the long eastern route (Option 10c) and alternative alignments at the northern end which may be feasible.
- (iv) The possibility of improving walking and cycling facilities in conjunction with the scheme or separately should continue to be explored.
- (v) The views of the public, town and parish councils, Area Board and other organisations should be obtained on the short list of options in order to inform the future development of the scheme.

Reason for Proposals

The A350 Melksham Bypass is a Large Local Major scheme which has been awarded development funding by the DfT to take it to OBC stage. It will be a major improvement to the important A350 route which provides vital transport links between the M4, the towns of western Wiltshire and the south coast.

As part of the development of the scheme various options were consulted on. In order to inform the further development of the scheme, it is proposed to adopt a short list of feasible options for further consideration and consultation. The preferred route will need to meet the transport objectives and the DfT requirements in order to be awarded funding.

The proposed consultations with the public, town and parish councils, the Area Board and other organisations, will inform the development of the scheme, and assist in preparing an OBC to submit to the DfT.

Terence Herbert - Chief Executive

Wiltshire Council

Cabinet

1 June 2021

Subject: A350 Melksham Bypass Consultation Report – Report on Public Consultation

Cabinet Member: Cllr Mark McClelland – Cabinet Member for Transport, Waste, Street Scene and Flooding

Key Decision: Key

Purpose of Report

1. To review the response to the public consultation on the options for the A350 Melksham Bypass scheme and the further assessment work recently undertaken, and to approve further consultation on a short list of options.

Relevance to the Council's Business Plan

2. The Council's Business Plan 2017 – 27 has priorities for Growing the Economy, Strong Communities and Protecting the Vulnerable. The goals for Transport and Infrastructure include:
 - (i) Road Infrastructure is improved
 - (ii) New infrastructure to support housing and employment growth
 - (iii) Improved strategic roads and rail
3. The proposed Melksham Bypass scheme is a major infrastructure improvement to the transport network to support housing and employment growth and would improve connections to the strategic road network.

Background

4. The importance of the A350 to the local economy has long been recognised in Wiltshire, and improvements have been undertaken in recent years to address sections where there were capacity constraints and where improvements were needed. There are several proposals for further improvements to the route currently being developed, including those at Melksham.
5. The A350 through Beanacre and Melksham has been a concern for many years. The road has sections with 30 mph speed limits passing through residential areas, with several busy junctions which provide access to Melksham town centre, retail and commercial sites, the A365 Bath Road and A3102. From the data included in the Strategic Outline Business Case updated in 2019 it is one of the busiest major roads in Wiltshire, with daily traffic volumes often above 35,000 vehicles per day, and heavy goods vehicles accounting for around 8% of all vehicles. There have been high collision rates with severity generally higher on the A350 compared to other roads in the area.

6. In July 2017, Department for Transport's (DfT) "Transport Investment Strategy" was published. As part of the Strategy, Government committed to creating a 'Major Road Network' (MRN) across England, which would be a network of England's most important routes which complement motorways and strategic trunk roads. The A350 was included as a route in the MRN.
7. Government acknowledged the need for a long-term funding stream for road investment, specifically through establishment of the 'National Roads Fund', being £28.8 billion between 2020-2025; £3.5 billion of which is to be spent on improving the MRN. This funding was confirmed in March 2020 in the DfT publication of their second Road Investment Strategy (RIS2) for the period 2020 – 2025. A central principle in the development of this strategy was to:

“create a road network that is safe, reliable and efficient for everyone – whether they are cyclists or drivers, passengers or pedestrians”
8. Government indicated that prioritised investment planning within a consistent national framework should be carried out by Sub-national Transport Bodies (STBs). The Western Gateway Shadow Sub-National Transport Body (WGSSTB) was officially formed in a shadow status in December 2018 with Cllr Bridget Wayman elected as Chair.
9. The WGSSTB considered candidate schemes from all member authorities, and following its meeting in June 2019, the Board agreed to submit nine schemes to DfT in July 2019. Four of the schemes are in Wiltshire:
 - (i) A350 - M4 Junction 17 Improvement
 - (ii) A350 Chippenham Bypass Improvements – Phases 4 and 5
 - (iii) A338 Southern Salisbury Improvements and
 - (iv) A350 Melksham Bypass
10. At its meeting on 19 May 2020 Cabinet considered a report on the success of the Council bid to the DfT for development funding for the A350 Melksham Bypass Large Local Major (LLM) road scheme and the three MRN schemes, and identified funding to continue to Outline Business Case (OBC) stage.
11. On 13 October 2020 Cabinet agreed to public consultation being undertaken on the options for the A350 Melksham Bypass scheme, which in view of the pandemic was to take the form of a predominantly on-line consultation. The town and parish councils, Area Board and other organisations were also to be invited to comment in order to inform the future development of the scheme.

Main Considerations for the Council

Transport Objectives

12. The transport objectives for the scheme were derived from relevant key policy documents and strategies, including the DfT Transport Investment Strategy, Swindon and Wiltshire Strategic Economic Plan, Wiltshire Core Strategy, and the Wiltshire Local Transport Plan. The transport objectives set for the scheme were confirmed by Cabinet at its meeting on 13 October 2020 and are to:

- (i) Reduce journey times and delays and improve journey reliability on the A350 through Melksham and Beanacre, improving local and regional north-south connectivity, and supporting future housing and employment growth in the A350 corridor.
- (ii) Reduce journey times and delays on and improve journey reliability on the following routes through Melksham and Beanacre:
 - A350 South – A3102
 - A365 West – A365 East
 - A350 South – A365 West
- (iii) Provide enhanced opportunities for walking and cycling between Melksham town centre and the rail station / Bath Road, and along the existing A350 corridor within Melksham and Beanacre, which will help reduce the impact of transport on the environment and support local economic activity.
- (iv) Reduce collisions resulting in personal injury rates and severity for the A350 and Melksham as a whole, to make the corridor safer and more resilient.
- (v) Reduce the volume of traffic, including HGVs, passing along the current A350 route in northern Melksham and Beanacre to reduce severance, whilst avoiding negative impacts on other existing or potential residential areas.

Strategic Outline Business Case

- 13. In developing the Strategic Outline Business Case (SOBC) for proposals at Melksham, which was submitted to the DfT in July 2019, various options were considered, including demand management, public transportation, online highway improvements, and new bypass options to the west and east of the existing route.
- 14. The SOBC identified an eastern bypass route, which could cost in the region of £135 million as being feasible, but all options are being revisited in more detail as part of the preparation of the OBC. This includes further consideration of the non-bypass options, developing the previously identified bypass route options and considering variations of those routes, which could potentially improve their performance in economic terms or reduce the environmental impact, and developing complimentary measures to improve facilities for walking and cycling.

Public Consultation

- 15. In view of the pandemic, the consultation had to be primarily on-line, with the opportunity provided to submit written comments by letter or email. The consultation was launched at the Melksham Area Board on 4 November 2020. An initial presentation was given to Seend Parish Council on 27 October 2020, and a further presentation was given to Melksham Town Council on 23 November 2020.

16. Whilst it was not possible to hold an exhibition at the library or town hall as would normally be the case, the use of social media, television and radio coverage, and the increase in the use of on-line consultations have helped. An extension to the consultation period from the end of November to 17 January 2021 was made in view of the limitations imposed by the pandemic, and to ensure that the local newspaper would be operating so that it could report on the consultation and encourage participation.
17. The consultation provided the opportunity for the public, town and parish councils, Area Board and others to comment on the scheme and the options. Other organisations, including the Environment Agency, Natural England, Highways Agency, were also invited to comment as part of the consultation.
18. It should be noted that the consultation was not intended to be a public 'vote' for the most popular route or option. There are many factors to be considered in determining the preferred option, including the objectives, landscape, archaeology, ecology, air quality, flood risk, environment including climate change impact, cost and benefits. The preferred option may be a variation of those consulted on as the design will inevitably be refined in response to the consultation.
19. The options need to be measured against the Transport Objectives and assessed in accordance with DfT guidance in order to determine the most appropriate option or options to take forward, as well as against the DfT criteria.
20. The options consulted on were:
 - Workplace parking levy (Option 1)
 - Road user pricing (Option 2)
 - Heavy goods vehicle restrictions (Option 3)
 - Rail service improvements (Option 4)
 - Bus service improvements (Option 5)
 - Walking and cycling improvements (Option 6)
 - Improvements to the existing A350 (Options 7a, 7b and 7c)
 - Short bypass routes (Options 8a, 9a, 9b, 9c, 10a and 10b)
 - Long bypass routes (Options 8b, 10c and 10d)
21. As this was the initial consultation on the options for the scheme, it was considered important that the widest range of options should be consulted on at this early stage, even though the emerging assessment work indicated that some were going to be more successful than others at meeting the transport objectives.
22. The public consultation documents and supporting information were available to view on the Council's website and can still be viewed at:

<https://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/highways-a350-melksham-bypass>

The webpage provided a short introduction to the scheme and a link to the 'Melksham Bypass Information Pack', which described the background to the scheme and set out the scheme preparation process, indicating that the scheme

was at a very early stage of its development and would be the subject of further informal and formal consultation should it proceed.

23. The aims of the non-statutory consultation were to:
 - successfully engage with stakeholders affected by or interested in the scheme;
 - engage with potentially affected landowners;
 - encourage involvement from stakeholders and build strong open relationships;
 - raise awareness of the scheme and understanding for the need to improve the A350;
 - inform about the option assessment process;
 - understand stakeholder concerns, issues and suggestions;
 - receive feedback on the options to allow us to develop the scheme further; and
 - prepare for the statutory consultation phases.
24. The document described the existing situation and why there was considered to be a local need for the scheme, as well as setting out the wider strategic priorities for the Western Gateway Strategic Transport Body. It also described the option assessment criteria to be applied in terms of Strategic, Economic, Financial, Management and Commercial cases.
25. The emerging findings so far were described, which indicated that the demand management measures (Options 1, 2 and 3) were unlikely to adequately address the key issues and scheme objectives, especially in terms of reduced journey times and regional connectivity, and these options were likely to present challenges around acceptability.
26. The public transport, walking and cycling measures (Options 4, 5 and 6) were unlikely to deliver the scale of impact required against the objectives of reduced journey times and regional connectivity on their own. However, it was acknowledged that there would be potential for these options to be considered alongside the road-based ones as potential complementary measures.
27. The emerging findings in connection with improvements to the existing A350 (Options 7a, 7b and 7c) indicated that the scale of improvement is expected to be limited by existing speed restrictions and what could feasibly be achieved at some of the more constrained sections. To overcome these constraints, if feasible, would increase scheme costs. Compared to other road-based options, there would be less direct landscape and visual impact and less loss of greenfield land, but severance issues, noise and air quality on the existing A350 would not be directly addressed and compared to the likely scale of benefits it was considered that this option would offer a lower overall value for money than other options.
28. The emerging findings in connection with the short bypass and full bypass options were also described. The results of the initial assessment of the options were provided based on the anticipated impact and examples of the potential complementary walking and cycling measures were described.

29. A separate document 'Melksham Bypass information on Options 7 to 10' provided descriptions of the individual route corridors being consulted on and an initial assessment against the strategic, economic, environment, social, financial and management factors.
30. The webpage also included the legacy documents prepared in connection with the SOBC, and a list of Frequently Asked Questions. During the consultation period there was an on-line questionnaire that could be completed.

Response to the consultation

31. There were 175 letters and emails in response to the consultation, and 1,018 responses to the on-line questionnaire. A summary of the responses was prepared (see **Appendices 1 and 2**).
32. The local town and parish councils were consulted and made comments regarding the scheme and their preferences on options:
 - (i) Melksham Town Council preferred an eastern route, but not one that incorporated Eastern Way.
 - (ii) Melksham Without Parish Council preferred an eastern route which did not have an environmental impact upon the community of Bowerhill.
 - (iii) Seend Parish Council thought that Option 8b should not be discounted and raised some concerns about Option 10c should it be adopted. Option 10d was considered to have the most detrimental effect.
 - (iv) Semington Parish Council was not in favour of Option 8b because of the environmental impact and would object to Option 10d. It considered Option 10c to be the least worst option.
 - (v) Great Hinton Parish Council felt that Option 10d was the worst possible one in every way and Option 10b to be the best by far.
 - (vi) Steeple Ashton Parish Council agreed that a bypass for Melksham is desirable, but the route had no direct impact on the parish.
33. Comments were received from Natural England about Spye Park Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Canal and Rivers Trust regarding the canals, and from the National Trust regarding Lacock. TransWilts commented on the importance of access to Melksham Station and the British Horse society on the importance of bridleway and rights of way. The comments from the organisations identified factors that would need to be considered in developing the proposals further.
34. The majority of the questionnaire responses received were from individuals (962) with a small number from businesses or organisations (42). Most of the responses were local with 886 (92%) being from Melksham or within five miles.

The responses from businesses and organisations responding were also predominantly locally based.

35. Most respondents supported the need for an improvement to the A350 at Beanacre and Melksham (594 Yes/406 No).
36. The main concerns about the current situation on the A350 in Melksham and Beanacre were about walking and cycling facilities (56.6%), landscape and scenery (50.4%) and traffic congestion and delays (50.2%).
37. Those not supporting the need for an improvement gave various reasons but the most frequently mentioned were:
 - Adverse effect on land and countryside (110)
 - Existing road works well (67)
 - High cost of scheme (48)
 - Bypass not needed (44)
 - Concern about more houses in Melksham (43)
38. Of the non-road options, based on the first choice of option, the most preferred options were:
 - Option 6 – Walking and cycling (41.2%)
 - Option 4 – Rail Improvements (37.3%)
 - Option 5 – Bus Improvements (32.3%)
39. Option 2 – Road User Pricing and Option 1 – Workplace Parking Levy had the least support of any option (6.7% and 6.5%).
40. Of the road options the most preferred options based on the first choice were:
 - Option 7a – Existing road northern section (31.0%)
 - Option 10c - Long eastern bypass (30.8%)
 - Option 7b – Existing road central section (29.9%)
 - Option 7c – Existing road southern section (27.8%)
 - Option 10d – Longest eastern bypass (20.8%)
41. Of the road options the western routes – Options 9a, 9b and 9c had the least support (11.9%, 11.0% and 10.8%).
42. The reasons given for choosing Options 1 to 6 were mainly that they would provide an alternative to the use of the car, would discourage car use, or would have less impact on the landscape and environment.
43. The main factors influencing choice of route option were generally the potential impact on the countryside and residential properties. There were a range of other factors given, including cost, effectiveness, adverse effects of alternative routes, and the potential or otherwise for in-fill housing development.

44. Most responses would like to see more facilities for walking and cycling within Melksham come forward as complementary measures to a potential A350 Bypass (Yes 682 / No 318). There were a variety of suggestions and requests made, including about the standards of walking and cycling infrastructure, facilities required to encourage walking and cycling, and suggestions for routes.
45. Other matters that were raised frequently in the questionnaire responses included the potential adverse effect of options on the countryside, concern about additional housing as a result of the scheme, the reduction in traffic following Covid-19, the effects on wildlife and biodiversity, the impact on residential areas and their access to open spaces, and that the journey time savings do not justify a scheme.
46. There were 175 letters and emails received in response to the consultation, which generally reflected similar views and concerns to those raised in the questionnaire responses described above.
47. There were letters and emails regarding specific route options, with many indicating that Option 10d was not considered to be a suitable option (89), because of its adverse effect in terms of countryside (74), wildlife (57), cost (45), canal (33), tourism (28) and flooding (23).
48. An alternative route option, three variations of the consultation options and alterations to the existing road were suggested in the questionnaires or correspondence and these have also been considered.

Review of Consultation

49. The public consultation was successful in obtaining the views of the town and the local parish councils.
50. There appears to have been a good response from the public despite the limitations caused by the pandemic. However, it should be noted that a large majority of the responses were from local residents and businesses and may not necessarily represent the views of the public or businesses that may make use of a Melksham bypass.
51. Organisations, including statutory bodies, responded to the consultation and commented on specific aspects of the scheme, and outlined factors to be considered as the scheme develops. Further discussions will be taking place with them as the design and assessment work continues.
52. There was some engagement with landowners, especially in connection with the walk-over surveys, but in view of the wide range of options and large area covered there were not detailed discussions about potential impacts or mitigation measures at this stage. These would be anticipated to take place in the next round of consultations as the scheme details are developed in more detail.

53. The consultation on road options was based on wide route corridors at the initial stage, and there were requests for more information in order to determine the exact routes relative to particular features or properties, which was not feasible at that early stage. There was also interest in what arrangements would be made regarding rights of way, side roads and private accesses.
54. The response to the consultation was predominantly local, and the strategic objectives of the scheme may not have been fully communicated and understood. Some respondents were under the impression that the only purpose of the scheme was to provide traffic relief for Beanacre, which the scheme may do, but it should be noted that the primary objectives are transport related, especially in connection with the major road network.
55. Further informal consultations on the scheme are proposed which should increase awareness and knowledge of the scheme both locally and over a wider area before the formal consultation processes start. They will also provide the opportunity for the public and organisations to make further comments on the short list of options which have been investigated in more detail.

Options Assessment – Initial Sift

56. Further assessment work has been undertaken on the 'long list' of options which were consulted on, informed by the results of the consultations and walk over surveys. The options have been reviewed to better understand potential impacts and benefits and a sifting process has taken place. An Options Assessment Report (OAR) is being prepared which will summarise these findings and a draft version will be available on the Council's website during the next round of consultation.
57. The OAR will set out the full consideration of the issues the scheme is intended to address, the potential options and an assessment of these against key criteria such as: fit with scheme and wider objectives; economic, social and environmental impacts; affordability; and value for money. It will outline the current situation and the strategic policy context, including the transport policies and future housing and development within the A350 corridor.
58. An initial sift of the previously identified options was undertaken taking into account the strategic fit with scheme objectives, the fit with wider strategic outcomes and viability and acceptability. This enabled unsuitable options to be identified and discarded. A two stage further assessment process was then undertaken on the remaining options to identify a short list of options to be the subject of a full appraisal.
59. The initial sifting process indicated that whilst the introduction of a work place parking levy or road user charging (Options 1 and 2) would be a means of encouraging the use of public transport and active travel they would not meet the transport objectives and had little public support.

60. The environmental impact of heavy goods vehicles is a concern locally and restricting HGVs on the A350 (Option 3) would reduce traffic on the current A350 route but it would not be feasible without a viable alternative route being available. The A350 provides the main link from the M4 and the Strategic Road Network to the towns in west Wiltshire and the movement of these vehicles is vital for the local economy and supplying the needs of the community. It was concluded that this option does not meet the transport objectives for the scheme.
61. Improvements to train services (Option 4) clearly had a high level of support locally in the consultation response, especially in view of the limited services currently available. This option demonstrates a good fit with the wider outcomes but the scale of impact likely to be realistically achievable is not expected to be of the magnitude required to address the identified problems. Increasing service frequencies significantly could require major railway infrastructure improvements, including double track the outcome and delivery are not within the Council's control. Whilst it could be progressed separately it is not considered a viable option to meet the current transport objectives for the scheme.
62. Improvements to bus services (Option 5) also had a high level of support locally in the consultation response. However, the relatively frequent half-hourly bus services on the main routes provide limited scope for further improvements without significant ongoing revenue support. It was not considered to be a viable option to meet the current transport objectives for the scheme.
63. Improvements to walking and cycling (Option 6) had the highest level of local support, and there appears to be some scope for active travel to replace local car journeys, and possibly more importantly to provide exercise and leisure opportunities if suitable facilities are available. It was concluded that improvements to and walking and cycling were unlikely to meet the objectives in themselves but could complement other options and should be progressed in conjunction with the scheme.
64. The improvement of the existing road (Options 7a, 7b and 7c) had more support than the other road options, especially from those opposed to a bypass solution or concerned about the effect of a bypass on the countryside. Improving the northern section of the existing route through Beanacre (Option 7a) would be particularly challenging because of the constraints of the properties lining the road.
65. Dualling the A350 Western Way section of the route (Option 7b) would offer less technical challenges because widening to the west of the existing road should be feasible, and the southern section (Option 7c) already has land available from the previous Semington Bypass scheme. The online improvements were identified as being unlikely to deliver the scale of impact required but had support in the public consultation and could potentially be less expensive than other routes so were taken forward to the next stage.

66. Of the bypass routes, the western options (Options 8a, 8b, 9a, 9b and 9c) had less local support than the other route options. It was noted that the inner western routes (Options 9a, 9b and 9c) have particular technical issues and limited public support. Seend Parish Council thought that Option 8b should not be discounted, but Semington Parish Council was not in favour of that option. In view of the technical assessments and consultation responses it was not proposed to include the inner western routes (Options 9a, 9b and 9c) in the next stage of the sifting process, but Options 8a and 8b would be considered further.
67. The short eastern routes (Options 10a and 10b) would be the cheapest options, would bypass the narrow northern section of the existing route and would make use of existing roads. The short eastern routes had marginally more public support than the western routes, but less than the longer eastern routes. Great Hinton Parish Council considered Option 10b to be the best route by far. Melksham Town Council favoured an eastern route, but it did not favour one that would connect to Eastern Way as Options 10a and 10b would.
68. The long eastern bypass (Option 10c) had more public support than the other off-line bypass routes and performs well in terms of value for money and effectiveness. A similar route was identified in the SOBC as a viable route and this has been confirmed by the further assessment work recently undertaken.
69. The Town Council favoured an eastern route. Melksham Without Parish Council also favoured an eastern route but not one which would have an environmental impact upon the community of Bowerhill. Seend Parish Council raised some concerns about Option 10c.
70. The longest bypass route (Option 10d) was included in the route options for public consultation following a request made at the Melksham Area Board meeting on 4 March 2020. From the consultation response the route did have some public support as it was considered to be furthest from most residential properties and provided a full bypass.
71. Following the initial sift, it was concluded that all of the eastern routes should be considered further.
72. The options taken forward following the initial sifting exercise were:
- Bus service improvements, Walking and cycling improvements (Option 5 and 6) in conjunction with other options
 - Improvements to the existing A350 (Options 7a, 7b and 7c)
 - Western Bypass routes (Options 8a and 9a)
 - Eastern Bypass routes (Options 10a, 10b, 10c and 10d)

Further Options Assessment (Phase 1)

73. The remaining options were subject to further assessment to distinguish the relative benefits and impacts of the options under consideration. It was not intended to necessarily present the absolute performance of an option, although it can provide a useful indication. It considered the strategic, economic, financial, management and commercial aspects.
74. The assessment further assessment indicated that there would be some potential to deliver some capacity and journey time improvements with online options (Options 7a, 7b and 7c) but the scale of impact would be limited.
75. Improvement of the existing road through Beanacre and at the northern end of Melksham to the standard to meet the needs of the major road network would be unlikely to be feasible, especially in terms of traffic capacity without extensive impacts. Without the northern section also being improved there would remain a constraint on traffic flows and speeds on the route, with the environmental and safety problems remaining and worsening over time, and it was not proposed to continue with this option.
76. The Western Bypass routes (Options 8a and 8b) performed well against the primary scheme objectives. However, the shorter route (Option 8a) would require structures for rail, road and floodplain crossings which would result in some adverse landscape and visual impacts due to the scale and the height of the structures. The longer route (Option 8b) also presents a number of delivery complexities with a higher cost.
77. The western options had less public support than the eastern routes, and although Option 8b performed similarly to Option 10c it had a higher cost and greater technical and environmental risk, and on balance it was not considered as favourable to take the western routes forward.
78. The shorter eastern routes (Options 10a and 10b) performed moderately well against the primary scheme objectives, with Option 10a being slightly more favourable. The lower cost of the route means that it would have the potential to offer better value for money with reduced environmental footprint and was considered worthy of further consideration.
79. The long eastern bypass routes (Options 10c and 10d) both perform well against the primary scheme objectives. However, the longer route (Option 10d) would be more expensive and would have additional environmental impacts. There were considerable concerns expressed by some of the public and parish councils about the environmental impact of Option 10d, especially regarding the effects on the Kennet and Avon canal, Semington Brook and the countryside. Seend, Semington and Great Hinton Parish Councils all raised objections or expressed concern about this route. It is proposed to discard Option 10d and consider Option 10c further.

80. The short-listed options taken forward further assessment were:
- Short Eastern Bypass route (Option 10a)
 - Long Eastern Bypass route (Option 10c)
81. The options for bus service, walking and cycling opportunities would be considered in conjunction with these options, and could be developed separately should opportunities arise.

Further Options Assessment (Phase 2)

82. The two short listed route corridors have been developed in more detail since the consultation. Three broadly viable alternative route alignments have been identified for each of the options at their northern end, where there are various routes to connect to the A350 north of Beanacre. The southern ends of the route corridors are more constrained with less scope for alternatives.
83. The route options and variants have been compared using traffic modelling, high level appraisals of environmental impacts, cost and value for money. The journey time savings for the full bypass are considerably greater than for the shorter option, but there are not significant differences between the savings for the various route alignment variants. The adverse environmental impacts of the shorter routes would be less than for the longer route.
84. The cost estimates for the options have included a risk allowance to allow for uncertainties. Whilst the longer options would be more expensive, they would have greater benefit to cost ratios when assessed using the DfT methodology and would be more likely to attract funding. The assessment indicates that the economic case for taking the shorter options to full appraisal is marginal.
85. The public consultation response indicated concerns about severance of the walking and cycling routes between the town and the school with the shorter eastern routes. The use of the local distributor road, Eastern Way, as part of the major road network was also a concern to residents.
86. In view of the outcome of the sifting exercise and taking the public consultation response into consideration it is not proposed to progress further the development of the short eastern bypass options. It is proposed that the full eastern bypass option will be developed to the full appraisal stage. Further design and assessment work will be required on the potential alternatives at the northern end of this route and there would be benefits in carrying out further consultation on these.

Alternative Routes and suggestions

87. In the response to the public consultation some suggestions for alternative routes and variations of the consultation routes were suggested and these have been considered.

88. It was suggested that instead of improving the A350 at Melksham, a new link road should be provided between the A46 and A36 immediately to the east of Bath. This is a scheme which has been considered previously by DfT. It would not be within Wiltshire and would be likely to form part of the strategic road network, which would be the responsibility of Highways England. The scheme would have some merits in transport terms but has previously been discounted on environmental grounds.
89. Whilst it provide an improved north-south route, from the initial assessment of traffic flows it appears unlikely that the A46-A36 link would have a significant impact on A350 traffic flows at Melksham and so is not considered to be a viable option for the current objectives. However, a study into north-south routes in the area is being undertaken by Highways England on behalf of DfT and this option may be considered in that study.
90. Variations of Option 10d were suggested at its southern end. One was to connect directly into the current A350/A361 Littleton roundabout at Semington, rather than to the A361 east of that junction, and the other was for the route to be extended to the south to join the A350 south of the A350/A361 roundabout.
91. Both variants would have some merits in terms of the A350 route, but both would have the same cost issues and environmental issues associated with Option 10d because of the canal and brook crossings. From the assessment work undertaken it is not considered that these variants offer significant advantages, taking into account those cost and environmental impacts, and the concerns raised by some of the public and the local parish councils about Option 10d.
92. An alternative to the routes at the northern end of the scheme was suggested, with the route extended northwards to include a junction at the southern Lacock junction on the A350. It would be likely to require the agreement of the National Trust in view of the status of the land in that area, but it could provide the opportunity to reduce traffic in Lacock and improve access to the National Trust car park, and was considered worthy of further investigation and consultation.
93. In response to the consultation there were comments made about issues at the existing traffic signal-controlled junctions at Aldi/McDonald's and Asda, and it was suggested that right turn movements off the A350 should be banned at these locations. Unfortunately, this would increase U-turning traffic at the Farmers Roundabout junction, which would delay traffic seeking to enter that roundabout and reduce capacity. Overall, such changes would be likely to reduce capacity and increase traffic delays on the network, especially at peak times.
94. When the alterations to Farmers Roundabout were made these options were investigated but it was concluded that their effects would be detrimental, and they were not included in that scheme. The traffic signals at Farmers Roundabout, Asda and A365 Bath Road are linked and operate to maximise

capacity at the junctions. Further changes to traffic signal phasing and timings may reduce delays for some movements but would not increase overall capacity and would increase delays for others.

Traffic

95. The traffic counts used in the development of the scheme options for public consultation were the most recent available at the time. The Covid-19 pandemic, with its associated travel restrictions and lockdowns, changed traffic flows considerably during 2020. It was suggested in some of the responses to the consultation that travel patterns in the future would change permanently as a result of increased working from home and this would reduce the need for road improvements such as Melksham Bypass.
96. After the first lockdown in March 2020 traffic flows, including hgv traffic, did reduce considerably, but during the summer they slowly started to increase towards previous levels. In the subsequent lockdowns the traffic reductions were not as great and hgv flows were not affected to the same degree as businesses adapted to the new circumstances.
97. There does appear to have been some reduction in morning peak hour flows, probably as a result of increased home working, but the longer-term effect on traffic has not been as significant as some believed it would be. Overall, it appears less likely that there will be a large reduction in traffic in the long term following the pandemic, but this may depend on economic conditions and future growth.
98. The DfT will be reviewing and revising traffic growth forecasts from time to time, especially in the light on any changes following the impact of the pandemic, and any scheme will have to be reassessed using those forecasts. Initial indications are that improvements would still be justified at Melksham based on current information, but this will be kept under review.

Potential Scheme Benefits

99. The potential scheme benefits have been reviewed following the initial public consultation to ensure that any proposals being taken forward are likely to deliver the benefits originally envisaged.
100. The Scheme forms part of the Western Gateway Sub National Transport Body's Strategy to improve connectivity between M4 and the South Coast. A range of strategic transport priorities have been established which will assist economic performance by improving labour market efficiency, increasing business and economic connectivity, providing access to international gateways and enabling development within the corridor.

101. The scheme is forecast to deliver strategic benefits including:

- Helping unlock the potential of the south coast and facilitate greater economic alignment between the north and south of the Western Gateway by providing improved strategic connectivity from the M4 and A303 corridors to the south coast.
- Potential to help realise local growth ambitions and forge significant agglomeration benefits by removing one of the barriers to more efficient north and south travel in the Western Gateway area.
- Creating a more reliable, less congested, and better-connected transport network that works for the users who rely on it.
- Providing a well-connected, reliable and resilient transport system to support economic and planned development growth at key locations.
- Supporting and helping to improve the vitality, viability and resilience of Wiltshire's economy and market towns.
- Providing transport infrastructure to support new housing in the western Wiltshire corridor.
- Assisting the efficient and sustainable distribution of freight in Wiltshire and beyond to build stronger, more balanced economies by enhancing productivity and responding to local growth priorities.
- Supporting and promoting a choice of sustainable transport alternatives.
- Reducing the level of air pollutants, carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gas emissions from transport, thereby contributing to the Council's carbon reduction targets.
- Improving safety for all road users and reducing the number of casualties on Wiltshire's roads.

102. Significant localised benefits are anticipated to accrue from a parallel package of transformational improvements including:

- Improving access to the railway station from the town and residential areas.
- Improving walking and cycling routes from the town to the south and Semington.
- Improving walking and cycling routes for leisure use by connecting existing routes.
- Improving air quality, physical and mental well-being by reducing traffic and traffic noise on the existing A350 through Beanacre and Melksham.
- Improving access to local services, shops, amenities and schools with the removal of through traffic.
- Reducing severance impacts on communities in Beanacre and northern Melksham caused by high traffic volumes and encouraging HGVs to use more suitable routes.
- Improving localised air quality by shifting traffic and pollutants away from sensitive receptors, especially residential areas.
- Generating opportunities for public realm schemes following the diversion of traffic.

103. It appears likely that the options being consulted on in the next stage would be capable of delivering the benefits anticipated for the scheme.

Next Stages

104. The next stage in the scheme development is to undertake a consultation on the short list of options. This will provide the opportunity for the public, town and parish councils, Area Board and others to comment on the more detailed proposals. Other organisations, including the Environment Agency, Natural England, Highways Agency, will also be invited to comment again as part of the consultation.
105. Depending on any Government COVID-19 restrictions at the time, we will look to hold one or more face to face events, although the consultation will primarily be held online. The opportunity will also be provided to submit written comments by letter, email, or through an online form, and members of the public will be able to digitally access consultation documents on the council website, or view printed copies at the town's library, if restrictions allow at the time. The opportunity will be offered to the town and parish councils, and the Area Board, to attend virtual meetings or to hold webinars to explain the scheme and the options to them should they wish. The possibility of providing display boards in the library or other location will be considered if it is appropriate at the time.
106. The intention is to provide greater detail on those options being taken forward now that they have been developed in more detail following the first consultation and the recent assessment work. This will include more details on the road alignment with larger scale mapping, indications of potential rights of way alterations and landscaping.
107. As with the first consultation on the scheme, the proposed consultation would not be a public 'vote' for the most popular route or option. There are many factors to be considered in determining the preferred option, including meeting the transport objectives, landscape, archaeology, ecology, air quality, flood risk, environment, cost and benefits. The preferred option could be a variation of the options to be consulted on as the design will be refined in response to the consultation.
108. The consultation would provide the opportunity to gather additional information on the scheme and its potential impacts and help identify mitigation measures. The views of organisations with specialist knowledge of the area will be particularly important in helping to refine the proposals.
109. The assessment of scheme options will be in accordance with DfT guidance, primarily as set out in DfT's Transport Analysis Guidance (WebTAG). The OBC for the scheme will have to make the case for obtaining DfT funding as the Council would not be able to fund a major scheme of this type from its own resources. The preparation of the OBC will require the consideration of the strategic, economic, financial, management and commercial cases.

110. It is anticipated that the OBC will be submitted for approval to the DfT later this year, and the scheme would then be designed to planning application stage, when the proposals would be the subject of formal consultations. The statutory orders would be prepared to enable the compulsory purchase of land if required and to make alterations to side roads and private accesses. With a scheme of this size it is expected that there would be a public inquiry in connection with the statutory orders.
111. Subject to successful progress through the statutory procedures, construction could start in 2024, with the scheme opening in 2027.

Overview and Scrutiny Engagement

112. The scheme is still at an early stage of its development. Future progress on the project will be reported to the Environment Select Committee in connection with the annual report made on the highways service.

Safeguarding Implications

113. There are no safeguarding implications.

Public Health Implications

114. The scheme could improve the highway network significantly in the local area and has the potential to improve road safety and reduce the number killed and seriously injured on our roads. The potential reduction in injury collisions and road safety implications would be considered in assessing the scheme.
115. The removal of through traffic from residential areas could reduce traffic noise and air pollution with consequent health benefits for residents, but the options could have the potential to introduce traffic into previously unaffected areas and may have other detrimental effects. The options assessment and business case for the scheme will take these impacts into consideration.
116. Reduced traffic on some of the existing roads could provide the opportunity to provide improved facilities for walking and cycling to encourage active travel and healthier lifestyles. The potential for improved walking and cycling provision is being considered at the earliest stage of the scheme development and could be included in the scheme or promoted separately.

Procurement Implications

117. The Melksham Bypass would be a major construction project. The exact procurement arrangements may depend on the final details of the scheme, and at this stage it is too early to confirm the likely procurement process to be followed. The procurement strategy is being developed as part of the OBC preparation, and would include consideration of opportunities for advanced works, staged construction and specialist contracts.

118. It is anticipated that the scheme would be largely funded by the DfT and procurement would be carried out to meet the DfT requirements, using standard documentation where available, and in accordance with the Council's own procurement rules.

Equalities Impact of the Proposal

119. Equality impact assessments will be undertaken in accordance with the DfT guidance as the scheme is developed and will be used to inform option selection and scheme assessment.
120. It is anticipated that scheme options may have different implications for different groups. The public consultation and ongoing assessment work should help identify these so that they can be considered in preparing the business case for the scheme.

Environmental and Climate Change Considerations

121. The Melksham Bypass would be a major transport improvement, which would be likely to reduce journey times and vehicle operating costs on the A350 and at the associated junctions. The reduced congestion, better facilities for active travel, and improved road safety would be expected to reduce energy consumption as a result of the scheme. This is will depend on the final proposals and will be assessed as part of the options appraisal process.
122. The scheme is likely to involve major civil engineering works, with the use of large plant and equipment and the energy consuming manufacture of materials, especially concrete and asphalt. There would be scope for the use of energy efficient plant, materials and processes to reduce the carbon footprint of the construction stage of the scheme. The impact would be considered in the light of emerging policies and strategies at government and local level.
123. The scheme would include environmental mitigation measures, including landscaping proposals, sustainable drainage schemes, and environmental protection measures to control potential incidents as a result of collisions. A road designed to modern standards with appropriate environmental protection measures is likely to be less of an operational risk to the environment and people than the existing road.
124. The potential effects of climate change will be taken into account in the design of the scheme. This would include making allowances for increased rainfall and flood risk, as well as the use of more durable materials to provide resilience in connection with increased temperatures and other impacts of climate change.

Risks that may arise if the proposed decision and related work is not taken

125. Should the decision be made to not proceed with the scheme, the opportunity to obtain significant government investment in the county would be lost. The existing problems on the A350 at Beanacre and Melksham would remain, and the situation would be expected to deteriorate because of anticipated future traffic growth.

126. Not undertaking further informal consultations on the route options at this stage could mean that potentially all the information required to inform the OBC would not be available. This could lead to incomplete information for later stages of the scheme development and would not be in accordance with the DfT guidance for major schemes. There are other formal consultation stages, including at planning application and in connection with the statutory orders, but it is considered that continuing non-statutory consultation is vital in the development of major projects.

Risks that may arise if the proposed decision is taken and actions that will be taken to manage these risks

127. There is a risk that after identifying a route and taking it to the planning application and statutory orders stage, the scheme does not proceed because funding is no longer available, or if the statutory orders are not confirmed. Consideration will be given to the risks associated with progressing the scheme at the various stages of its development. Risk management is an important consideration with schemes of this type and processes are in place to manage the associated risks.
128. If it is agreed to undertake further public consultation on the short list of route options, it should be noted that the Council would have to reveal the routes on property searches, which could lead to concerns from home owners about potential difficulties in selling properties. In order to limit this potential adverse impact, it would be helpful to adopt a preferred route as soon as possible to reduce the uncertainty.

Financial Implications

129. The report to Cabinet in May 2020 recognised that most of the funding for the scheme would be provided by the DfT, with £1.33 million currently awarded by the DfT to prepare the OBC for the scheme. The report identified Council funding of £0.66 million to contribute to this stage of the scheme development.
130. The indications are that the currently identified funding resources will be adequate to progress the scheme to the OBC stage. It is anticipated that the successful acceptance of the OBC by DfT would result in an award of further funding to progress the scheme to Full Business Case (FBC), which would include the planning and statutory processes and the contract procurement.

Legal Implications

131. There is no legal requirement to undertake public consultation at this stage. However, undertaking a consultation on the developing route options ensures that the Council captures all information potentially required to inform preferred route selection. It also ensures that information is available for later stages of the scheme development and is in accordance with the DfT guidance for major schemes.
132. There are formal consultation stages, including at planning application stage and in connection with the statutory orders, but it is considered that informal consultation during the early stages is a vital stage in developing major projects.

133. The adoption of a Preferred Route for the scheme is an important stage in developing a scheme of this type. It should be noted that in certain circumstances this could result in blight claims if land is adversely affected by the scheme. Any such claims would be considered on their merits should they be received but are unlikely to be successful at this early stage when the proposals are not certain.
134. The scheme could be the subject of Compulsory Purchase Orders (CPO) under the Highways Act 1980 should it not be possible to acquire the necessary land and rights from owners by agreement. It is also likely that the scheme would require Side Roads Orders (SRO) in order to make alterations to minor roads, rights of way and private accesses needing to be altered to accommodate the scheme.
135. Objections to the CPO (should they be required) and SRO statutory orders could result in the Secretary of State (SoS) requiring a public inquiry to be held. The Inspector's report would be considered by the SoS in determining whether or not to confirm the orders.

Workforce Implications

136. There are no immediate workforce implications in undertaking public consultation or developing the A350 Melksham Bypass. A small major highway projects team has been established in the Council, which works closely with the Council's consultants who have the specialist knowledge and expertise required for a scheme of this type.
137. In the longer term, if the project proceeds through the detailed design and construction stages, it is likely that there would be significant training opportunities for the Council's technical staff with good opportunities to broaden their experience.

Options Considered

138. A wide range of options for the scheme were consulted on in the first round of public consultations, including road and non-road options. The assessment work undertaken indicates that the non-road options would not meet the transport objectives for the scheme, but they could be progressed separately. The potential DfT funding for the scheme is for an improvement of the MRN and funds could not be diverted by the Council for other purposes.
139. The improvement of the existing road is constrained through Beanacre and to the north of Melksham by properties adjacent to the road. Improving this section of the existing route to the standard required for a major road to carry the volume of traffic predicted is not considered to be feasible or desirable.
140. The western routes for a bypass did not offer significant cost, operational or environmental benefits when compared to the eastern routes and had less public support than the eastern routes.

141. The eastern routes generally performed well in operational and cost terms, with varying environmental implications. The longest eastern route (Option 10d) and the variants suggested were the most expensive and had greater adverse environmental impact, and it is not proposed to short list that option.
142. The initial consultation comments included suggestions for walking and cycling improvements which could be included as part of the scheme or progressed separately. These will be investigated further.

Conclusions

143. The A350 Melksham Bypass is a Large Local Major scheme which has been awarded development funding by the DfT to take it to OBC stage. It would be a major improvement to the important A350 route which provides vital transport links between the M4 and the towns of western Wiltshire.
144. The initial assessment work and consultations indicate that it should be possible to develop a viable scheme. In order to develop the options further it is proposed to carry out further public consultation on a short list of options to inform the preparation of the OBC.

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The following documents have been relied on in the preparation of this report:

None

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Melksham Bypass Report on Public Consultation

Appendix 2 – Melksham Bypass Report on Public Consultation Appendices

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Proposed A350 Melksham Bypass

Public consultation report

The consultation had 1,018 online responses and more than 175 letters and e-mail submissions.

Introduction

The A350 Melksham Bypass was one of the nine projects identified as priorities by the Western Gateway Strategic Transport Body, which recognised the regional importance of the A350 as a north-south route.

The importance of the A350 to the local economy has long been recognised by Wiltshire Council. The section of the road through Beanacre and Melksham has been a concern for many years. It has sections with 30mph speed limits passing through residential areas, with several busy junctions providing access to Melksham town centre, retail and commercial sites, the A365 Bath Road and A3102.

The A350 at Melksham is one of the busiest major roads in Wiltshire, with daily traffic volumes generally above 35,000 vehicles per day, and heavy goods vehicles accounting for around 8% of all vehicles.

Funding has been received from the Department of Transport (DfT) to develop a Large Local Major improvement scheme for the A350 at Melksham and to prepare an Outline Business Case (OBC) for a scheme.

Transport objectives

The transport objectives of the scheme were confirmed by the Council's Cabinet on 13 October 2020 and are to:

- (i) Reduce journey times and delays and improve journey reliability on the A350 through Melksham and Beanacre, improving local and regional north-south connectivity, and supporting future housing and employment growth in the A350 corridor.
- (ii) Reduce journey times and delays on and improve journey reliability on the following routes through Melksham and Beanacre:
 - A350 South – A3102
 - A365 West – A365 East
 - A350 South – A365 West
- (iii) Provide enhanced opportunities for walking and cycling between Melksham town centre and the rail station / Bath Road, and along the existing A350 corridor within Melksham and Beanacre, which will help reduce the impact of transport on the environment and support local economic activity.
- (iv) Reduce personal injury accident rates and severity for the A350 and Melksham as a whole, to make the corridor safer and more resilient.
- (v) Reduce the volume of traffic, including HGVs, passing along the current A350 route in northern Melksham and Beanacre to reduce severance, whilst avoiding negative impacts on other existing or potential residential areas.

Public consultation

The first stage in the scheme development included undertaking a non-statutory consultation on a long list of options. This provided the opportunity for the public, town and parish councils, Area Board and others to comment on the scheme and the options. Other organisations, including the Environment Agency, Natural England, Highways England, were also invited to comment as part of the consultation.

Because the COVID-19 pandemic prevented face to face consultation events, it was primarily an online consultation, although the opportunity was also provided to submit written comments. The consultation was launched at the Melksham Area Board on 4 November 2020. An initial online presentation was given to Seend Parish Council on 27 October 2020 and to Melksham Town Council on 23 November 2020.

While it was not possible to hold an exhibition at the library or town hall as would normally be the case, the use of social media, television and radio coverage, and the increase in the use of online consultations have helped. An extension to the consultation period end from the end of November to 17 January 2021 was made in view of the pandemic limitations, and to ensure that the local paper would be operating again so that it could report on the consultation and encourage participation.

The options being consulted on were:

- Workplace parking levy (Option 1)
- Road user pricing (Option 2)
- Heavy goods vehicle restrictions (Option 3)
- Rail service improvements (Option 4)
- Bus service improvements (Option 5)
- Walking and cycling improvements (Option 6)
- Improvements to the existing A350 (Options 7a, 7b and 7c)
- Short bypass to the west and east (Options 8a, 9a, 9b, 9c, 10a and 10b)
- Long bypasses to the west and east (Options 8b, 10c and 10d)

This was the initial consultation on the potential options for the scheme, and it was considered important that the widest range of options should be consulted on at this preliminary stage, even though the emerging assessment work indicated that some were going to be more successful than others at meeting the transport objectives.

Public consultation documents

The public consultation documents and supporting information were available to view on the council's website and can still be seen at:

www.wiltshire.gov.uk/highways-a350-melksham-bypass

The webpage provided a short introduction to the scheme and links to the 'Melksham Bypass Information Pack', which described the background to the scheme and set out the scheme preparation process, indicating that the scheme was at a very early stage of its development and would be the subject of further informal and formal consultation should it proceed.

It was stated that the aims of the non-statutory consultation was to:

- successfully engage with stakeholders affected by or interested in the scheme;
- engage with potentially affected land owners;
- encourage involvement from stakeholders and build strong open relationships;
- raise awareness of the scheme and understanding for the need to improve the A350;
- inform about the option assessment process;
- understand stakeholder concerns, issues and suggestions;
- receive feedback on the options to allow us to develop the scheme further; and
- prepare for the statutory consultation phases.

The document described the existing situation and why there was considered to be a local need for the scheme, as well as setting out the wider strategic priorities for the Western Gateway Strategic Transport Body. It also described the option assessment criteria to be applied in terms of Strategic, Economic, Financial, Management and Commercial cases.

The emerging findings so far were described, which indicated that the demand management measures (Options 1, 2 and 3) were unlikely to adequately address the key issues and scheme objectives and these options were likely to present challenges around acceptability.

The public transport, walking and cycling measures (options 4, 5 and 6) were unlikely to deliver the scale of impact required against the objectives as options in their own right. However, the assessment identifies that there is potential for these to be considered alongside other road-based options as potential complementary measures.

The emerging findings in connection with improvements to the existing A350 (Options 7a, 7b and 7c) indicated that the scale of impact is expected to be limited by existing speed restrictions and what could feasibly be achieved at some of the

more constrained sections. To overcome these constraints, if feasible, would increase scheme costs. Compared to the likely scale of benefits it is considered that this option would offer a lower overall value for money.

Compared to other road-based options, there would be less direct landscape / visual impact and loss of greenfield land. However, severance issues and noise / air quality on the existing A350 would not be directly addressed.

The emerging findings in connection with the short bypass and full bypass options were also described. The results of the initial sifting of options were provided based on the anticipated impact, and examples of the potential complementary walking and cycling measures were described.

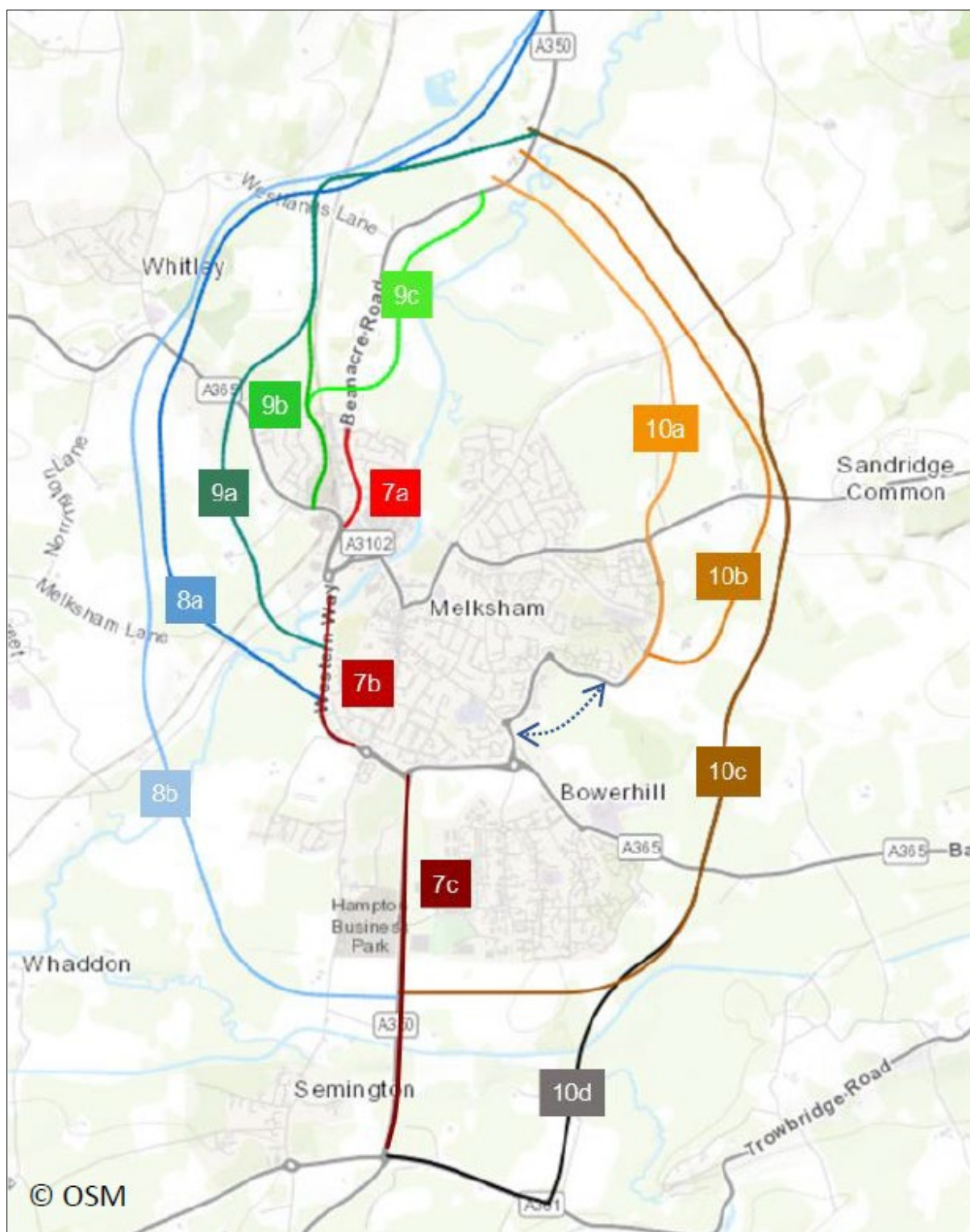
A separate document 'Melksham Bypass information on Options 7 to 10' provided descriptions of the individual route corridors being consulted on and an initial assessment against the strategic, economic, environment, social, financial and management factors.

The webpage also included the legacy documents prepared in connection with the Strategic Outline Business Case (SOBC), and list of Frequently Asked Questions.

During the consultation period there was an online questionnaire that could be completed.

The plan below is an extract from the consultation material showing the various routes under consideration.



Bypass route options

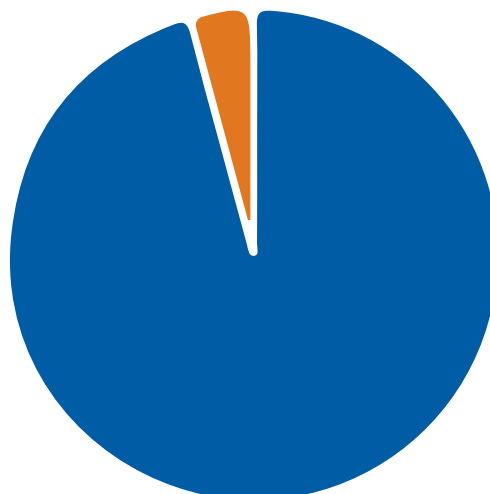


Note – Indicative of potential route corridors only – this does not denote specific road alignments at this stage.






Responses to the online consultation

1. Are you responding on behalf of yourselves or a business or organisation?

 You	962
 A business or organisation	42







2. How old are you?

 Under 18	8
 19-30	85
 31-44	226
 45-59	345
 60+	294



3. Where do you live?

 In Melksham	454
 Within 5 miles of Melksham	432
 Elsewhere in Wiltshire	61
 Outside of Wiltshire	15



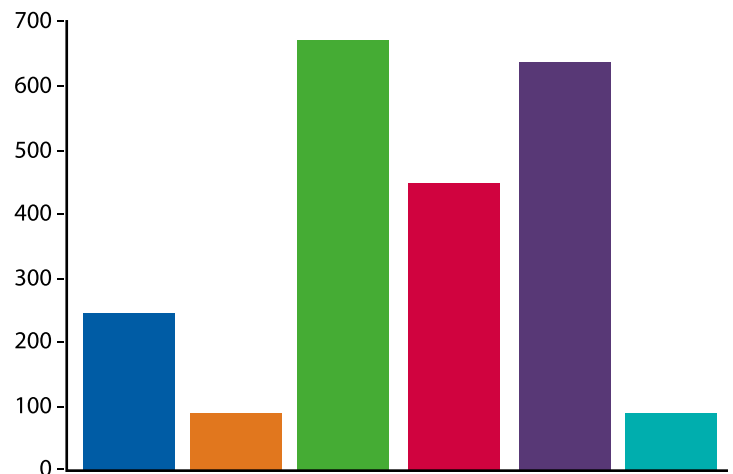
4. Where is your business based?

There were 42 responses from businesses with the majority of them being local from Melksham, Bowerhill and adjacent areas:

Location	Number
Bowerhill	12
Melksham	10
Shurnhold	3
Chippenham	2
Lacock	2
Shaw	2
Whitley	2
Atworth	1
Devizes	1
Frome	1
Royal Wootton Bassett	1
Trowbridge	1
Broughton Gifford	1
Other	3

5. How do you currently use the A350 through Melksham?

● Business use	243
● School run	92
● Shopping	670
● Commute	449
● Recreation	633
● Other	93



6. When do you mainly use the A350 through Melksham?

● Morning peak hrs	460
● Evening peak hrs	427
● Other times on weekdays	695
● Weekends	674
● Other	18

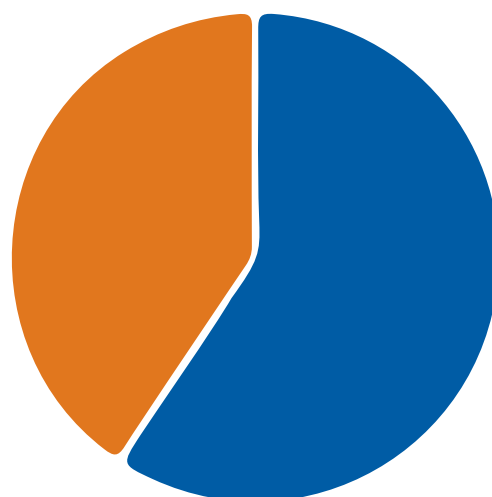


7. How concerned are you about the current situation on the A350 in Melksham and Beanacre with regards to:

	Very concerned	Somewhat concerned	Neutral	Somewhat unconcerned	Very unconcerned
Road safety	20.9%	23.3%	23.6%	14.0%	18.2%
Traffic congestion and delays	30.1%	20.1%	18.9%	15.2%	15.6%
Impact of traffic on residential properties	26.6%	21.9%	23.3%	12.2%	16.0%
Landscape and scenery	25.3%	25.1%	22.0%	12.4%	15.1%
Employment and businesses	11.1%	21.4%	35.1%	16.7%	15.8%
Walking and cycling facilities	30.5%	26.1%	22.4%	9.3%	11.6%

8. Do you support the need for an improvement to the A350 at Beanacre and Melksham?

● Yes	594
● No	406



9. If no, please state why

397 responses

Please refer to appendices for all comments

10. Thinking about the options that you would most like to see come forward, please rank in order of preference:

Most preferred ■ 1 ■ 2 ■ 3 ■ 4 ■ 5 ■ 6 ■ 7 least preferred

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1 Workplace parking levy	6.5%	5.4%	6.7%	13.1%	10.3%	9.4%	48.7%
2 Road user pricing	6.7%	3.1%	7.1%	11.1%	8.4%	9.6%	54.1%
3 HGV restrictions	27.2%	11.4%	13.6%	14.8%	10.2%	8.0%	14.8%
4 Rail improvements	37.3%	15.2%	15.5%	10.8%	5.8%	4.5%	11.0%
5 Bus improvements	32.3%	17.7%	15.1%	13.3%	6.6%	4.7%	10.4%
6 Walking and cycling improvements	41.2%	16.1%	14.5%	9.5%	7.0%	3.3%	8.6%
7a Improvements / upgrade to existing A350 route	31.0%	10.4%	7.9%	8.4%	5.6%	7.7%	29.1%
7b Improvements / upgrade to existing A350 route	29.9%	11.2%	8.1%	7.3%	6.1%	7.6%	29.8%
7c Improvements / upgrade to existing A350 route	27.8%	9.0%	9.6%	10.2%	5.7%	7.9%	29.8%
8a Short and long; inner and outer western routes	14.9%	9.1%	9.7%	10.0%	6.8%	7.8%	41.7%
8b Short and long; inner and outer western routes	15.9%	8.2%	9.7%	8.2%	6.2%	7.5%	44.3%
9a Short and long; inner and outer western routes	11.9%	6.9%	11.9%	9.1%	8.0%	7.9%	44.4%
9b Short and long; inner and outer western routes	11.0%	6.4%	10.4%	9.8%	8.4%	8.9%	45.3%
9c Short and long; inner and outer western routes	10.8%	6.3%	9.3%	9.9%	8.9%	9.4%	45.6%
10a Short and long; inner and outer eastern routes	17.2%	8.5%	6.8%	12.9%	7.4%	7.3%	39.9%

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
10b Short and long; inner and outer eastern routes	16.2%	8.7%	8.1%	7.7%	6.8%	7.6%	44.8%
10c Short and long; inner and outer eastern routes	30.8%	8.1%	4.5%	5.0%	3.6%	5.9%	42.0%
10d – Short and long; inner and outer eastern routes	20.8%	10.3%	4.8%	4.6%	4.0%	4.0%	51.6%

11. Why have you chosen your most preferred option?

998 responses

Please refer to appendices for all comments

12. Looking at your most preferred option relative to the others, in your opinion, do you agree that your chosen option improves the following?

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Road safety	47.9%	33.7%	15.4%	0.9%	2.1%
Traffic congestion and delays	56.1%	29.6%	11.0%	1.1%	2.2%
Impact of traffic on residential properties	52.3%	25.8%	17.3%	2.1%	2.5%
Landscape and scenery	45.3%	22.4%	22.9%	5.6%	3.8%
Employment and businesses	30.4%	34.8%	30.9%	1.6%	2.3%
Walking and cycling facilities	39.3%	26.3%	29.2%	2.2%	3.0%

13. Would you like to see more facilities for walking and cycling within Melksham come forward as complementary measures to a potential A350 bypass?

● Yes	682
● No	318



14. If yes, what facilities would you like to see?

610 responses

Please refer to appendices for all comments

15. Do you have any further comments about these proposals to improve the A350 in Melksham?

678 responses

Please refer to appendices for all comments

16. How did you hear about this no-statutory consultation?

855 responses, including...

Facebook

Online and melksham news

Melksham Area Board

Town Council Meeting

Email

Newspaper

Written and email responses to the consultation

The town and parish councils, and other organisations were consulted on the proposals and a summary of their comments is included below:

Melksham Town Council

The council's Economic Development Manager reported that the preference of this council is to pursue an eastern bypass route. However, an eastern route which incorporates part of the existing Eastern Way is not desirable as Eastern Way runs through a residential area of the town and is not appropriate for the levels of heavy traffic a bypass would generate. Also incorporating this road as part of the bypass route would involve most children from the town, having to cross the by-pass each day to access the town's Melksham Oak secondary school. This is not desirable.

This council also considers it essential that the consultation results and subsequent development work on the preferred route should be done in partnership with the Neighbourhood Plan Review, The Local Plan Review and the 'Priority for People' work arising from the Movement Working Group – part of the Melksham: 2020-2036 strategic plan. Doing so will ensure the most advantageous outcome for the Melksham community.

Melksham Without Parish Council

The Clerk to the council advised that Melksham Without Parish Council welcomes the investment in transport infrastructure which reduces congestion through the Melksham Without Parish Council area. However, it considers proposals for a bypass to the western side of town to be unadvisable and inappropriate. The appropriate option would be an eastern proposal which did not have an environmental impact upon the community of Bowerhill.

Semington Parish Council

Semington Parish Council requested that the justification for the scheme should be revisited in the post COVID-19 era where working from home is likely to become more established and lead to long-term reductions in traffic volumes. They were concerned that traffic surveys were conducted before the Farmers Roundabout improvement, that increases in costs for the scheme could fall on Wiltshire's council tax payers, and that the scheme appeared to be an attempt to raise the status of the road to 'trunk' strategic importance.

It was suggested that the emerging post COVID situation and the global climate emergency would lead to reduced car traffic and an increase in public transport, walking and cycling which Semington Parish Council would support. The parish council made specific comments on proposed route options as follows:-

Option 8b

This is the long western bypass option. This route would cross the flood plain from the River Avon and come through farm land to join the A350 south of Bowerhill. It

would need to be raised to prevent flooding and would therefore be very visually intrusive both in the surrounding countryside and from the canal. There is also likely to be significant noise impact on both Semington and Berryfields villages. It is likely that the route would need to be very close to the canal for approximately 1km before joining route 7C, and be relatively close for some distance further west. There would need to be significant protection to the Kennet and Avon Canal with this option to honour the Wiltshire Council core strategy commitment to canals within the county.

Semington would suffer noise impact from the north-west, north and east, rather than just from the east with all other options. Semington Parish Council would request that substantial tree planting be undertaken along the route to screen the noise if this route were selected, even though it would increase the area of land required to accommodate the route.

Where Option 8b crosses the Semington Road south of Berryfields would create a potentially hazardous junction for the national cycle route 403. Option 8b would also create a tempting rat run for vehicles to cut the corner and come through the village rather than go the longer route around three sides. Option 8b would pass very close to the Wiltshire Air Ambulance HQ.

The ongoing restoration of the Wilts & Berks Canal along with the Thames and Severn canals is supported by the Wiltshire Core Strategy as it supports the objective of creating a “Wessex Ring” of operational canals. Wiltshire Council’s Core Strategy with respect to canals includes developing the canal’s recreational and nature conservation potential. Option 8b would cut across the proposed canal regeneration between Semington and Berryfields. If the bypass were built before the canal is restored it would probably prove prohibitively expensive to provide the connecting link to the Kennet and Avon Canal. If built subsequently it would require another bridge not costed in the current proposal. Route 8B will probably require part of Route 7C from the point where it joins the A350 south to the roundabout with the A361.

Semington Parish Council would not be in favour of Option 8b because of the environmental impact and the likelihood of a significant increase in through traffic within the village.

Option 7c

This is the upgrading of the existing A350 to the south of Melksham. This road has been designed to be dual carriageway capable and can be improved without significant impact on the environment, other than an increase in noise. Some additional sound screening would be sought by the parish council if this option is used.

Option 10c

This is the eastern bypass option which skirts Bowerhill and joins the A350 at or to the south of the old railway line. This option does not change the risk of increased through traffic within the village. The environmental impact is believed to be lower

with this option than any of the other long route options. The noise impact will be worst close to the industrial estate of Bowerhill and as such is the least worst option.

This route could be supplemented with the southern part of route 7C if traffic volume justifies it. The route would run roughly parallel to the Kennet and Avon Canal for approximately 2km around the south eastern extent of Bowerhill. There would need to be significant protection to the Kennet and Avon Canal with this option to honour the Wiltshire Council core strategy commitment to canals within the county.

Option 10d

This is the long eastern bypass route which continues south to join the A361 at a point between the Strand and the Littleton roundabout junction with the A350. This option will have a significant environmental impact on the Littleton area, with additional crossings of the canal and Semington Brook required. Where the A350 and the A361 are shared would probably require improvement with this stretch of highway. The A361 bend near The Strand public house is already an accident black spot, increasing traffic along this stretch of the road may lead to an increase in accidents along this route.

The Semington brook area around Littleton is a particular wildlife haven with otters, water voles, buzzard, red kite and ravens seen this year. The route would pass close to listed buildings. Semington Parish Council would object to this route based on the environmental impact on both Semington Brook and canal and the noise and amenity impact for Littleton residents.

Semington Parish Council considered that all routes should keep the impact on the Kennet and Avon Canal as low as is reasonably practical.

Seend Parish Council

The Parish Clerk advised that Seend Parish Council has looked at the various options put forward. It has been intimated in the consultation documents that the route options on the western side of Melksham have more problems to overcome than the eastern side, such as railway lines, electric sub-station, solar farm, golf course as well as a flood plain. However, the benefits of going west should not be overlooked, and therefore all options must still be considered from all angles. The Parish Council made specific comments on the proposed route options as follows:-

Option 8b

Route 8b should not be discounted as a worthy option. Although this is the longer route around the west of Melksham, it would have the advantage of making access to Bath and surrounding towns quicker but, more importantly, it will make travelling to Bath hospital much quicker. RUH is the main hospital for Melksham and surrounding villages and, at present, it can take far too long to travel there, particularly in times of emergencies. Therefore, this option must be given serious consideration, despite the expenditure of the structural obstacles, as the economic benefits may mitigate these extra costs.

In preparing your case for a bypass, you cite extracts from the draft Melksham Neighbourhood Plan. No mention is made of Seend's emerging Neighbourhood Plan. In it the parish council identifies the Kennet and Avon Canal and its surrounding countryside as a major environmental and recreational asset for both Seend and Melksham. Two of the route options, 10c and 10d, will cause great harm to this landscape.

As the parish council is representing the parishioners of Seend parish, they have concentrated their comments on the two routes that would most affect us.

Option 10c

This route was the one most favoured by Wiltshire Council when it was submitting its Strategic Outline Business Case in 2019. It is cheaper than option 10d and the lowest cost of all the long routes. It does not require bridges to cross the canal and Semington Brook. And it is likely to draw the most traffic from the existing A350 and other routes.

However, the building of the bypass along this route would have an adverse impact on the residents of Bowerhill and restrict their access routes to the Kennet and Avon Canal for recreation. Rights of way would be affected restricting easy access to the countryside on the south side of the canal. Whilst Giles Wood would be better protected by this route than 10d, further forestry and landscaping would be needed to protect the environment and surrounding properties.

However, it is vital that, where possible, parish boundaries are preserved and if the bypass were to run south of Bowerhill, north of Giles Wood, this could go a short way to protecting the parish boundaries between Melksham and Seend. Avon Needs Trees (ANT) have already intimated they would be willing to contribute towards planting of trees and it may be that Giles Wood and surrounding areas would be enhanced with more planting of trees not only for environmental reasons but also to cut down on noise for surrounding properties. More forestry in this area would also enhance the visual amenity of the Kennet and Avon Canal.

The raised level of Seend and Seend Cleeve would mean that this bypass route would be highly visible and there would be heightened noise and air pollution that would need to be mitigated by natural screening.

For freight traffic travelling to and from the various industrial estates in Melksham, route 10c with the additional dualling of the A350 between Semington and Littleton roundabout would have major benefits.

Were this to still be the favoured route of Wiltshire Council, then the parish council would expect much needed mitigation in the form of mass tree planting, landscaping and bunds to reduce the impact on the surrounding countryside. It would be crucial to the wellbeing of all residents impacted by this route that green landscaping is created rather than an infill of housing. This would need to be factored into any costs prior to building.

Where the A350 south would join Hampton Park West, little work and expense would be needed to widen the existing A350 to the Littleton roundabout. When that was

built in 2004, allowance was made for the road to be widened in later years and there is sufficient width under the canal bridge to do that.

This option would not incur further expense of crossing the Kennet and Avon Canal and Semington Brook.

Option 10d

We note that this option was not one of the original route options in the Strategic Outline Business Case presented to the DfT but came about because of a suggestion at the March 2020 Melksham Area Board meeting.

This route, if chosen, would have the most damaging effect on Seend Parish.

The description in the consultation document of this route describes it as follows: “There are no statutory environmental designations expected to be impacted by this option. The corridor passes through land associated mainly with farming and equestrian uses. The crossing of the Kennet and Avon Canal is likely to affect its setting, with potential visual and amenity impacts.”

The quality and value of the landscape in both environmental and amenity terms is very much understated in this description. More green field sites in this option would be used either for structural buildings and/or further housing development. Melksham/Bowerhill is already undergoing extensive development and these green field sites should not be used as an attempt to build yet more housing, particularly as it would be likely that Bowerhill would meet up with Seend, thereby not leaving any gap to decipher the parish boundaries.

Option 10d uses the largest amount of land (23 hectares) and is one of the longest routes at 5.9 miles. It would need two bridges to cross the canal and Semington Brook and major structural work to cross a flood plain. It would also need improvements and a new junction made on the A361. This makes it one of the most costly of all the routes.

The parish council also stressed the importance of the Kennet and Avon Canal and drew attention to the Seend Neighbourhood Plan, the presence of floodplains, the loss of view from Seend Cleeve, and raised concerns about the potential for increased traffic through Seend, and the effect of any scheme on the restoration of the Wilts & Berks Canal.

In conclusion Seend Parish Council strongly urged that their concerns with the Option 10 routes should be taken on board. They do not believe that the plans for these routes, (most particularly with route 10d), take into consideration the criteria set out in the Neighbourhood Plan.

“In the event that a Melksham Bypass is constructed and passes in part through the Parish, the effect of the infrastructure proposal on the following elements of the canal’s setting will be expected to demonstrate how they will be mitigated: tranquillity, light pollution, biodiversity assets in recognition of its status as a County Wildlife Site, heritage assets, including archaeology and access to the Canal”

“The landscape, biodiversity and heritage assets associated with the Kennet & Avon Canal are highly valued in the Parish and are underpinned by four Neighbourhood Plan evidence base reports: Seend Parish Character Statement (2020), the Seend Parish Green Infrastructure Report (2020), Seend Parish Local Key Views Report (2020) and the Locally Valued Heritage Assets Report (2020). Any developments affecting the canal must protect and reinforce its distinct character and enhance its setting and surroundings.”

This green space between Melksham and Seend promotes both physical and mental well-being, crucial in this current climate, and must be protected at all costs.

Great Hinton Parish Council

The Chairman indicated that the parish council felt very strongly that Option 10d is the worst possible option in every way. The impact on the environment and wildlife would be huge, involving closing the canal for months where businesses are already struggling. The noise pollution would be much worse than it has been since the new section of road was built. The long term prospect of possible extension of Option 10d towards Yarnbrook /Westbury is extremely concerning and could have a hugely detrimental effect on all local villages.

If the bypass must go to the east, then Option 10b would be by far the best proposal for all local areas. If this option was chosen, then we would assume that the Semington Bypass would be made dual carriageway. This could alleviate the majority of the current problems which have been highlighted.

Steeple Ashton Parish Council

The Parish Clerk advised that the parish council agrees that a bypass for Melksham is desirable. The route of the bypass has no direct impact on the parish as it terminates north of the Semington roundabout however, members request that consideration is given to the effects of bypass related traffic increase in the following areas to the south of the scheme:

- Safety of junctions at Common Hill and Cold Harbour with increased traffic flows;
- Air quality and noise impacts from increased traffic and congestion to properties at Ashton Common, Ashton Road and along A350 itself;
- Impact from increased traffic on woodlands at Green Lane Wood and Smith’s Well Wood;
- Risk of traffic rat-running through Steeple Ashton to avoid congestion on Yarnbrook to Westbury section of A350;

The Steeple Ashton Parish Council also feels that Wiltshire Council should consider implementing a Westbury bypass in conjunction with the Melksham scheme to minimise congestion north of Westbury.

Natural England

The Conservation and Planning Lead Adviser for the Wessex team commented that it is difficult to confirm at the resolution provided but it appears that options 10b, 10c and 10d have the potential to impact on Spye Park SSSI. Any proposal moving forward with either of these options would have to demonstrate it does not impact on the features for Spye Parks notification.

Attention was drawn to the National Planning Policy Considerations. Section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (2006) requires that, 'Every public authority must, in exercising its functions, have regard, so far as is consistent with the proper exercise of those functions, to the purpose of conserving biodiversity'. Section 40(3) also adds that 'conserving biodiversity includes, in relation to a living organism or type of habitat, restoring or enhancing a population or habitat'. The authority should also consider the proposals in light of the policies set out in Section 15 Conserving and enhancing the natural environment of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 2019).

Other factors to be considered included best and most versatile agricultural land and soils, protected species, local sites and priority habitats and species, ancient woodland, ancient and veteran trees, environmental enhancement, access and recreation, rights of way, Access Land, and National Trails.

Canal and River Trust

The Area Planner for the Canal & River Trust indicated an interest in Option 7c if chosen and noted that Option 10d would require significant involvement from the Trust in the design and location of a proposed new bridge, suitable mitigation, Legal agreement and DEFRA consent.

National Trust

The Planning Advisor, south west region, felt that further information would be needed for the Trust to come to a fully informed view on the different options, and how they may affect our landholdings and interests. At present, they ask the council to take into account the existing traffic issues being experienced at Lacock – see below – and consider the extent to which the various options might be able to address those issues. Furthermore, there are other matters that – as a conservation organisation – the Trust would want the Council to bear in mind.

The Trust has previously noted in responses to planning proposals at Melksham and Chippenham that there is a problem with rat-running traffic through Lacock village. In essence, drivers from the east attempt to get to the A350 in the west while avoiding town centre traffic in Melksham and Chippenham. This often means extra traffic driving through Lacock – along Hither Way (which visitors to Lacock cross to enter the village) and along West Street and Cantax Hill (within the Conservation Area). It also means extra traffic in rural lanes in the wider area (e.g. Forest Lane, part of National Cycle Route 403). This extra traffic harms the historic character of the village, and the safety of other road users.

In addition, the Trust have concerns about the safety of the southern A350 junction serving Lacock (A350 / Melksham Road). The A350 is a busy road, with many vehicles travelling at some speed. This can create problems (and safety concerns) for vehicles wanting to join the A350 from Melksham Road, in particular for vehicles turning north. Potentially junction improvements could improve this situation and enhance highway safety.

Other matters the Trust thought should be considered included the effects of new infrastructure, climate change, biodiversity, active travel, heritage and landscape, flooding and water quality and noted that the Trust's land at Lacock has been declared 'inalienable' and cannot be compulsorily purchased against the Trust's wishes without special parliamentary procedure.

Brisith Horse Society Wiltshire

BHS Wiltshire County Access Officer emphasised the importance of bridleways crossed by any route of a Melksham Bypass, which would be used by riders who are very vulnerable users, and by off-road cyclists and walkers. Crossings over or under the bypass must be carefully designed with safety of horse riders, cyclists and walkers in mind.

Examples of bridleways which could be affected were identified and it was suggested that the opportunity could be taken to link up routes with a new route along the line of the bypass.

Wiltshire Wildlife Trust

The Chief Executive proposed a different approach that puts environmental enhancement as one of the objectives to be achieved by the scheme rather being seen as a constraint.

The risk table in the business case identifies a risk of "Objections to some elements of the scheme by local residents, landowners and environmental groups", with the suggested mitigation of "Early engagement with stakeholders and communications to highlight the benefits of the scheme".

An alternative way to avoid objections would be to deliver a scheme that is truly innovative and ambitious in the way it avoids and addresses environmental impacts and genuinely delivers biodiversity gain, carbon offsetting and helps Wiltshire to ensure that at least 30% of its land is protected to reverse biodiversity loss by 2030.

All of the options presented in the assessment have been identified as having an adverse impact on biodiversity and the water environment. One of the problems of the approach being taken is that the environment is being seen as a constraint. A different approach would be to see this as an opportunity to not only meet the requirements of the business case but also protect and enhance the natural environment and deliver benefits to people and wildlife. The approach taken to Salisbury's River Park seems a good example of this.

The key physical constraints map identifies the river, floodplain and areas of woodland, but it must be recognised that the blank spaces on the map will contain features that are of great importance to the movement and lifecycle of key and priority species. These include woodland copse, hedgerows and other agricultural habitats and riparian and floodplain habitats, and as identified in the Business Case, commuting and foraging habitat for bats.

The scheme information addresses the carbon footprint of the works in terms of reducing traffic congestion and using energy efficient plant, materials and processes. It also assesses the impact of climate change and the effect this will have on the scheme infrastructure, e.g. resilience to flooding. Any mitigation and environmental enhancements planned as a result of the environmental impact assessment should also incorporate the potential for carbon offsetting and increase the resilience of local habitats and species to the impacts of climate change.

In exploring potential routes, environmental impacts and potential for biodiversity gain should be set out at the outset. The approach should not be how to minimise impacts once a short list of routes has been selected. The business case states repeatedly that “Potential moderate or major adverse environmental impacts have been identified... but have scope to be reduced or mitigated through the planning and design process”. But that is too late – the selected route may be highly destructive. If the natural environment is taken fully into account and given due weight in the initial assessment process, a better outcome may be achieved; it is not a case of mitigating damage but embracing opportunities for environmental enhancement at the outset.

In September of this year the Prime Minister committed to protect 30% of the UK’s land by 2030, to address the emerging ecological and climate crisis. The full environmental impact assessment and planned mitigation measures for this scheme must be robust and ambitious in their scope, in order to not just avoid or mitigate for adverse impacts but contribute to biodiversity net gain and help achieve the 30% target.

TransWilts

The Chair of TransWilts considered the A350 bypass as an exciting and important opportunity, and they welcome the comprehensive consultation process to enable input to the scheme.

TransWilts have already provided a report to Wiltshire Council on potential Melksham Station passenger growth, and they very much welcome the inclusion of the aim “providing better access to the railway station from the town and residential areas” in the consultation.

Whilst the Covid pandemic has put a short term collapse of passenger numbers nationally, the long term growth in rail passengers will recover, and the importance of connectivity to education and jobs has never been more important, particularly to the Melksham population demographic without a car. TransWilts conducted a Melksham Station passenger survey in late 2020, whilst the numbers were lower the majority of the passengers using the station were arriving on foot, mainly younger passengers

and mothers with pushchairs. The substantial growth expected in rail travel at Melksham needs supporting with much improved access particularly with the station's location being west and north of the major residential and business centres.

The Bypass scheme gives the opportunity to substantially improve the accessibility to the station with safe walking and cycling routes. Regular bus route access to the station is important and the envisaged infill development should secure CIL funding and developer s106 contributions that secure the cycling and bus routes that will encourage low carbon transport options.

TransWilts sees the opportunity to enhance the tourist and visitor economy of Melksham and are starting to promote weekend visitors by rail. Destinations from Melksham are varied and the inclusion of cycle routes for Semington K&A canal, River Avon, Lacock and National Trust properties should be included. The opportunity for installing safe cycle lanes on the old A350 route (Options 7a, 7b, 7c) should be included. No doubt a safe cycle/ pedestrian crossing of Options 10a, 10b, 10c whilst travelling along the River Avon to Lacock will be included as part the northern junction design with the A350 south of Lacock.

The station pedestrian access is via an underpass tunnel under the existing A350. It is not an attractive route to the station, with the lower traffic numbers on the old A350 route, we would like to restore a surface access to the station replacing the underpass.

They understand the existing pedestrian bridge across the River Avon from Scotland Road will not accommodate cyclists. This has the potential for an attractive route to the town centre, community facilities and leisure routes. They would like the bypass scheme to include a new cycle bridge over the Avon making a second safe cycle route from the town to the station via Foundry Close and link to the planned northern access to Melksham Station.

Written and email responses to the consultation

As well as the completed questionnaires there were 175 letters and emails received in response to the consultation which included 953 comments on aspects of the scheme or specific route options. A number of these communications were received before the consultation started but given the circumstances Wiltshire Council agreed to consider these as part of the consultation response, and they have been included in the analysis. It should be noted that in some cases the written submissions may duplicate questionnaire responses also given. The comments on the scheme in general were:

General comments on scheme in written and email responses	Number
Scheme not required	30
Not required because of reduced traffic following Covid-19	27
Adopt policies to reduce traffic	25
Damage to countryside	21
Object to scheme	14
Will cause increase in housing	12
Bypasses increase traffic	10
Adverse effect on wildlife	10
Time savings not sufficient to justify scheme	10
Adverse environmental effects	9
Carbon impact and climate change concerns	7
Westbury Bypass needed	6
Adverse effect on residents	6
Should be considered in more detail	5
Not long routes to south	4
Will reduce noise and vibration	3
Need to consider effect on schools	3
Adverse effect on canal	3
Further details required on effects of routes	3
Adverse effects on rights of way	3
Implement Options 1-6 with bypass	3
HGVs through Seend	2
Further information on ecology required	2
Consider A350 improvement north and south of Melksham	1
Scheme incompatible with Core Strategy	1
Adverse effect on flood risk	1
Put house building on hold until route adopted	1
Bypasses don't work	1
Provide landscaping and ecosystem with project	1
Consider line of Wilts and Berks Canal	1
Consider use of rail for long distance freight	1
Need to protect station environment	1
Prefer longer eastern route	1

General comments on scheme in written and email responses	Number
Not a western route	1
Prefer Eastern route not affecting Bowerhill	1
Assessment of economic effect on town required	1
Need to take into account existing traffic issues in Lacock	1
Consider potential impact on Spye Park SSSI	1
Consider access to Great Chalfield with Options 8 and 9	1
Consider link road for Melksham instead	1
Safety of junctions on A350 south of Melksham	1
Air quality and noise impacts on A350 south of Melksham	1
Improved access to the station not using subway	1
Improved cycle links from station to canal and Lacock	1
Environmental enhancement should be an objective for the scheme	1
Potential for carbon off-setting should be included	1

There were comments regarding specific route options:

Option 7a comments on scheme in written and email responses	Number
Suitable option	6
Not a suitable option	5
Option 7b comments on scheme in written and email responses	
Suitable option	6
Not a suitable option	5
Option 7c comments on scheme in written and email responses	
Suitable option	10
Not a suitable option	5
Impact on canal would need to be considered	1
More noise screening required for Semington with Option 7c	1
Options 8a, 8b and 9a comments on scheme in written and email responses	
Not a suitable option	3
Poor value for money	2
Adverse impact on heritage	2
Suitable option	1
Adverse flood risk	1
Terrorism risk with electricity sub-station	1
Adverse impact on Golf Club	1
Adverse effects on residents	1
Option 8a comments on scheme in written and email responses	
Suitable option	1
Not a suitable option	1
Option 8b comments on scheme in written and email responses	
Suitable option	4

Option 7a comments on scheme in written and email responses	Number
Not a suitable option	2

Option 9a comments on scheme in written and email responses	Number
Suitable option	2
Not a suitable option	2
Option 9c comments on scheme in written and email responses	
Not a suitable option	1
Option 10a comments on scheme in written and email responses	
Not a suitable option	10
Suitable option	5
Severs school from town	1
Adverse effect on pedestrian and cyclists	1
Would increase accidents	1
Option 10b comments on scheme in written and email responses	
Not a suitable option	11
Suitable option	5
Adverse effect on pedestrian and cyclists	1
Would increase accidents	1

Option 10c comments on scheme in written and email responses	
Suitable option	25
Not suitable option	17
Adverse effect on countryside	16
Adverse effect residential areas and access to countryside	12
Adverse effect on rights of way	9
Adverse effect on wildlife	6
Adverse effect on canal	6
Adverse effect of noise and pollution	5
Would increase housing with adverse effects on town	4
Consider planting opportunities with Option 10c	3
Option too expensive	2
Comments on rights of way	2
Protection of Canal required with this option	1

Option 10d comments on scheme in written and email responses	
Not a suitable option	89
Adverse effect on countryside and landscape	74
Adverse effect on wildlife	57
Option too expensive	45
Adverse effect on canal	33
Adverse effect on tourism and tourist businesses	28

Option 10d comments on scheme in written and email responses	
Adverse effect on flooding	23
Adverse effect on farm	22
Adverse effect of noise and pollution	21
Adverse effect on residential property	18
Adverse effect on agriculture	17
Adverse effect on rights of way and access to countryside	16
Adverse effect on monuments listed buildings	9
Would increase housing with adverse effects on town	9
Suitable option	6
Adverse effect on business	6
Adverse effect on road safety	3
Would increase traffic in Seend	2
Link direct to Semington Roundabout	1
Wish to be involved in canal aspects	1

Various organisations submitted letters and emails in response to the consultation, which included detailed information on the area and the proposals.

Melksham Rail Users Group

It was requested that the Melksham Rail User Group and the TransWilts Community Rail Partnerships should be stakeholders and consultees throughout this process. They commended Options 4 and 5 (rail and bus) public transport and Option 6 (cycle and walking) improvements, and noted that they score very highly on deliverability, affordability and acceptability. Whilst they are unlikely to meet your objectives on their own, they should provide a valuable and significant element implemented as thoroughly as practical in any solution.

It was suggested that the A46/A36 should be looked at as an alternative long-distance route rather than increasing capacity on the A350, and the alternative of rail use for longer distance freight and medium and longer passenger traffic via the TransWilts railway line which parallels the A350 road.

It was suggested that any railway crossings (Options 9a, 9b, 9c, 8a and 8b) should allow for the line to be restored to a double track such that trains can path both ways under or over the bridge at the same time. Please rule out level crossings at each point that rail and road cross.

It was requested that any development of Options 7a, 9b and 9c should not encroach on access to and use of the railway station and public transport hub on Station Approach. The opportunity should be taken within any option to improve bus/road access to the station.

The need for modelling to include current and projected factors in preference or addition to historic ones, and consequential housing and business development to

be included. Current and planned canal access, use and development should not be restricted by the scheme, and the opportunity taken to improve national and other cycle routes.

Community Action Shaw and Whitley (CAWS) Group

CAWS appreciated the current constraints regarding traffic volumes, road safety, accidents and journey times, and were generally in support of such a scheme. They agreed that the non-road options in isolation would not deliver the necessary benefits, but that they should be considered as part of a larger scheme, especially as there is an aging population and there would be health benefits through walking and cycling, and improved rail and bus services would be of benefit to the communities.

CAWS did not support Options 7a, 7b and 7c because they would not deliver material benefits to their communities in terms of traffic volumes and safety. Options 8a, 8b, 9a, 9c were not supported because of environmental and other reasons. Options 10a and 10b were not favoured at this time because of minimal improvements in journey times.

Options 10c and 10d were supported because they offered the greatest improvements in journey times and value for money. It was also noted that these routes would run closer to existing recent residential developments and likely future developments.

Wiltshire West Scouts

The Assistant District Commissioner expressed concern about Option 10d which would pass close to land owned by local Scout Groups and other groups from outside the district have used for many years for camping and outdoor activities.

A36/A350 Corridor Alliance

They did not consider that road building was a solution and that the Department of Transport's scheme assessment methodology diverted national and local government away from thinking about sustainable transport and environmental issues.

Reference was made to the Westbury Eastern Bypass Inquiry, and the difficulties associated with improving the A36/A350 corridor route in Hampshire and Dorset. The climate emergency and carbon cost of providing and using infrastructure should be taken into account. The group criticised government policy and indicated that Wiltshire Council should not be following their lead.

A36/A350 Corridor Alliance concluded that the Melksham Bypass proposal is a dinosaur. There is no place in the future for evolutionary dead-ends. It really is time that Wiltshire Council moved into the 21st Century and learned how to do land-use and transport planning for a sustainable future.

Alternative options suggested during the consultation

The letters, emails and questionnaire responses suggested a small number of alternative routes for the bypass and variations of the consultation options. These were:

- A36/A46 connection should be constructed to the east of Bath so that that the A36 becomes the main north-south route.
- Option 10d should be extended to the south to join the A350 south of the current A350/A361 junction at Semington.
- Option 10d should be diverted to connect directly into the current A350/A361 junction at Semington, rather than to the A361 east of that junction.
- The northern end of the bypass routes should be extended to a new junction at the southern Lacock junction on the A350.

Other suggestions for alterations to the existing road included:

- Removing the traffic signals at the entrance to Asda on the A350.
- Improving the Aldi/MacDonalds junction on the A350.
- Changing the traffic signals on Farmers Roundabout

These suggestions will be investigated, and the conclusions reported to the Council's Cabinet when the response to the consultation is considered.

Summary of the responses to the consultation

1. There were 175 letters and emails in response to the consultation, and 1,018 responses to the on-line questionnaire.
2. The local town and parish councils were consulted and made a number of comments regarding the scheme and their preferences on options.
3. Melksham Town Council preferred an eastern route, but not one that incorporated Eastern Way.
4. Melksham Without Parish Council preferred an eastern route which did not have an environmental impact upon the community of Bowerhill.
5. Seend Parish Council thought that Option 8b should not be discounted and raised some concerns about Option 10c should it be adopted. Option 10d was considered to have the most detrimental effect.
6. Semington Parish Council were not in favour of Option 8b because of the environmental impact and would object to Option 10d. They considered Option 10c to be the least worst option.
7. Great Hinton Parish Council felt that Option 10d was the worst possible one in every way and Option 10b to be the best by far.
8. Steeple Ashton Parish Council agreed that a bypass for Melksham is desirable, but the route had no direct impact on the parish.
9. Comments were received from Natural England about Spye Park SSSI, Canal and Rivers Trust regarding the canals, and from the National Trust regarding Lacock. TransWilts commented on the importance of access to Melksham Station and the British Horse society on the importance of bridleway and rights of way. The comments from the organisations identified factors that would need to be taken into account in developing any proposals further.
10. The majority of the questionnaire responses received were from individuals (962) with a small number from businesses or organisations (42). Most of the responses were local with 886 being from Melksham or within 5 miles. The responses from businesses and organisations responding were also predominantly locally based.
11. Those responding mainly used the A350 through Melksham for shopping (670) and recreation trips (633) and used it mainly outside the peak hours (695) and at weekends (674).

12. The main concerns about the current situation on the A350 in Melksham and Beanacre were about walking and cycling facilities (56.6%), landscape and scenery (50.4%) and traffic congestion and delays (50.2%).
13. Most respondents supported the need for an improvement to the A350 at Beanacre and Melksham (594 Yes/406 No).
14. Those not supporting the need for an improvement gave various reasons but the most frequently mentioned were:
 - Adverse effect on land and countryside (110)
 - Existing road works well (67)
 - High cost of scheme (48)
 - Bypass not needed (44)
 - Concern about more houses in Melksham (43)
15. Of the non-road options based on the first choice of option the most preferred options were:
 - Option 6 – Walking and cycling (41.2%)
 - Option 4 – Rail Improvements (37.3%)
 - Option 5 – Bus Improvements (32.3%)
16. Option 2 – Road User Pricing and Option 1 – Workplace Parking Levy had the least support of any option (6.7% and 6.5%).
17. Of the road options the most preferred options based on the first choice were:
 - Option 7a – Existing road northern section (31.0%)
 - Option 10c - Long eastern bypass (30.8%)
 - Option 7b – Existing road central section (29.9%)
 - Option 7c – Existing road southern section (27.8%)
 - Option 10d – Longest eastern bypass (20.8%)
18. Of the road options the western routes, Options 9a, 9b and 9c had the least support (11.9%, 11.0% and 10.8%).
19. The reasons given for choosing Options 1 to 6 were often that they would provide an alternative to the use of the car, would discourage car use, and would have less impact on the landscape and environment.
20. The main factors influencing choice of route option were generally the potential impact on the countryside and residential properties. There were a range of other factors given, including cost, effectiveness, adverse effects of alternative routes, and the potential or otherwise of in-fill housing development.

21. The chosen options were considered to improve the following:
- Traffic congestion and delays (85.7%)
 - Road safety (81.6%)
 - Impact of traffic on residential properties (78.1%)
 - Landscape and scenery (67.7%)
 - Walking and Cycling (65.6%)
 - Employment and businesses (65.2%)
22. The majority of responses would like to see more facilities for walking and cycling within Melksham come forward as complementary measures to a potential A350 Bypass (Yes 682/No 318).
23. There were 270 comments that wanted to see more cycle paths and routes, 185 wanted improvements to walking and cycling facilities, and 54 wanted walking improvements. There were a variety of suggestions and requests made, including the standard of walking and cycling infrastructure, facilities required to encourage walking and cycling, and suggestions for new routes which should be provided.
24. The opportunity was provided to enable further comments and the opportunity was taken to reinforce views previously given regarding the need or otherwise for the schemes and on particular options.
25. Other matters that were raised frequently in the questionnaire included the potential adverse effect of options on the countryside, concern about additional housing as a result of the scheme, the reduction in traffic following Covid-19, the effects on wildlife and biodiversity, the impact on residential areas and their access to open spaces, and that the journey time savings do not justify a scheme.
26. There were 175 letters and emails received in response to the consultation, which reflected similar concerns to those raised in the questionnaire responses described above.
27. There were letters and emails regarding specific route options, with many indicating that Option 10d was not considered a suitable option (89), because of its adverse effect in terms of countryside (74), wildlife (57), cost (45), canal (33), tourism (28) and flooding (23).
28. An alternative route option, three variations of the consultation options and alterations to the existing road were suggested, which will be investigated further and reported to Cabinet in due course.

How the consultation will be used

The information collected through the consultation process will be used to develop and inform the assessment of the options in more detail, and potentially help to identify a short list, or preferred option, for further informal consultation. The views of organisations with specialist knowledge of the area are particularly important in helping to refine and assess the proposals.

It should be noted that, as set out in the consultation material, the consultation is not a public 'vote' for the most popular route or option. There are many factors to be taken into account in determining the preferred option, including emerging guidance on carbon impacts, ecology, public health and road safety, landscape, archaeology, employment and the economy, flood risk and drainage, cost and economic benefit. The preferred option may be a variation of the options being consulted on as the design will be refined in response to the consultation.

The assessment of scheme options will need to be in accordance with Department for Transport (DfT) guidance, primarily as set out in DfT's Transport Analysis Guidance (WebTAG). The Outline Business Case (OBC) for the scheme will have to make the case for obtaining DfT funding as the Council would not be able to fund a major scheme of this type from its own resources. The preparation of the OBC will require the consideration of the strategic, economic, financial, management and commercial cases.

The response to the consultation, outcome of further investigation and consideration of the alternatives will be reported to Wiltshire Council's Cabinet, probably later in 2021, when a decision will be made on how to proceed regarding this scheme.

Melksham Bypass

Public consultation report

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Proposed A350 Melksham Bypass Appendices

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Appendix 2 - Responses to Question 11 (Why have you chosen your most preferred option?)

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Appendix 4 – Responses to Question 15 (Do you have any further comments about these proposals?)

Responses to question 9

Why do you not support the need for an improvement to the A350 at Beanacre and Melksham?

Why do you not support the need for an improvement	Number
Adverse effect on land and countryside	110
Existing Road works well	67
High cost of scheme	48
Bypass not needed	44
Concern about more houses in Melksham	43
Farmers Roundabout has helped	41
Adverse environmental considerations	40
Traffic is better as more people are working from home (Covid-19 impact)	34
Adverse effect on wildlife and ecology	32
Only moves problem elsewhere	31
Reduce traffic rather than build roads	28
Adverse effect on residential properties	27
Traffic and noise pollution with the scheme	24
New roads tend to increase traffic	22
Should improve public transport instead	20
Journey time saving does not justify scheme	19
Climate change emergency	18
Money could be spent better elsewhere	18
Will reduce access to countryside from residential areas	18
Adverse effect on Bowerhill	17
Westbury needs a bypass first	16
Improve walking and cycling	15
Improve existing road instead	15
Concern about insufficient facilities in town with additional housing	12
Beanacre residents knew what they were moving into	9
Melksham already has a bypass	9
Adverse effect on residential areas, schools, and road safety with shorter eastern options	7
Electric cars will reduce pollution and noise	7
Adverse effect on canal	6
Adverse effect on farms and agriculture	5
Concern about road safety with the scheme	5
Improve town centre facilities instead	5
Cuts off canal from Bowerhill residents	4
Increased flood risk	4

Why do you not support the need for an improvement	Number
Need to reduce car dependency	4
Adverse effect on Giles Wood	3
Adverse effect on property values	3
Devizes needs improving instead	3
Remove unnecessary junctions at Aldi and Asda	3
Adverse effect on local villages	2
Bradford on Avon needs a bypass instead	2
Bypass of Beanacre but not a long Melksham Bypass	2
Consider alternatives to road building first	2
Invest in high speed broadband instead	2
Just improve Asda and Bath Road junctions	2
Other roads need improving instead	2
Repair the existing roads instead	2
Risk to mental health from loss of green space	2
Should be sending freight by rail	2
Should explore options to reduce traffic	2
Should improve cycle facilities	2
This is another result of hgvs being deflected from Bath	2
Traffic problems are worse in Westbury	2
Unclear if costs and destruction are justifiable given limited benefits relating to localised traffic problems	2
Working from home reduces need to travel	2
A bypass provides the belief that more traffic and higher speeds is acceptable	1
A bypass to the east would encircle the town in roads	1
A new route would be a hindrance to those that live in the area	1
A350 has been widened from M4 with a bottleneck at Melksham	1
Adding cycle lanes and pedestrian facilities instead	1
Adverse effect around Shaw and Roundponds of some options	1
Adverse effect of children walking to school	1
Adverse effect of western routes on golf course and Shaw	1
Adverse effect on residential properties in Lacock	1
Adverse effect on small businesses that rely on the support of the canal boats	1
Adverse effect on tourism	1
Adverse effects of eastern routes	1
Adverse impact on restoring Wilts and Berks canal	1
Against take up of greenfield farming/equestrian land through Melksham Forest/Sandridge Lane	1
All other measures should be tested first. A bypass should be last resort	1
Already a subway between town and the station	1
Asda, McDonalds and Aldi should not have been placed on the main road	1

Why do you not support the need for an improvement	Number
Beanacre would benefit from changes to the road passing through it but not a bypass	1
Benefits of scheme would not be very significant	1
Better to introduce weight restriction in Beanacre	1
Building a bypass would not benefit the businesses on the existing road	1
Building new roads is a short-term fix	1
Bypass will not be used by travellers going from Chippenham to Trowbridge or Devizes	1
Bypass would stop people visiting Melksham	1
Cannot be justified by the small benefit to residents of Beanacre	1
Car use will go down	1
Carbon implications of project need to be assessed	1
Concern about adverse effect on Seend Cleeve with options 10c and 10d. Western options preferred	1
Concern about impact of western routes	1
Current situation affects very few, the proposed changes would affect many	1
Damage to the neighbourhood	1
Devizes and Westbury are much more of a bottleneck	1
Disruption during construction	1
Disruption to local towns and villages	1
Do not need any more roads	1
Does not represent value for money	1
Don't encourage more traffic. Even electric vehicles deposit minute fragments of rubber and brake dust	1
Establish Melksham as a green town promoting walking and cycling	1
Ever increasing traffic levels are not sustainable	1
Following Brexit, the population will decrease with less cars	1
Government needs to change tax regimes to discourage travel	1
Highways England's preferred route to Poole is via A36 or A34 not A350	1
If it was a problem, it should have sorted out at the same time as Semington was	1
I'm concerned about some of the routes	1
Improve rail network	1
Improve the traffic lights on existing route	1
Introduce traffic calming in Beanacre instead	1
It is only the traffic signals at Asda that are a problem	1
It needs push to cleaner forms of transport	1
It would have a negative effect on surrounding areas	1
Just connect A350 north of Beanacre to Melksham-Calne Road	1
Melksham has enough shops and businesses	1
Money should be spent on electric vehicle infrastructure	1
Move the houses in Beanacre instead	1

Why do you not support the need for an improvement	Number
New roads just encourage car use	1
No one travelling to Trowbridge will use it	1
Only a problem when road at Staverton is closed because of flooding	1
Only needs a feeder road from north-east of Melksham to serve the new housing developments	1
Particular concern about Option 10d	1
People not knowing how to drive is the problem	1
Problem is caused by highways authorities deliberately directing hgvs on to A350 as route to Poole	1
Problems with access from villages into fast traffic	1
Reduce car traffic to make more space for those with disabilities and goods vehicles	1
Reduce speeding in residential areas	1
Relocate one or two supermarkets to eastern side of town	1
Remove Bath Road and Asda traffic signals	1
Required at Melksham but not Beanacre	1
Risk of increased flooding	1
Road building does not improve congestion and emissions over the longer term	1
Roads are not a long-term solution to congestion	1
Salisbury needs a bypass instead	1
Scheme will only benefit Beanacre residents	1
Scheme would have a huge negative impact	1
Shorter routes would not bypass Melksham	1
Should improve public transport along route	1
Should not encourage traffic in the vicinity of Melksham	1
Some routes do not make use of Option 7c which suggests building a bypass would not solve the problem	1
Suggest mini-roundabout at Westlands Lane	1
Support the need to resolve Beanacre	1
The economic, environmental and traffic cases are made on out of date, skewed evidence	1
The government is soon to launch a new green agenda	1
The only traffic delay is caused by McDonalds/Aldi junction	1
The original reason for doing it have changed and the whole scheme should be reconsidered	1
There are too many people and too many cars	1
Town is dead and will get worse with scheme	1
Traffic has increased considerably since the Semington Bypass was built	1
Traffic in Melksham and Beanacre has not increased in years	1
Traffic lights at Farmers Roundabout need sorting out first	1
Western routes would have less impact	1
Widening a road does nothing to take traffic away from residential areas	1

Why do you not support the need for an improvement	Number
Will just cause bottleneck at West Ashton and Yarnbrook	1
Would benefit some town homeowners but have huge negative effect on those living in the countryside	1
Would have adverse social impact	1
Would like to see up to date analysis of traffic	1
Yarnbrook and Westbury should be a higher priority	1

Responses to question 11

Question 10 asked which options you would like to see come forward, ranked in order of preference. It should be noted that respondents could choose more than one first choice. Question 11 asked 'Why have you chosen your most preferred option?'. The comments may have referred to more than one option in some cases, and may be repeated in different sections below.

Why have you chosen Option 1 - Workplace Parking Levy
To encourage more use of public transport
Lower land use and environmental impact
Best idea yet
Least impact on where I live
Other options only move the problems to another area
Melksham has already lost significant amounts of open space
To reduce land taken for roads
Loathe to see residents who have chosen to buy properties way from main roads suddenly find it passes their back door
The road is functioning as it is
Effect of bypass on countryside
Opportunity to provide out of town park and ride hub
Limited impact on environment
Would help represent the real cost of driving through Melksham
To avoid adverse effect on canal
Best value for money and minimum disruption will come from improving existing route
Bypass is not necessary
To encourage more use of public transport
I think it makes sense
The present A350 is quite sufficient for my use. People who drive to work should have designated parking and pay a small fee.

Why have you chosen Option 2 - Road User Pricing
Improvements in Melksham rail facilities would reduce traffic
Very little impact on residents and best value for money
Wiltshire needs to start taking the lead in encouraging unsustainable road use reduction
Most environmentally friendly option
Traffic demand management is the only viable option as we need to reduce carbon
Need a credible cycle option from Melksham to Chippenham
With climate change we should be discouraging car use and encouraging public transport use
More investment in public transport required to give people viable alternative to the car
Impact is less harmful than other proposals
Best long term option and does not provide a particularly enlarged boundary to be infilled with more housing

Why have you chosen Option 2 - Road User Pricing

Best for quality of life and environment

Wiltshire Council acknowledged the climate emergency and needs to aim to decarbonise transport.

Roads are too busy currently

Need to be reducing traffic not encouraging it

Climate change is the most important thing to consider, especially for the young

Does not build a road on eastern edge of Bowerhill

Less damage to countryside

Greatest value for local community from a greater-good perspective

Best value and long term growth option

Loathe to see residents who have chosen to buy properties way from main roads suddenly find it passes their back door

Need to reduce car use in Melksham and the surrounding area. Many journeys are very short

Must invest in alternatives to road transport

A new route will cost a lot

Would help represent the real cost of driving through Melksham

To bring the relationship between personal use and social/environmental/physical ill health and cost closer together

Least impact on local rural areas, flood plains and countryside. Using already built infrastructure and not spending millions over-developing an area that has little or no means of supporting additional traffic

Why have you chosen Option 3 - HGV Restrictions

There are too many lorries

Too much traffic and hgvs going through Melksham

Better for all residents

Roads do not need improvement. Traffic is not a major issue. Money should be spent on other more important community issues.

Anything other than a bypass

Improvement to rail and restrictions on weights will reduce haulage users

Least impact on residential areas and villages

Least detrimental effect on Melksham

We should be encouraging the transfer of goods via rail.

Minimise changes to current landscape

Least destruction to the countryside especially the cherished Kennet and Avon canal.

other options need to be addressed before building/making another route around melksham

HGV volume and pollution is getting worse

because my house is falling to bits.

Too many heavy goods vehicles pass through Melksham really bad

Because I have thought about this for years

Least impact on green field sites

Minimising heavy lorry traffic should improve the current situation. Shifting the problem to another area of Melksham will not.

The 350 is no longer suitable for the type and amount of daily traffic that uses it.

Restrictions would help with air quality and safety

Why have you chosen Option 3 - HGV Restrictions
Feel something needs to be done with volume of traffic, increase safety, move hgv to alternative routes.
Because I'm a resident who is affected by the present amount of congestion
Impacts less on current facilities
HGV restrictions would also improve pedestrian and residential position. Alongside a bypass to the west.
Least impact on countryside.
Removes primary from Beanacre and Melksham, improves air and noise pollution, less standing traffic
Minimal impact to current countryside, maintains full access to recreational facilities such as canal and Giles Wood, vital for wellbeing
Taking heavy polluting vehicles off the road is a first requirement
Most benefit overall for the greatest amount of people. Overall improvements to quality of life in and around Melksham plus significant improvement for road users
Because there's too much congestion and accidents on existing routes
HGV traffic is the most damaging and intrusive user group.
We need LESS traffic, especially HGV's, not more traffic, on the A350.
It's my preferred option out of the choice
Because I don't want heavy vehicles on a bypass. I don't want the bypass either
Lower land use and environmental impact
Freight must be carried by rail routes
More HGV traffic should be replaced by goods trains.
Everybody knows that HGVs cause more nuisance and pollution than other vehicles, yet we are expected to accept this as a price for progress
HGVs are mostly through traffic that could and should use alternative routes that would be more efficient while creating less environment impact (noise, road wear/damage etc.)
Combining improvements in public transport, reducing HGV use and improving the existing route offer are lower cost and reflect Govt green policy and likely changes in vehicle technology
Lorries do the damage and noise, increased since the bridge ban in Bath. We don't need to build more roads and cause more disruption to other villages and the beautiful countryside.
Reduce pollution danger and wear and tear on smaller routes
As a resident the large trucks/commercial traffic should be taken away from the centre of Melksham
The congestion is getting worse with every passing day.
HGV restrictions in conjunction with a 40mph bypass (60mph is unnecessary and will have profound impacts on nearby residents).
More HGVs are using the A350 because there are diversions in place because the A36 in Bath is closed to them. Bath's problem should not be moved to Melksham.
Better infrastructure and public transport coupled with less HGV traffic would make a big difference
No extra roads
To keep HGV and through traffic away from the town centre and residential areas
Because more can be done through other measures before building a whole new bypass which has a massive environmental cost
Hgvs cause most noise and damage to both environment and building

Why have you chosen Option 3 - HGV Restrictions

Why spend millions on a new road when it just moved the same problem elsewhere? HGV restrictions would have a significant impact to current congestion

Don't want the road

I have to travel from Chippenham to Melksham 5 days a week and the amount of HGV's that have been diverted travel along here is ridiculous. I am forever stuck behind these lorries and it is impossible to overtake or get past them unless you are lucky enough for the traffic lights by Whitehall to give you a chance. Traffic has significantly increased recently on this route

None of those options are particularly inspiring.

Least harmful. Most effective.

We need to cut road capacity, get your thinking into the modern world, building roads and houses will just increase traffic, we need active travel, better public transport and a greener place to live.

I think it makes sense

Lesser impact on the overall environment

Least impact on local rural areas, flood plains and countryside. Using already built infrastructure and not spending millions over-developing an area that has little or no means of supporting additional traffic

Least disruption

Less traffic !!!

Roads do not need improvement. Traffic is not a major issue. Money should be spent on other more important community issues.

Option 4 - Rail Improvements

It is the least damaging to the countryside around Melksham. I do not believe there is a need for more infrastructure around Melksham. Train freight yes, traffic no.

Improvements in Melksham's rail facilities would reduce the amount of traffic on Melksham's roads.

If public transport links and regularity were improved (more trains to Chippenham/ Trowbridge etc) I would be much more likely to use them

Improvements on rail and bus services to reduce the amount of people relying on cars

We are in a climate catastrophe. Encouraging more driving is completely immoral and our children will remember these types of expansion that we performed when we knew it was morally wrong.

Educate people to use local Rail and Bus routes and to car share - Spend monies to increase services and carriages from Melksham Train Station and increase local bus routes to Melksham

It is vital that we achieve modal shift to public transport, bus and train for environmental and congestion reasons

Improved public transport is a priority

With the current climate crisis, we should be discouraging car usage & encouraging public transport usage

there needs to be more investment in public transport to give people a viable alternative to the car.

Affordable sustainable transport should be the first option to reduce traffic flow through Melksham

We need less road building and more modern greener solutions

Rail and busses should be more of a focus as they are already there and do need improvements

Option 4 - Rail Improvements
Less impact on environment
Health, Community and environmental benefits for moving away from increased car use
Least environmental, visual and noise impact to beautiful countryside
The station is hardly used, if my family or I want to use a train we must first travel to Chippenham or Trowbridge. It is sad that a town with a population as large as Melksham (and growing rapidly!) does not have a good rail connection
We are in the midst of a climate emergency, and road transport is one of the biggest contributors. We should be investing in alternatives to road travel = cycling, walking, bus and rail (including rail freight). Note that by improving rail, bus, cycle and walking infrastructure, it will help reduce the number of cars on the A350, thereby helping achieve this scheme's aims.
Successful bus and train network would completely revolutionise the town.
Rail and bus improvements could reduce need for commuting via private transport
This improve commuter links to other towns
I think public transport is always a priority
Money would be better spent improving public transport. School traffic is a major factor, with the roads being noticeably less busy during school holidays. Work needs to be done around improving public transport, walkways and cycle ways and encouraging parents to walk or car share.
Best for the environment and local people
To get traffic off the roads.
The most important thing is to improve train/bus/cycling infrastructure and spend the money in Westbury which desperately needs a relief road past the trading estate.
Reduce the need to a bypass by improving train and bus services
We should be looking at more local improvements that encourage use of public transport or walking and cycling.
So more people can use the train
We should challenge the underlying assumption that mass road travel in private vehicles is sustainable
Incremental improvements to existing roads make sense, but we must rethink how people travel.
Look at alternatives to a bypass
There's a climate crisis, eco emergency, air quality crisis, obesity crisis and a respiratory pandemic. We don't need yet more cars, lorries, pollution and noise and C19 has proved we don't need to be travelling all the time to work/shops/school.
Cost-effectiveness
Alternative modes of transport (bus, train, cycleways, and walkways) should be provided
To improve carbon footprint and local public transport options
Economically and ecologically best for Melksham
Wiltshire Council acknowledged the climate emergency and needs to aim to decarbonise transport.
Public transport reduces cars if done properly
It seems the best value and will have the least impact on inhabitants. "Green" and "Eco" disadvantages are usually temporary.
Better Rail and other public transport options will reduce traffic in general
Alternative modes of transport (bus, train, cycleways, and walkways) should be provided
Environmental
We need to augment public transport

Option 4 - Rail Improvements
Public transport must also be made a priority
Improved rail bus and active travel is the best solution and essential to end the climate emergency.
Improvement on public transport and walking and cycling would take existing pressure of single car use on the current A350.
This ought to be obvious to a responsible transport authority. Public transport, active transport first. Road building not at all
Offer alternatives to driving (train, bus, cycles for local journeys)
I think enabling people to take public transport - because it's been improved - or to safely cycle or walk is a more suitable all-round option.
Thinking ahead and in order to protect our environment we should consider ways of reducing the amount of traffic on the existing road.
If the rail and bus lines were improved, then this could reduce traffic.
Support commuting using public transport, given the proportion of residents who work within a few minutes train ride, but currently drive because trains service is so poor.
Eco friendly planet no need for extra cars when we have a railway station!
The train station has come on leaps and bounds but it need not be stalled.
Improve public transport so people have a real alternative to car use
Active and public transport will be essential to recover from the pandemic and protect against climate emergency.
We don't have a railway station but if we did have one it would prevent a lot of cars on the road which is what we should be aiming for
Rail routes in Melksham make it impossible for this to be used. I have worked with lots of commuters who would prefer this to driving.
Combining improvements in public transport, reducing HGV use and improving the existing route offer are lower cost and reflect Govt green policy and likely changes in vehicle technology
As many more people are concerned about the environment, catering to this by improving public transport - making it eco-friendly - would also then have a positive economic impact for Melksham and surrounding areas.
More public transport is needed - we need to make less car journeys.
Should be trying to use other travel
Minimum impact on surrounding area, favours move from road to public transport
Lowest environmental impact on rural setting. Expanding road options will only increase traffic further
Spending money on safe cycling routes, pedestrian walkways and more public transport would greatly improve the lives of the residents of Melksham.
the rail facility is underutilised. The infrastructure already exists. All the other north and central wilts towns benefit from good rail links.
A decent public transport system works in almost all other countries in Europe why can't it work in Wiltshire?
Public transport improvements / changes to work and shopping should stop need for more roads
Must invest in alternatives to road transport
More funding for public transports and walking/cycling should be the priority.
To encourage fewer people to drive.
Need better Rail options

Option 4 - Rail Improvements
A bus or rail route is the most suitable
Public transport and walking/cycling are most beneficial to the health of both the environment and the public, and would also reduce the amount of local traffic
Would reduce the vehicular traffic
Improvements to rail network
other non-car/ lorry options as public transport needs much more attention as do eco-friendly methods esp. cycling
Because I don't want you to build a bypass. Just improve the existing A350, improve the rail links and improve the bus links
Has less impact on the green environment, cheaper, and less opportunity for infill expansion and thus adding further pressure.
Wiltshire residents need a long-term solution to traffic issues
Because busses and trains is where a broke council should be focusing their efforts
The rail access into Melksham is a disgrace. The money would be better spent on improving rail links.
Better infrastructure and public transport coupled with less HGV traffic would make a big difference
Least land grab, options which destroy open countryside are wrong. The government is rightly turning away from such schemes in preference for greener solutions.
would rather promote use of public transport
Invest in better public transport and existing infrastructure improvements
Public transport helps to remove single occupant traffic congestion
The public transport infrastructure should be improved.
No need for a bypass
None of those options are particularly inspiring.
Least harmful. Most effective.
The rail line through Melksham can and should be redoubled and buses made to stop at the station
Rail can be quicker and keep traffic off the roads
Less impact on the environment
Seems the most sensible option
Best value for money, serves a wider area
More cost effective and environmentally friendly
To tackle Climate Change and achieve net zero emissions by 2050 we must reduce significantly HGV traffic on our roads. New diesel and petrol cars are to be banned by 2030, so to reduce HGV emissions we should be making much greater use of or railways for transporting goods.
Because it provides the greatest benefit for the smallest impact on existing property and amenity landscape.
They would help the traffic situation and remain in line with Wiltshire Council's commitment to work to improve climate change. And with structures put in place to reduce speeding, it would be much safer.
To get traffic movement reduced
Least affect to nature and green places
We need to cut road capacity, get your thinking into the modern world, building roads and houses will just increase traffic, we need active travel, better public transport and a greener place to live.
I think it makes sense

Option 4 - Rail Improvements

Lesser impact on the overall environment

Because your destroying the countryside

These alone can improve the living environment for all in, and surrounding Melksham

Melksham needs better transport connections would discourage road users

reduces the impact on the existing rural environment and overall disruption to the area

Least disruptive and lowest impact on environment

Least impact on local rural areas, flood plains and countryside. Using already built infrastructure and not spending millions over-developing an area that has little or no means of supporting additional traffic

Least damage to environment.

Least damaging environmentally and least likely to results in further housing

Roads do not need improvement. Traffic is not a major issue. money should be spent on other more important community issues.

Least impact on environment and local residents

Better for environment and access for people

Least change as possible please but offer alternative option for travel

Improve access for existing residents, don't sacrifice their physical and mental health to make money from housing developments

Environmental impact

Why have you chosen Option 5 - Bus Improvements

Wiltshire needs to start taking a lead, as have cities such as Bristol and London, in encouraging unsustainable road use reduction.

If public transport links and regularity were improved (more trains to Chippenham/ Trowbridge etc) I would be much more likely to use them

Improvements on rail and bus services to reduce the amount of people relying on cars

We are in a climate catastrophe. Encouraging more driving is completely immoral and our children will remember these types of expansion that we performed when we knew it was morally wrong.

Educate people to use local Rail and Bus routes and to car share - Spend monies to increase services and carriages from Melksham Train Station and increase local bus routes to Melksham

It is vital that we achieve modal shift to public transport, bus and train for environmental and congestion reasons

Many rural communities have a poor public transport infrastructure, if we had good bus services at sensible costing and educating people to use the bus it would rest cars and also help the climate

Because buses have a huge potential to reduce car dependency and if done correctly would reduce the need for major road building. Have you considered a dedicated busway to serve the new residential areas that the bypass will enclose?

Because as above with the current climate crisis we should be discouraging car usage & encouraging public transport usage. However, to do that there needs to be more investment in public transport to give people a viable alternative to the car.

Health, Community and environmental benefits for moving away from increased car use

Currently the bus service in this area is pitiful. and by improving it, you would take more local traffic off the roads which, in turn, would reduce congestion.

Why have you chosen Option 5 - Bus Improvements

We don't need more roads, just better management of public transport and better and safer walking and cycle routes

We are in the midst of a climate emergency, and road transport is one of the biggest contributors. We should be investing in alternatives to road travel = cycling, walking, bus and rail

By improving rail, bus, cycle and walking infrastructure, it will help reduce the number of cars on the A350, thereby helping achieve this scheme's aims.

Successful bus and train network would completely revolutionise the town.

Rail & bus improvements could reduce need for commuting via private transport

We should be looking at more local improvements that encourage use of public transport or walking and cycling.

Money would be better spent improving public transport.

I think public transport is always a priority

The most important thing is to improve train/bus/cycling infrastructure and spend the money in Westbury which desperately needs a relief road past the trading estate

Reduce the need to a bypass by improving train and bus services

We should challenge the underlying assumption that mass road travel in private vehicles is sustainable

There's a climate crisis, eco emergency, air quality crisis, obesity crisis and a respiratory pandemic. We don't need yet more cars, lorries, pollution and noise and C19 has proved we don't need to be travelling all the time to work/shops/school.

Alternative modes of transport (bus, train, cycleways, and walkways) should be provided

To improve carbon footprint and local public transport options

Wiltshire Council acknowledged the climate emergency and needs to aim to decarbonise transport.

Public transport reduces cars if done properly

The much used bus link to Bath that has ceased to link the surrounding villages now means people have to drive where they would have taken the bus. These are simple, affordable and greener options.

Improvement on public transport and walking and cycling would take existing pressure of single car use on the current A350.

They would help the traffic situation and remain in line with Wiltshire Council's commitment to work to improve climate change

If the rail and bus lines were improved, then this could reduce traffic.

Improve public transport so people have a real alternative to car use

Active and public transport will be essential to recover from the pandemic and protect against climate emergency

Wiltshire council has declared a climate emergency. "Future technology" or "Electric cars" are not sufficient to address this

Public transport is far too infrequent and expensive in Wiltshire. As a teacher I cannot reliably commute by public transport from Trowbridge to Chippenham.

Combining improvements in public transport, reducing HGV use and improving the existing route offer are lower cost and reflect Govt green policy and likely changes in vehicle technology

Why have you chosen Option 5 - Bus Improvements

I think that an improvement to the existing road as well as to the public transport we have available would be much more beneficial to Melksham and the environment. As many more people are concerned about the environment, catering to this by improving public transport - making it eco-friendly - would also then have a positive economic impact for Melksham and surrounding areas.

More public transport is needed - we need to make less car journeys

encourage fewer journeys rather than building more roads.

Spending money on safe cycling routes, pedestrian walkways and more public transport would greatly improve the lives of the residents of Melksham.

bus services and safe walking and cycling routes must be improved for the sake of future generations

A decent public transport system works in almost all other countries in Europe why can't it work in Wiltshire?

Public transport improvements / changes to work and shopping should stop need for more roads

Must invest in alternatives to road transport

More funding for public transports and walking/cycling should be the priority

To encourage fewer people to drive.

A bus or rail route is the most suitable

public transport and walking/cycling are most beneficial to the health of both the environment and the public, and would also reduce the amount of local traffic

Just improve the existing A350, improve the rail links and improve the bus links

Wiltshire residents need a long-term solution to traffic issues

Better infrastructure and public transport coupled with less HGV traffic would make a big difference

Make improvements such as lower speed limits and development of the bus and train network.

would rather promote use of public transport

Invest in better public transport and existing infrastructure improvements

Public transport helps to remove single occupant traffic congestion

The public transport infrastructure should be improved.

Don't want the road

No need for a bypass

Least harmful. Most effective.

Less impact on the environment

Best value for money, serves a wider area

More cost effective and environmentally friendly

Its re the green impact on the environment and people in the area

They would help the traffic situation and remain in line with Wiltshire Council's commitment to work to improve climate change. And with structures put in place to reduce speeding, it would be much safer.

Because it provides the greatest benefit for the smallest impact on existing property and amenity landscape.

Least affect to nature and green places

We need to cut road capacity, get your thinking into the modern world, building roads and houses will just increase traffic, we need active travel, better public transport and a greener place to live.

I think it makes sense

Why have you chosen Option 5 - Bus Improvements

No need to change the road but improvements to public transport are always good
These alone can improve the living environment for all in, and surrounding Melksham
reduces the impact on the existing rural environment and overall disruption to the area
Least disruptive and lowest impact on environment
Least impact on local rural areas, flood plains and countryside. Using already built infrastructure and not spending millions over-developing an area that has little or no means of supporting additional traffic
Least damage to environment.
Least damaging environmentally and least likely to results in further housing
Protecting the landscape of our countryside is of most importance
Roads do not need improvement. Traffic is not a major issue. money should be spent on other more important community issues.
Least impact on environment and local residents
Least change as possible please but offer alternative option for travel
Environmental impact

Why have you chosen Option 6 - Walking and Cycling

There is no footpath and no alternative cycle route along the A359 from Beanacre northwards
Wiltshire needs to start taking a lead, as have cities such as Bristol and London, in encouraging unsustainable road use reduction.
We are in a climate catastrophe. Encouraging more driving is completely immoral and our children will remember these types of expansion that we performed when we knew it was morally wrong.
There needs to be a credible cycle option from Melksham to Chippenham meeting the new government guidance
A designated Cycling path on that route would be ideal but I'm not sure if it would alleviate the traffic much but would certainly make cycling a less dangerous alternative
Need more cycle routes
Improvements to cycling areas and walking especially canal would be beneficial
Health, Community and environmental benefits for moving away from increased car use
Create appropriate climate for walking and cycling facilities
We don't need more roads, just better management of public transport and better and safer walking and cycle routes
We are in the midst of a climate emergency, and road transport is one of the biggest contributors. We should be investing in alternatives to road travel = cycling, walking, bus and rail (including rail freight). Note that by improving rail, bus, cycle and walking infrastructure, it will help reduce the number of cars on the A350, thereby helping achieve this scheme's aims.
Because our cycle network in Wiltshire needs to be better. It's rubbish in Melksham with only one side of town with a decent path.
Improve the cycle routes
We should be looking at more local improvements that encourage use of public transport or walking and cycling.
As a handywoman with aspirations making cycle provision to help access melksham and villages is important to me
Encourages cycling and then reduce traffic

Why have you chosen Option 6 - Walking and Cycling

The most important thing is to improve train/bus/cycling infrastructure and spend the money in Westbury which desperately needs a relief road past the trading estate

It will do most to benefit the largest number of people / journeys, have little or no harmful environmental impact unlike some other options, improve people's mental and physical health by encouraging active travel, and help reduce emissions, noise, air pollution and road danger.

Encourage more cycling and walking

We should challenge the underlying assumption that mass road travel in private vehicles is sustainable. Incremental improvements to existing roads make sense, but we must rethink how people travel.

Please cater for cyclists. The A350/A420 junction is lethal for cyclists. Of the bypass options, the western routes look better for the environment.

Improved walkways for safe pedestrian use

Wiltshire Council acknowledged the climate emergency and needs to aim to decarbonise transport.

Better management of existing road for users, offer alternatives to driving (train, bus, cycles for local journeys)

I think enabling people to take public transport - because it's been improved - or to safely cycle or walk is a more suitable all-round option

Thinking ahead and in order to protect our environment we should consider ways of reducing the amount of traffic on the existing road.

Active and public transport will be essential to recover from the pandemic and protect against climate emergency

Lack of safe dedicated cycle paths

I cycle

encourage fewer journeys rather than building more roads.

Should be trying to use other travel

To ease congestion by vehicles on roads as much as possible and to give incentive for people to exercise more in public.

bus services and safe walking and cycling routes must be improved for the sake of future generations

Hgv restrictions, walking cycling, bypass

I'm a cyclist and non-car driver. during lockdown so many more started cycling and walking with reduced traffic. This is the way forward for the modern world.

Personally, I'd much rather walk and cycle in the local area, but much of the A350 doesn't have footpaths or cycle lanes, and I'm forced to share with fast moving traffic.

We need better cycle routes. Safer routes that families can ride.

To encourage fewer people to drive.

public transport and walking/cycling are most beneficial to the health of both the environment and the public, and would also reduce the amount of local traffic

Walking and cycling are also good for people's mental and physical health, which then has a positive effect on our NHS also.

Having other safe ways to travel would give plenty including ourselves the opportunity to take an alternative instead of a single car

I ride a bike to school I go the long way due to no paths.

Improve cycling options separately

No need for a bypass

Why have you chosen Option 6 - Walking and Cycling
Because it's important! Adding more roads will only ever increase traffic. Think outside the box, be innovative!!! The solutions are out there.
Do not want a bypass running near residential properties
Investment needs to encourage pedestrians and cyclists.
We should be preserving the countryside and getting as many vehicles off the roads as possible, for our own health and that of the planet.
Least harmful. Most effective.
Best solution in my opinion
Avoid Bowerhill
More cost effective and environmentally friendly
Its re the green impact on the environment and people in the area
They would help the traffic situation and remain in line with Wiltshire Council's commitment to work to improve climate change. And with structures put in place to reduce speeding, it would be much safer.
Least affect to nature and green places
We need to cut road capacity, get your thinking into the modern world, building roads and houses will just increase traffic, we need active travel, better public transport and a greener place to live.
Because we need to start keeping Wiltshire fitter and healthier to protect our health services
Lesser impact on the overall environment
Because your destroying the countryside
We have a good walking area around Bowerhill. Please do not cut it in half with a bypass, that defeats the object.
For efficiency to benefit younger people
Because apart from walking and cycling there is nothing else to do in Melksham
Look after the roads you already have
Further capacity for motor traffic has always failed to resolve the issue of congestion.
These alone can improve the living environment for all in, and surrounding Melksham
Walking and cycling are healthier, cheaper and more eco-friendly than any other option
reduces the impact on the existing rural environment and overall disruption to the area
If people don't feel safe walking and cycling, then uptake in these activities as alternatives to motorised transport will be limited. 'Build it and they will come'.
Lack of safe cycling routes
Least impact on local rural areas, flood plains and countryside. Using already built infrastructure and not spending millions over-developing an area that has little or no means of supporting additional traffic
Least damage to environment.
Least damaging environmentally and least likely to results in further housing
Protecting the landscape of our countryside is of most importance
Roads do not need improvement. Traffic is not a major issue. money should be spent on other more important community issues.
least impact on environment and local residents
Minimising loss of existing countryside.
Most needed and practical and least disruption
Cost and smaller impact on majority of residents
Environmental impact

Why have you chosen Option 7a, 7b and 7c
Recently there has been improvements at Farmers Roundabout, I think improvements to the existing route would probably be the best solution
It is the least damaging to the countryside around Melksham. I do not believe there is a need for more infrastructure around Melksham
Least costly and least impact on area
Road can cope especially if improved
Very little impact on residents and best value for money
Anything other than a horrendous ugly bypass!
Current roads should be improved, not try to direct traffic elsewhere unnecessarily
Feel it would be more cost effective to upgrade existing route
I have just bought a house at Sandridge Place purely for the location. Peace, quiet and countryside being my main reason for moving from elsewhere
I want to limit the location for house building
Most appropriate route
Makes use of existing infrastructure
We should be solving the problem by reducing the amount of vehicles on the road and promoting EV usage in Wiltshire. We should not be building new roads.
Improve what we have not a new route
Least destruction to the countryside especially the cherished Kennet and Avon canal.
Some of these options just seem to shift the same issues to the other side of town affecting more people than Beanacre.
Traffic has been fine since the new farmers roundabout.
Improve pinch points and reduce traffic
Least environmental, visual and noise impact to beautiful countryside
No new bypass required
Improve existing road - no new road
An extra 3 or 4 minute improvement in traffic speed doesn't seem worth spending a lot, particularly at the moment
To upgrade current road
7a Improvements / upgrade to existing A350 route
Keeping the existing route or eastern side of Melksham.
Improve existing road rather than destroy countryside and local villages
I don't want more traffic near my home.
The bypass routes particularly crossing the Kennet and Avon canal are going to cause much environmental damage and loss of wildlife and building on a flood plain is not reasonable.
Least impact to existing residential properties with large improvements to A350 congestion
Better roads, but not at the detriment of the surrounding countryside and villages.
Why create two roads with traffic noise and pollution when you can keep that on the existing route.
Most preferred is update of existing A350. Less environmental impact and affect on residents.
Cheaper and less impact. £150m is madness.
To minimise impact on unspoilt countryside to south east of Melksham
Because there is absolutely no need for a new bypass and no justification for the adverse effects on environment, air and noise quality, traffic in areas near schools etc.
Because the road really only requires maintenance and minor changes. This risks less impact on the environments and the businesses in and around it.

Why have you chosen Option 7a, 7b and 7c
Least impact
Improving the existing road is the obvious answer
Less destructive to the wider environment, if you choose to live next to a main road then it's reasonable to expect there to be traffic! Don't push all the noise and pollution onto the lovely open countryside
Improvements should be made to the current road
No need for a bypass around Beanacre.
Upgrade the current road. Don't destroy countryside for another road.
Option which has the least impact on countryside and wildlife.
Just improve the road already there
I feel a bypass isn't the option. It will cause harm to wildlife, hedgehogs for example are already struggling. Also, a new bypass will cause a lot more flooding, homes will be at much higher risk
Upgrade less intrusive to countryside. Bypass unnecessary. Our countryside is precious and has been a saviour to many this year. Think of the wildlife!
Less ruination of our beautiful valley. Imagine all those road and headlights flooding across the valley at night. So tragic to inflict that
Affects the least housing areas.
There should be no more road building, it only serves to infill housing and create an urban sprawl
Making the A350 can be made better if you would really think about it. We don't need to go faster, just keep moving
No destruction of lovely Wiltshire countryside. Bypass always attracts more traffic, making things even worse
Just makes more common sense to improve what we have than spend millions on something very unpopular.
Use of existing route, least impact on nature, shortest distance, best use of a road to allow passing traffic north/south
Improve what is already there
Just make sense to me. Less spoiling of the countryside. keeps traffic away from Oak school otherwise there would be more and more going past it
We must preserve our lovely countryside for our children not hand it over to the car. Improving the existing A350 should be the priority. Use our money you would have spent on infrastructure we already have
The Western Way is already a bypass, just getting it working better. Especially the lights at Asda exit and the lights at Bath Road. That's where all the trouble starts
Can't see the sense behind spending all that money and destroying more countryside for just a few minutes saving. Change what's there already
It's cheaper and less damage to the environment as the damage is already done.
I use the A350 around melksham most days and there's nothing to warrant another bypass. how about considering more seriously to improve the existing road especially around farmers to Aldi
No more roads please.
Less environmental impact on the beautiful nature either side of Melksham
Least impact
Environmental impact and don't want to simply move the issues when they can be improved where the A350 currently is.

Why have you chosen Option 7a, 7b and 7c
Least amount of natural habitat destruction, improvements follows existing road network, no new noise or visual impact
Any other option than upgrading current A350 is daft and destructive. What about all those lights across open countryside, and headlights, no thanks!
Best thing to do. Others just destroy the countryside we all enjoy for a few minutes it saves on travel time
Don't need yet another road across the countryside. It's lovely out towards Lacock. Don't spoil it
It's all we need. Asda traffic lights are the main problem. That and the lights at Bath Road. Get rid of them and cars will flow much better
No additional routes across currently non road land
Just improve the existing A350, not add another road which will probably be a dual carriageway/truck road.
Most preferred option would be to improve the existing A359 route
Current bypass seems to work well for 85% of the time. Just needs upgrading around Asda/Farmers Roundabout up to Leekes for it to work even better.
Work with what's already there.
It's all we need. I use it every day and just cannot see the need for yet another bypass
The road we have is good, just needs some thought around Asda and Aldi. Beanacre is not a problem. I live there so should know
To avoid building on fields and lands around Melksham which will displace wildlife, lead to more housing and exacerbate flooding.
We simply cannot destroy the countryside east of melksham. The best option will be to expand the current A350 to dual carriageway (7b-7c)
No bypass
Improvements is all that is needed
The best thing to do. It's okay, just needs a bit of sorting out around Farmers Roundabout
Less destructive to the countryside. The more housing you have the more need for infrastructure.
Best for everybody. We have enough roads already
why change what works- just make it better
lowest environmental impact on rural setting. Expanding road options will only increase traffic further
My preferred routes focus on least destruction to countryside and key outside space whilst addressing the issues, adequately, of traffic congestion at the short key times during rush "hour".
Any change to existing route is an improvement
just improve what's already there
I don't think we need to destroy any more countryside around Melksham
All we need is for Wiltshire council to do what they should have done years ago and sort out the traffic lights around the Asda area. That is where all the delays start!!
To reduce land being taken for more roads which is impacting on flooding, traffic, pollution.
because it makes sense to work with what we already have
Any bypass is going to generate even more traffic - proven fact. What is already the reworks well, I use it every day and cannot see the problem. Just get Asda sorted
Why spend millions on a new road when it just moved the same problem elsewhere?
Least environmental impact whilst still improving traffic flow
Improve what is already in place.

Why have you chosen Option 7a, 7b and 7c
It is common sense to enhance existing road infrastructure in preference to destroying the countryside that makes Melksham a place that people want to live in and around.
Improving the or existing bypass, which does what is necessary by "bypassing" Melksham will undoubtedly be cheaper and cause less environmental turmoil
Build on existing investments, minimise unnecessary destruction of surrounding landscape, address root cause of traffic rather than encouraging increase flow
Least damage to countryside
It's the least environmentally damaging.
Because you already have a road system in place. Bowerhill has already been made large enough for the duelling which was always the original plan so why cause the upheaval to the countryside/villages etc
Minimum environmental impact and value for money potential. The goal should be to achieve the stated outcomes with the minimum loss of greenspace and rural environment
Because I do not want to see an eastern route built across the beautiful countryside it would cut across
The road is functioning as it is.
Best value for money expanding an already part prepared route. Most affordable option. Less complex (avoids further canal and brook crossing and existing accident black spot near The Strand). Less environmental impact on green fields, canal and water courses, with associated wildlife, such as water voles and newts.
Because I do not want traffic on my doorstep Thank you. I moved from London for a peaceful life
Has less impact on the green environment, cheaper, and less opportunity for infill expansion and thus adding further pressure.
Existing bypass, review the recent junctions, lights policy / entry to Asda/Aldi/Leekes
Improvement and invest in more broadband will lead to more flex working patterns for commuters, and review poor junctions of Aldi, Asda.
Improve road layout at key junctions. Plus need to encourage more home working. Melksham is a commuter town for traffic towards north M4, investing in more tarmac in greenfield is not a solution.
Because it will have the least impact on the beautiful countryside areas which are home to an abundance of wildlife and enjoyed regularly for recreational purposes. There are also lots of small villages/hamlets which would suffer from increased traffic pollution, including fumes, road noise, visual pollution and litter (the A350 between Trowbridge and Melksham is already a disgrace).
Less cost, less pollution, less impact on the environment.
It requires the least work as the majority of it would be an upscale if a pre-existing route. Least environmental damage to the surrounding area.
I do not agree with the expenditure and creating more housing along with hemming Bowerhill with Bypasses which were not there!
It looks at enhancing the road, which is already there, with car journey's not being taken as much any more and more flexible working patterns, there seems little requirement for a new road.
Least cost and disruption
Least land grab, options which destroy open countryside are wrong
I think using the current infrastructure and the elements already created (such as the aqueduct) which was built to be made wider should be considered first. The money has already been spent on these and therefore should be the first option.
Preserve green space, improve current bypass at junctions for better traffic flow.

Why have you chosen Option 7a, 7b and 7c
Because, making improvements to the current route is the best way to conserve the countryside and also allow you to have money to spare to spend on developing cycle routes.
Because I think it will be best for the town and the people of Melksham. Utilising and enhancing the current route is surely better than churning up green fields and disturbing the wildlife
least amount of impact, makes most use of existing roadways, least impact to residential areas
I have never encountered problematic or dangerous delays on the current A350. My only wish would be that the route be more cycle friendly.
As I think this would suffice in improving the road safety and traffic congestion without having detrimental effect on surrounding areas, especially the wildlife.
I have chosen to upgrade the existing route
Better for the environment
Economics
The most sensible option.
Least damaging to the environment and probably the best use of the funds available
Why not? It could work
Better impact on all issues
To take traffic away from Seend Cleeve and Beanacre and Melksham. Do not want infill with high density housing estates.
Keep noise and air pollution away from Seend Cleeve. Improve existing routes and get traffic off roads
It's all that's needed
The least cost and not affecting the beautiful green open space near the canal and Giles Wood which is home to a lot of birds and wildlife. we need to protect the environment as much as possible and not keep concreting over it
Least impact on the countryside, cheaper.
Eastern route too near to Lacock
Melksham doesn't want a bypass
Save the green fields around the canal
There is no traffic problem at present, there are plenty of other communities that should be considering improvements to the main through routes.
I think the best value for money and minimum disruption will come from improving the existing route.
There is already a stretch of A350 passing under the Kennet & Avon canal. I really don't want to see a new road bridging the canal and driving through the water meadows. Existing conditions are fine, I think the money could be better spent on (for instance) another doctors surgery.
It's what I thought.
I think improvement to the existing road would be better than a new road
The existing Semington bypass A350 could be upgraded to dual carriageway. Least damage.
My least travel disruption
I think the current road could be improved without having a negative impact on more countryside and other people's homes. Putting more roads in is just distributing the problem not solving it. More houses in the local area, makes a bigger demand for outside space for exercise, family activities, socialising and places for people to have a break from their day to day life for mental health benefits
This is what I think needs sorting out

Why have you chosen Option 7a, 7b and 7c
This is the optimum cost/benefit
This road is a major route from the midlands to Poole
It has the least environmental impact
We need to improve what we have not cover more green space with concrete.
Freeing up the existing route by preventing right turns and changing priorities away from the Stores and Units to allow the A350 to run freer.
Long term benefit to both transport and local residents to avoid delays
Long-term, the best. Why ruin other parts of our region with new traffic? We must improve what we have
Please do something about the delays caused by Asda lights. The next set on at Bath Road should be removed in favour of a roundabout
For health and safety of children attending Melksham Oak walking to school
seems the obvious thing to do -improve the route we have.
best idea yet!
best result, will cost far less and less destruction of countryside.
Just common sense
why not, it makes common sense to improve what's already there.
So that you don't destroy any more of our lovely county with unwanted roads.
Why not? It's the common sense option.
Why not? It's the obvious thing to do
I use the A350 every day and have no issues - Aldi and Asda can be a problem sometimes.
Route 7c causes the least impact on residential areas and would aid traffic around the new housing development in Melksham
Seems common sense to me
Best route
Existing route satisfactory - just need better carriageway(s).
The area around Asda has never worked properly, two sets of lights. Fix it there please
To minimise environmental impact and to avoid the eastern side of Melksham that would increase traffic and danger to children waking to the secondary school from the new residential developments in Estero Melksham. Which would increase car usage at school drop off due to safety issues.
Improving the flow on this stretch of road would hugely increase the traffic flow on the A350
Improvements to the current A350 would be a cheaper option, would not ruin more landscape and impinge on more housing
Improvement is appropriate.
It makes sense to spend the money on enhancing and upgrading the A350 part of which is already feasible for upgrade.
We live in Beanacre and our house has been damaged by the A350. Ideally traffic volumes would reduce anyway as people use cars less, but if that is not going to happen then reluctantly, we would support road changes. Upgrading the existing road would seem sensible, as in Chippenham but is unlikely to be feasible.
I do not want a bypass between Seend and Bowerhill. This would be terrible for the Environment. There will be protests
To build a new bypass to save a few minutes off a commute is expensive and a waste of money. Also, this will cost us beautiful countryside and people a place to escape from the pressures of everyday life.
Eastern route too near to Lacock

Why have you chosen Option 7a, 7b and 7c

The case for a longer eastern bypass has not been made, with the current traffic date based pre pandemic surveys and without consultation with TransWilts. The eastern options would also see an exponential increase in noise light and particulate pollution in an area current not affected by these. Finally, this consultation fails to mention housing and the impact/ location of the revised Melksham plan should have a bearing on where any road improvements should happen.

Least change as possible please but offer alternative option for travel

Least impact on other areas whilst improving their current road

Cost and smaller impact on majority of residents

Try and improve the existing route (provided the cost/benefit is clearly positive). Any other option which requires encroachment, or worse, on open countryside should be avoided - both to avoid environmental damage, and to avoid large capital outlays.

Because money has previously been spent developing these solutions, and a costly unnecessary wide route bypass at a time of unprecedented national debt would be irresponsible.

Why have you chosen Options 8a and 8b

Least impact on residence and most long-term gain

Prefer a bypass

I reside on the eastern side of Melksham

Any improvement to divert traffic on A350 will be advantage to local residents

Just build the road. It is needed

I have just bought a house at Sandridge Place purely for the location. Peace, quiet and countryside being my main reason for moving

Awful traffic at peak times

Traffic going west is very busy in the morning

We need traffic to go the other way around Melksham. Having it the way it is it's like building new housing estate with only 1 way in-out. There were many accidents near Avon bridge and traffic was horrendous peak time

Best option

Its furthest away from where I live

To make it easier to travel out of and into Melksham and easier to travel in to Melksham as other routes to use for people not needing Melksham

Because it solves a multitude of existing problems with traffic and congestion.

Least impact on present environment

Maximise improvement for residents and road users.

Because the impact is less harmful than the other proposals

I don't want more traffic near my home.

They are what I would like to see

I do think if the route is to go ahead the options of 8a and 8b are the best due to having little environmental impact and would keep the integrity of the woodland on the eastern side of Melksham.

Protect the new housing developments on the east side of Melksham, protecting the woodland on east side of Melksham, overall less of an impact to residents. East side of Melksham is already impacted by the A3102.

Options 1 to 7 increase urban congestion, only options 8 and 10 solve the problem, 8a would seem to be the cheapest

Why have you chosen Options 8a and 8b
Because there's too much congestion and accidents on existing roads
Use of existing road structure on that side of town
Believe if the improved route went West of the town this would cause the least damage to the countryside.
Just redirecting the traffic from passing Beanacre residents to Melksham residents, is just moving the problem which will just impact more residents. There needs to be another crossing point to allow the traffic to split and disperse along more routes which will reduce the traffic density. Ideally the route which allows for dual carriageway would be preferred it allows the follow of traffic to be maintained despite slower vehicles, preventing traffic building up.
The route should be as short as possible to reduce impact on land and amenities for recreation.
Least impact on where I live
It's more environmentally green
It keeps the field used in option 9a/b/c
Keep noise and air pollution away from Seend Cleeve. Improve existing routes and get traffic off roads
keep away from Seend Cleeve. Reduce heavy traffic and single user cars
This main road has never been capable of taking so much traffic, it's slow, people are in patient and do stupid overtakes! All needs improvement
To take traffic away from Seend Cleeve and Beanacre and Melksham. Do not want infill with high density housing estates.
Keep away from Seend Cleeve. Reduce heavy traffic and single user cars
The routes to the west of the Melksham have more infrastructure already there so the visual impact on the countryside will be less
More traffic comes from the west, more major roads are westerly, it makes sense to develop to the west.
Has least impact on residential areas
Best of a bad choice.
To keep the traffic away from Melksham and not provide an excuse for developers to build a mass of houses between Bowerhill and the Canal.
Years on construction, disruption not needed
We are in desperate need of a bypass to relive traffic through the town centre and to ease congestion on farmers roundabout.
Most practical and environmental option
I have chosen the routes that I feel are beneficial to car drivers. HGV's should be the priority users of the original A350.
As it is going to have less impact on the Countryside, The Kennett & Avon Canal and all of the Wildlife that inhabit these areas.
Because I do not want to see an eastern route built across the beautiful countryside it would cut across. It would cost a fortune environmentally, environmental disaster, cost a huge amount of money for very little gain in travel time and the inevitable housing infill would completely spoil the current nature of Melksham, Beanacre and Bowerhill.
Because I do not want Traffic on my doorstep Thank you. I moved from London for a Peaceful life
Least new road and least disturbance to environment
Because of road congestion and safety
Most sensible.

Why have you chosen Options 8a and 8b

Looks cheapest to do

It provides a bypass across land least disruptive to that already used for recreation. There is space for cycle way provision. It is also over the floodplain so I am hopeful the area will not be infilled with housing but left as river/canal/marina/nature reserve with some recreational public access for exercise etc

Achieve the objective of bypassing Beanacre and the rote as far as Farmers roundabout, plus enhancements from Western Way roundabout south under the canal to Littleton roundabout would have low impact on the countryside and scenery.

8a and 8b would have the least effect on residents of Melksham and villages

Why have you chosen Option 8a

of those proposed, these represent the shortest proposals that address the problems to some extent. without causing irreparable damage to the local area

My preferred routes focus on least destruction to countryside and key outside space whilst addressing the issues, adequately

To avoid more traffic near school and houses

A new road bypassing Melksham is desperately needed

Less impact as using existing roads as well

All that is required based on future and possible/likely changes to travel behaviour.

Least amount of impact, makes most use of existing roadways, lease impact to residential areas. Impact to the golf club is far more acceptable than impact to homeowners and families

Minimises impact on rural area and green belt. Maintains build in existing developed areas.

keeps traffic out of the areas where new houses are being built and through a residential area. I would prefer to use routes that children do not cross for school or recreation.

I live in Bowerhill and regularly walk to the canal, along the canal and through the fields around the canal the Eastern options cut off Bowerhill residents from accessing these areas and their natural beauty.

Relieves existing road of through traffic improving local environment.

Need to alleviate traffic using rat runs to avoid current A350 congestion

Only route Melksham to Chippenham needs improving for congestive reasons. All other routes would spoil what little walks of nature Bowerhill have

A western bypass. There is a need to ensure that congestion is reduced but at the same time passing traffic is good for business. Huge swathes of greenbelt land and wildlife would be affected and it would spoil the picturesque countryside.

A combination of routes 8a and 7b would seem to be the least detrimental in terms of preserving a bit of open countryside around Melksham.

The bypass should not be positioned across the eastern side of Melksham, this would simply move the problem somewhere else as well as destroying the environment.

Lower impact on the countryside. It is important to make as much use as possible of the existing bypass, particularly the section after the Western Way roundabout, section 7c, that can easily be upgraded. To not use this section and the hugely expensive under canal bridge would be a folly and huge waste of public money.

Why have you chosen Option 8b
These are true bypass routes moving traffic off of the current road network
Least impact to existing residents! Offers the same flow of traffic as the eastern without disruption and noise pollution to existing residents.
Avoids the town completely
Would help with the traffic in Beanacre and be better for resident
Environmental Impact, traffic and health impacts
I believe has the lowest negative impact on the fewest number of people whilst having the biggest positive impact on the underlying problem of traffic congestion, noise and pollution. Furthermore, it appears to be the most cost-effective solution.
Uses otherwise unusable land. Relieves traffic from existing A350 residents. Low negative impact on non A350 residents.
Removes primary from Beanacre and Melksham, improves air and noise pollution, less standing traffic
Most cost effective, it will have the biggest impact and keep traffic away from central Melksham
Bypass would be the only solution.
To reduce the impact of pollution on the residents and keep the traffic away from an area of outstanding beauty which is used for exercise by literally hundreds of people
The wider routes take the bypass and intersections/junctions furthest away from current residential areas so will have a lesser negative environmental impact on the community
10d, 10c and 8b all offer routes which will make my town a far better place to live. All other opens just move the problem to other residents. Although the environment may be impacted the noise levels will be reduced and most importantly road safety will vastly improve
I think it meets the term bypass and I think causes the least disruption to properties and businesses currently in place
Awful traffic at peak times
Although this is the most expensive and possibly difficult option to build, it will be the most cost effective and produce the best result in the long term. Bearing in mind current and proposed development of Melksham, to the east, a bypass on the Eastern side will eventually be enveloped into the town. Many environmental benefits will then be lost. The Western route keeps heavy traffic away from the town but retains access to Bowerhill and local roads. The cheapest option is not always the best.
Least impact on Bowerhill and the canal, an area which needs to be kept free of traffic noise, visual and air pollution
Whilst complexity and cost are greater believe has least impact on local communities
Surely the current A350 Semington bypass provides a good start to taking the bypass around the western side of Melksham and following one of the routes provided by options 7, 8 and 9.
8b moves traffic completely around Beanacre and Melksham through an unattractive landscape already blighted by rail, and power infrastructure.
I understand that the traffic is an issue. At least 8b is used to join on to the existing main road and doesn't disrupt too much countryside. It still makes the work worthwhile as it diverts the Melksham traffic away from the centre. This would be my most preferred choice.

Why have you chosen Options 9a, 9b and 9c
Prefer a bypass
I reside on the eastern side of Melksham
Any improvement to divert traffic on A350 will be advantage to local residents
Just build the road. It is needed
I have just bought a house at Sandridge Place purely for the location. Peace, quiet and countryside being my main reason for moving
9a and 9b seem to offer the best use of existing investment in the Semington Bypass and Farmers Roundabout coupled with a bypass of Beanacre without impact to the remaining green areas of Bowerhill
Traffic going west is very busy in the morning
We need traffic to go the other way around Melksham
Best option
To make it easier to travel out of and into Melksham and easier to travel into Melksham as other routes to use for people not needing Melksham
Cost, environmental impact most effective
Environmental Impact, traffic and health impacts
Because I'm a resident who is affected by the present amount of congestion
Any route to the east of Melksham will have a severe impact on the Bowerhill area and the many existing and new housing developments to the east of the town.
Affects the least housing areas.
Least impact on where I live
Any change to existing route is an improvement
We are in desperate need of a bypass to relive traffic through the town centre and to ease congestion on farmers roundabout.
Least environmental impact whilst still improving traffic flow. Improves journey time without huge amounts of negative impact on both noise and air quality for people living along the other proposed route
Because I do not want to see an eastern route built across the beautiful countryside it would cut across. It would cost a fortune environmentally, environmental disaster, cost a huge amount of money for very little gain in travel time and the inevitable housing infill would completely spoil the current nature of Melksham, Beanacre and Bowerhill.
Has less impact on the green environment, cheaper, and less opportunity for infill expansion and thus adding further pressure.
Because of road congestion and safety
Least amount of options to build off, and an area that isn't already accessed by the public for rare amount of countryside we have access to without the dangers of heavy traffic near by
It provides a bypass across land least disruptive to that already used for recreation. There is space for cycle way provision. It is also over the floodplain so I am hopeful the area will not be infilled with housing but left as river/canal/marina/nature reserve with some recreational public access for exercise etc
The larger routes both to the East and West of Melksham esp. 10c and 10d and 8a and 8b will mean vast amount of houses that Melksham can't support and too many for the natural size of the town. This will become inevitable as the new road will act as a boundary for infill construction and also highlighted by the recent council meeting on this topic where land was reviewed in December. Melksham and the surrounding villages already suffer greatly with pressure on the doctor's surgeries, access to dentists, schools and the town centre

Options 9a and 9b

Use of existing road structure on that side of town

The routes to the west of the Melksham have more infrastructure already there so the visual impact on the countryside will be less

Why have you chosen Option 9a

Of those proposed, these represent the shortest proposals that address the problems to some extent. without causing irreparable damage to the local area.

Take the wider route and avoid destroying the village infrastructure

Shortest route less disruption for us

Large traffic volumes not stopping at Melksham, simply passing en route north and south.

Bypass should divert traffic away from residential houses. Road junctions should be limited and designed to keep traffic moving (feed in lanes).

This option achieves a good compromise between relieving congestion and making the best use of existing previous A350 road investment, especially if the Semington bypass section is made a dual carriageway.

Don't like any of the eastern options

I favour continuing to use the existing Western Way and Semington Bypass rather than building miles of new road to the east of Melksham

7c uses the existing A350 and 9a takes it further away from Melksham and Beanacre

Why have you chosen Option 9b

Use of existing route, least impact on nature, shortest distance, best use of a road to allow passing traffic north/south. Not a development road which primary use is to build more houses which will render the use of the road as a bypass useless.

Less impactful on Melksham and its surrounding areas while building on previous investment

Least overall impact on the environment and hope would continue to contain future, unwanted but inevitable development to the east. Larger scale eastern developments will inevitably lead to filling up with housing and huge amounts more traffic and generally unpleasant environment all round.

9b eases the pressure through Beanacre and utilises the existing roads

The bypass should remain on the Western side of Melksham rather than make the majority of an already adequate road redundant.

Least overall impact on the environment and hope would continue to contain future, unwanted but inevitable development to the east. Larger scale eastern developments will inevitably lead to filling up with housing and huge amounts more traffic and generally unpleasant environment all round.

Why have you chosen Option 9c

Less devastation to the environment

7b+c and 9c: Existing bypass already in place, to upgrade/modify. Low cost, little impact on current surroundings.

Too much traffic now on eastern way and Sandridge Common Roundabout

Why have you chosen Option 10a and 10b
Prefer a bypass
An eastern bypass reduces the stress of traffic through the town centre and Beanacre Road, reduce delays and congestion and create easier connections to the M4 for the eastern side of Trowbridge
More logical to go in open areas with less housing around. A350 is already western side. So need eastern access
Bypass must be wide enough from the centre of Melksham. Only viable on east Melksham
The options of 10a, 10b, 9a and 9b seem to offer the best use of existing investment in the Semington Bypass and Farmers Roundabout coupled with a bypass of Beanacre without impact to the remaining green areas of Bowerhill.
Traffic needs to flow to stop pollution and user time. The Eastern option offers the comprise for routes. environmental impact and improved links to Calne and Devises.
Because I know the area and impact on all residents
The fields in this area have already been destroyed to make way for houses so to add the bypass here makes more sense than destroying even more green areas in Melksham.
Its furthest away from where I live
Prefer '10' route as fewer rural communities, fewer obstacles and less sensitive countryside, plus cheaper route
Keeping the existing route or eastern side of Melksham.
There is clearly a problem on the A350 with congestion and it will only get worse. There are enormous lorries driving through Beanacre often over the speed limit and the road simply isn't designed for it. I believe a bypass is required and having seen all the plans, the only feasible and realistic option would be on the eastern side of Melksham.
Environmental Impact, traffic and health impacts
Makes more sense. Don't need to come out towards Whitley and Atworth most traffics is heading south towards Westbury
I feel that a bypass to the east is the best option for the majority of people and will keep traffic further away from the town.
Western routes would devastate a beautiful undeveloped area with village atmosphere and important natural habitats
Most sensible for a bypass. Most development is East of Melksham
As I think they will be better for Melksham.
Provide the larges diversion to through traffic whilst utilising roads already built.
Simpler and cheaper to connect Beanacre to existing original bypass route via Snowberry Lane and New Road
I believe eastern route is the best for future proofing road, and not as many rail and river crossings
Upgrading existing infrastructure is cheaper and infinitely more environmentally friendly than destroying hectares of the local green belt. It has worked well in Chippenham and various sections of option 7 are already primed for widening which means they should be infinitely more deliverable on time and within budge
These represent the shortest proposals that address the problems to some extent. without causing irreparable damage to the local area.
Less disruption to housing and avoiding the canal.
Least damage to the environment. Value for money. Taking advantage of Semington Bypass which is already there.

Why have you chosen Option 10a and 10b
Easy to deliver with regard to impact on community. Care must be taken of the local environment to preserve habitats, wildlife and flower and fauna.
Only options that will work others will cause huge bottle necks and result in poor air quality and a missed opportunity.
Minimum environmental impact and value for money potential. The goal should be to achieve the stated outcomes with the minimum loss of greenspace and rural environment
Less cost, less pollution, less impact on the environment.
I think the best value for money and minimum disruption will come from improving the existing route.
These proposals use 7 c which already has 2 bridges along it which have been widened to take dual carriageway.
It seems by far the most obvious option.
Should choose options to the east of Melksham for least inconvenience to all.
Eastern routes look more viable
Best option by far
Because it will bypass the town centre
Impact on the village area to west would be more than the Eastern routes and Eastern routes more appropriate to improve or amend in future
Flood plain to west of Melksham and crossing railway twice make western route less feasible.
Less impact on local community
Less impact on villages and local residents
There will be more people effected with the Western routes, than there would be with the Eastern routes.
Less impact on the Kennet and Avon canal. Route on the west of Melksham are not feasible due to several obstacles, so unlikely they will be considered.
Would link well to bypass by the rugby club. Ease, it also seems like common sense, not that that is normally taken into account
Best option for traffic and avoids coming closer to Shaw
Less invasive to the environment as opposed to crossing the canal which is destructive.
Least 'kinks' in the route to suit HGVs.
Too much traffic now on eastern way and Sandridge common Roundabout
Least impact on environment, avoiding need to re expand later
Most beneficial to Lacock - reducing north Melksham traffic through village
This seems more practical and less impact on the environment
Least impact to existing properties and villages
Believe small upgrades will suffice, but if one is going to happen, then it makes sense to bypass as much of Melksham as possible. Would be very wrong to go through to the popular golf course, certainly closing it.
Route would seem to have less impact on existing properties. Most traffic at morning peak is travelling to M4 corridor and beyond.
I believe options 1 to 7 would not help the congestion problem as a lot of the traffic comes through the town, additional bike/walking use would be good for the community but will not help restrict the traffic. I believe options in 7 will not help, they are sticking plaster solutions, and one day upgrades could be needed in the future. With the lack of space on the current route for large upgrade work, I believe the initial money could be better spend on a relief road that can be upgraded in the future with the least amount of capital. I believe the options in 10 would allow this.

Why have you chosen Option 10a
10a being the most sensible starting point upon initial look
Appears to work best
Seems best option for most benefits. Some of the options seem very superficial.
I don't want the western routes to go ahead. It would bring too much traffic too near to the village of Broughton Gifford and eventually open the door to "in filling" housing.
It takes traffic away from Beanacre and around Melksham
Minimal impact to current countryside
To minimise impact on unspoilt countryside to SE of Melksham
Less destructive to the wider environment, if you choose to live next to a main road then it's reasonable to expect there to be traffic! Don't push all the noise and pollution onto the lovely open countryside
Least impact on environment around Beanacre
Making the A350 can be made better if you would really think about it. We don't need to go faster, just keep moving
10a provides a route to the east of town. Deals with the issues around Beanacre but doesn't open a large opportunity for enormous amounts of future housing developments. Its more affordable and utilizes the existing infrastructure where available.
Shorter new routes and using existing bypass 7c and bridge under canal
Better impact on all issues
It meets most of the primary concerns but has the least environmental impact.
Years on construction, disruption not needed
Takes through traffic around Melksham.
Easier to deliver and using the current Semington Bypass which is essential not to have a Bypass off of a Bypass as with 10d
Takes traffic away from built up areas with least detrimental impact on the rest of Melksham.
Not crossing the canal would be much better environmentally. Local wildlife would be a disaster if it went south of canal.
Lowest impact on community
Shorter and cheaper and less disruption to existing housing and wildlife
Option 10a provides easement to the main sections of road that prove to be an issue for traffic, which are labelled as options 7a and 7b. The section of road labelled in option 7c does not cause a problem.
10a = will cover majority of road users, with increased housing in East and main commute to the North - act as a link road to Melksham town only, and will alleviate traffic at Farmers Roundabout on Main Bypass current route.
I have chosen the routes that I feel are beneficial to car drivers. HGV's should be the priority users of the original A350.
Best use of existing infrastructure and least impact on environment
Reduces congestion & delays. Least damaging to countryside & environment & wildlife
Don't have to cross canal or railway, utilising existing roads that could be upgraded.
Less destruction of the setting of the canal and less population exposed to fumes
Large traffic volumes not stopping at Melksham, simply passing en-route north and south.
Less environmental damage by sorting out the existing road and 10a makes a lot of sense with all the rest of the roads being there already. Don't destroy a lovely valley East of the town with yet more road building

Why have you chosen Option 10a

10a: Low cost, will act as 'Local Traffic' route only which represents 76% cars and 68% HGV traffic, taking into account that most housing and new developments are on East side of Town.

It's a more sensible route, shorter and cheaper.

If there must be a bypass, 10a=lowest cost option and reduced scale of overall visual impact

If there must be a bypass, 10a would appear to offer the lowest cost option and reduced scale of overall visual impact

Takes traffic away from built up areas with least detrimental impact on the rest of Melksham.

10c in the long term is the best option, but 10a in the short term would work providing upgrades from the A3102 roundabout to the existing A350 roundabout are done with other improvements to Eastern way/ new road to A365 roundabout.

Why have you chosen Option 10b

The option seems to be optimal solution for the associated issues.

The existing A350 Beanacre to the Semington Bypass is no longer a suitable road for the volume of traffic using it and a replacement purpose designed road has long been needed. Proposals have been put forward to my knowledge since the mid 1970s and have not been pursued. The development is now essential for the Melksham Community, long been needed

Because these take the traffic out of Melksham, including HGVs. We need to augment public transport. The 9 options are bizarre, they just slightly redirect the existing A350 before Melksham. These options wouldn't help with congestion in Melksham.

Least impact on greenfield sites

Effectiveness of benefits delivered

Removes long-distance and strategic traffic from Melksham, improved safety on town roads, ability to then reduce speed limits and improve pedestrian and cycle facilities through the town.

takes traffic furthest away from main town area

10b: enhances 10a, and in addition will cover all other Local road users. The Main North/South passing traffic only accounts for 24% cars and 32% HGV and are therefore minority users to continue with current A350 with enhancements for 7a/b/c where possible.

This might stop traffic cutting through Lacock to get to Melksham & Calne. It makes sense to link the A350 with the Eastern way and access to the other side of Melksham which will become less congested. It will filter traffic away from the existing Farmers roundabout/ASDA/Aldi area which gets congested and is not a particularly safe area. It should stop traffic cutting through New Road/Sandridge Road/Blackmore Road/Queensway to get to town and the existing A350. It prevents a busy road being put through Southbrook & Shaw, having to cross the river and railway destroying the countryside. It provides better access for Calne and Devizes avoiding traffic coming through town. New Road and Forest Lane will have less speeding traffic allowing safer cycling and walking to be enjoyed.

Less impact as using existing roads as well

Easy of Melksham would have much less impact on local communities. Using the western options would be massively disruptive.

10b seems to have the least environmental impact consistent with scheme objectives. 10c is the next least worst option

Eastern routes seem to have less impact on area and deliver better improvement.

Bypass links to Eastern Way Road which is designed for large capacity of traffic.

Why have you chosen Option 10c and 10d
10d or 10c represent a true bypass and futureproofing sustainable levels of traffic and safety prefer a bypass
10c & 10d do exactly what is required and will provide the most return
10c & 10d are the only complete solutions to the A350/Melksham traffic problem. All other options fail, in varying degrees, to fully address the problem which will require more money to be spent at a later date. Please note that future road traffic will not diminish but merely switch from fossil fuel to clean renewable energies.
Just build the road. It is needed
An eastern bypass reduces the stress of traffic through the town centre and Beanacre Road, reduce delays and congestion and create easier connections to the M4 for the eastern side of Trowbridge
More logical to go in open areas with less housing around. A350 is already western side. So need eastern access
Bypass must be wide enough from the centre of Melksham. Only viable on east Melksham
These are true bypass routes moving traffic off of the current road network. All other 'short' options I do not consider to be a bypass at all, and whilst they may be cheaper in the short term they simply dump traffic back onto the already busy or, in the case on 10a and b onto an estate road close to a primary school with the associated hazards.
Makes the biggest difference to my life and greater benefits to Melksham
Any option apart from 10c and 10d will still bring traffic up the A350 and through residential areas that are heavily used by pedestrians
Will have least affect in Melksham as a whole.
Because I know the area and impact on all residents
It is pointless just tinkering with this. Think strategically and look at this from the overall north south perspective. A full bypass is what is needed.
10c/10d - otherwise there seems to be just shifting the issues from one side of town to the other
Because anything shorter would be a complete waste of time
Will solve problems by providing proper bypass and not shifting the problem into new housing areas
A bypass should avoid the town, and housing estates. It should have the least number of junctions possible. By definition, it should take through traffic, passing around the town, as fast as safely possible.
Beanacre needs a bypass. I don't really mind which one but chose the ones that seemed best according to the details.
The 10 series routes seem to stand the best chance of being practical and achievable. .
10a being the most sensible starting point upon initial look
need to bypass Melksham as a whole rather than shift the issues to another part of town
10c and 10d will keep the majority of heavy transport away from the roads around the town. With the increase of new houses brings more families with children, the 2 preferred options will reduce the traffic around Spa Road, Snowberry Lane, Oak school and proposed new school at Pathfinder way.
10c and 10d would future proof traffic flow to south coast port
I believe the route 10 options are the least disruptive to existing settlement areas and countryside
Impact on other roads and existing infrastructure
It's the option that will provide the most benefits and the best value for money

Why have you chosen Option 10c and 10d
Using part of Semington bypass already built and crossing canal, turns east and runs south of Bowerhill trading estate to enable expansion of trading estate with very close road links, turning north towards the A350 north of Beanacre will allow space for more housing to fill the space out to bypass.
Any route going through the town or connecting the current eastern bypass isn't viable as it would simply shift the congestion
This would take traffic out of the town. There have been a few bad accidents on the A350 near Aldi over the past few years
Best route for long term development
I feel that a bypass to the east is the best option for the majority of people and will keep traffic further away from the town.
Western routes would devastate a beautiful undeveloped area with village atmosphere and important natural habitats
The only route with least disturbance of houses
Most beneficial as Sandridge area has the most development
Wiltshire Council need to take the plunge and construct the road which Melksham needs for the next 25+ years and that's 10c or 10d
Most benefit overall for the greatest amount of people. Overall improvements to quality of life in and around Melksham plus significant improvement for road users
Option 10c or 10d would be the best,
Longer bypass the better, anything less will just be a cop out which has limited temporary benefit
We need a complete bypass, not a fudge
We the people of Melksham need a bypass not a reroute of the A350 through the town
By the time it's built the needs will be much greater and will justify the higher costs. All other options like a sticking plaster. Good long decent bypass is required.
If you are going to have a bypass then do it properly rather than only partially which in time would only lead to further delays so where you can, completely avoid the town to allow the north-south traffic not destined for Melksham to flow
To take traffic away from residential estate roads in Melksham and to have a credible bypass similar to the Chippenham bypass.
The wider routes take the bypass and intersections/junctions furthest away from current residential areas so will have a lesser negative environmental impact on the community
All other options are totally impractical and will just move and worsen congestion in other parts of town .10c and 10d are the only options that get anywhere near solving the congestion, safety and pollution issues
I support these Options because they appear to offer the best trade-off between benefits and risks and are in line with my comments submitted in response to the draft Neighbourhood Plan.
Best route benefits and will support existing and proposed development to the south and south east of Melksham. The western routes offer poor value for money, cost and delivery risk and have the largest impact on village communities.
10d, 10c and 8b all offer routes which will make My town a far better place to live. All other opens just move the problem to other residents. Although the environment may be impacted the noise levels will be reduced and most importantly road safety will vastly improve
Completely bypasses Melksham & Beanacre, not a compromise that would be regretted a few years after construction
This is the least environmentally damaging option

Why have you chosen Option 10c and 10d
10c and 10d provide the greatest relief for traffic and smallest impact on residents.
It makes sense to connect north and south with a good road. 10c and 10d take traffic away from the most houses and leisure areas overall and give best value for money.
To keep passing traffic out of the town and away from as many residents as possible. To hopefully have a more pedestrianised user-friendly town centre and safe cycling and routes to the train station which is quite cut off at the moment due to existing road. With the old A350 this will give an alternative for emergencies thus not necessarily needing to use the town centre as an alternative. Melksham needs this bypass to become more of a community. Also, it will hopefully encourage some businesses to set up in Melksham and on the outskirts providing employment
Main Artery to New homes sites on that side of Sandridge will need M4 access. Pollution from hgv away. From existing homes that have narrow paths Access best route from M4 to serve all existing industrial areas
Makes more sense. Doesn't need to come out towards Whitley and Atworth as most traffics is heading south towards Westbury
This seems to have the least impact but gives a good outcome
The existing A350 Beanacre to the Semington Bypass is no longer a suitable road for the volume of traffic using it and a replacement purpose designed road has long been needed. Proposals have been put forward to my knowledge since the mid 1970s and have not been pursued. The development is now essential for the Melksham Community, long been needed
I believe eastern route is the best for future proofing road, and not as many rail and river crossings
A long eastern route would avoid all the built up areas and provide good links for traffic from Calne and the new housing to the east of Melksham
It seems by far the most obvious option.
Should choose options to the east of Melksham for least inconvenience to all.
I think there should be a long bypass around the eastern side of Melksham to support the high level of development in recent and coming years. I live in one of these developments and think it would be beneficial to be able to connect to Chippenham/the M4 without going through Melksham town centre. I don't think that the western side of town should have to bear the brunt of the development on this side of town. I'd prefer a longer bypass than a shorter bypass as the eastern way is already very busy. The best solution is to take the majority of the traffic around the town
Eastern routes look more viable
Best option by far
Because it will bypass the town centre
Impact on the village area to west would be more than the Eastern routes and Eastern routes more appropriate to improve or amend in future
Flood plain to west of Melksham and crossing railway twice make western route less feasible.
A bypass around the Sandridge area would open access to that side of town, but also split the traffic across the current A350 and the new road. Also limit the road noise on the current A350
Less impact on local community
Less impact on villages and local residents
Longer bypass the better which is to the east. This will benefit for a longer period instead of doing a shorter half a job
There will be more people effected with the Western routes than there would be with the Eastern routes.
Best option for traffic and avoids coming closer to Shaw

Why have you chosen Option 10c and 10d

Least 'kinks' in the route to suit HGVs.

Too much traffic now on Eastern Way and Sandridge Common Roundabout

Least impact on environment, avoiding need to re expand later

Most beneficial to Lacock - reducing north Melksham traffic through village

This seems more practical and less impact on the environment

Least impact to existing properties and villages

Believe small upgrades will suffice, but if one is going to happen, then it makes sense to bypass as much of Melksham as possible. Would be very wrong to go through to the popular golf course, certainly closing it.

Route would seem to have less impact on existing properties. Most traffic at morning peak is travelling to M4 corridor and beyond.

I believe options 1 to 7 would not help the congestion problem as a lot of the traffic comes through the town, additional bike/walking use would be good for the community but will not help restrict the traffic. I believe options in 7 will not help, they are sticking plaster solutions, and one day upgrades could be needed in the future. With the lack of space on the current route for large upgrade work, I believe the initial money could be better spend on a relief road that can be upgraded in the future with the least amount of capital. I believe the options in 10 would allow this.

Why have you chosen Option 10c

Most comprehensive option with highest value for money

It's the only option apart from 10d that actually is a bypass We can't build a such an important road through Melksham between the majority of our homes and our only Secondary school. Route 10c offers potential for extra housing and business growth. This is the main viable route from the south coast to the M4 and the only the only negative I can see for this route is that it isn't completed 5 years earlier, we need 10c now.

Seems to provide best value for money

The combination of 10c and 7c is the only solution that makes any sense

Easier for my partner to get to work

Best value for money and least disruption during construction.

Best whole life cost impact for town and county planning. And local growth

Prefer 10c

It achieves its aim as a bypass without disrupting housing or recreation areas to a significant extent. All the other options are too close to, or part of, existing housing estates.

Furthest from schools

Best overall in dealing with the problem

I think running to the east of the town makes more sense with developments and access to industrial estates

Option 10c

This option completely avoids cars having to go through existing routes in Melksham reducing the impact of air quality on the town. It also has a continuous run through which should be the best option to keep the A350 moving.

Best compromise between journey time impact, cost, delivery challenges and delivery requirements. It also carries additional benefits (e.g. improved cycling routes)

Route that diverts traffic around the town with best flow for traffic

This is the best route for saving time on journeys and avoids all existing roads

Why have you chosen Option 10c
Less impact on environment. Utilising the current Semington bypass, therefore not a waste of taxpayers' money. Good communication to industrial estate. Through traffic still able to access the business park at the Bowerhill roundabout.
Because I think to east is the best way
Prefer '10' route as fewer rural communities, fewer obstacles and less sensitive countryside, plus cheaper route
Because it will give us a complete bypass of the whole of Melksham thus protecting all of us from all through traffic rather than only partially bypassing a few residential estates. Also, it will save money in the future because I am sure the smaller bypass options will need expanding with time as Melksham grows ever bigger.
It addresses the issue without adding the additional cost of extending further south across the canal and Semington Brook and creating a major new bottleneck on the A361, negatively affecting adjoining villages.
Takes route across land already compromised by urban and industrial sprawl
It is the most sensible and logical route which will provide a long term benefit.
It had the greenest colour for the environment and the value for money was med to high, the best option
It seems to give the greatest benefits and moves the through traffic away from the built up areas of Melksham. This will reduce the traffic and therefore the pollution in the area.
Best value for money.
The A350 is easily dualled; the A361 is not suitable; going through town seems a waste of time/money; the canal does not need to be disrupted; visual impact on the flood plains to the east is less affected; less impact on existing housing;
It (10c) actually bypasses Melksham, rather than encouraging traffic further to the town before "diverting" it elsewhere (10a/10b)., 10d also achieves this but is more expensive for little additional gain. These 10x options also support the commuting needs of the new developments which are emerging on the Eastern side of the town.
10c is the most cost-effective option
To create the most free flowing traffic North South A350 traffic and free up all of the existing infrastructure around the Farmers roundabout, Bath Road Junction and Beanacre Road.
Avoids floodplain and new canal link project. Takes road away from town and housing. Easier access to Bowerhill for HGV and trading estate traffic. No physical impact on existing canal.
10c looks to be the best from a traffic flow, environment improvement, noise reduction, safety, Return on investment, business access, links to other areas, minimum disturbance to existing population and sets the standard for future structural developments. It will also considerably improve the walking and cycling access from north Beanacre to Melksham
Least disruptive to existing environment/housing/business. Fulfils all criteria. Slightly less expensive than 10d without any less impact.
Keeps through traffic away from the town and on Value For Money is rated medium to high
Most cost effective, it will have the biggest impact and keep traffic away from central Melksham
I believe this route will have the greatest benefit in terms of noise, pollution and safety to the current residential areas which currently support the traffic that would move to the bypass.
10c due to its cost/value compared to others
It has least impact on current homes and provides good access to the Bowerhill industries.

Why have you chosen Option 10c
Best option of the longer bypasses by far. Best impact on noise and air pollution for Melksham residents and means Melksham town can have improved cycle ways and walkways
10c cheaper than 10d and should be adequate
It seems the best value and will have the least impact on inhabitants
Seems to be the route that will have the most impact on route improvement
Studying all the proposals it would appear to me as a layman that Option 10c provides the most relief and benefit to most people whilst having the least impact on the fewest. Anything that joins north of the Farmers roundabout would have very little benefit and is likely to cause an even greater bottleneck in an already congested area.
If you are going to do it, then do it right. A bypass is what it is - by passes the town and associated congestion
A long term solution is needed, avoiding residential areas wherever possible while at the same time minimising heavy traffic away from what is fast becoming a trunk road.
It takes through traffic out of Melksham and allows those travelling at peak times within the town i.e. school run to get around easier
It is the clear winner - a genuine bypass. None of the short ones work quite honestly, and the longer units than this are expensive and impractical.
This route removes the most traffic away from Beanacre and will help alleviate the need for the diverted HGV's from the A36 to drive through this part of Melksham. To create a better access for those that live on and just off the A350, especially at peak times.
Probably the best route for use, and cheaper in the long term given existing infrastructure
It is the most sensible
Best long term solution. Seems to be the more cost effective solution. All the other would require revisit in the future as housing development continues.
This would provide greatly needed relief to Beanacre and Melksham from the huge ever increasing volume of traffic on the A350
Seems the best one for all but am concerned about getting across the traffic if on the Devizes to Melksham road.
Least disruptive to all Melksham residents
Most practical
Best for the town and traffic management, best value for money
It seems the most sensible for access around Melksham, allowing exits towards Calne, Devizes and areas east of Melksham. It also accesses current road systems which are or have been recently improved
All construction would be complete in one scheme, costs less than west of Melksham proposals, 40% traffic reduction.
It keeps traffic away from the town and residential/heavily populated areas.
Easy of traffic flow through bottle neck areas and avoids homes and improves lives for those living in Beanacre and Melksham on the A350
It is the logical and most economic route - and the route most beneficial to Melksham
Less disruption to housing and avoiding the canal.
Least damage to the environment. Value for money. Taking advantage of Semington Bypass which is already there.
Easy to deliver with regard to impact on community. Care must be taken of the local environment to preserve habitats, wildlife and flower and fauna.

Why have you chosen Option 10c
Provides the greatest traffic relief to the A350 and is less constrained than other options. Also has the potential for delivering associated environmental benefits in conjunction with urban expansion to the east of Melksham
I believe a combination of 7c and 10c would provide traffic flow relief to Beanacre without carving unnecessarily into the countryside and the ensuing environmental loss.
Ease of delivery. Good to use the current Semington Bypass which is a good use of public money. Careful thought must be given to the environment and recreation - canal having a bridge over would be shameful.
This route may not be the least expensive, but it has less problems with infrastructure on the western route.
The most obvious route with the most benefits.
Best value and long term growth option
Easier to deliver and using the current Semington Bypass which is essential not to have a Bypass off of a Bypass as with 10d
Takes through traffic around Melksham.
Easy to deliver. Least disruption to the environment. Do not want canal disrupted. Good to use current Semington bypass already in situ.
Away from listed buildings and close to the Bowerhill Industrial Estate - good for access. Use of current Semington bypass is excellent as can always be made into a dual carriageway.
Lowest impact on community. 10d would have huge impact on recreation and local endangered wildlife. Would be catastrophic.
Making use of the Semington Bypass as much as possible. Or that would be an utter waste. Having a Bypass off a Bypass otherwise is odd.
Most impact upon traffic delays and cuts out all bottle necks. Of the long options least impact upon environment. Best value for money. Removes more traffic from local unsuitable roads e.g. A361 through Seend High Street.
10c offers the least disruption to the town, offering the greatest benefit to traffic congestion
Because Melksham will block up unless you can drive out towards Calne, I have sat in the traffic jams in Melksham and the traffic is travelling eastwards. A reduction in traffic jams through the town produces the ability for Melksham to be a destination. Housing development is spreading out along the A350, Bowerhill now combining as part of Melksham. This new road will allow new planned and coordinated development, without the negative effects to established communities, especially Whitley and Shaw which will be so negatively impacted if the scheme was allowed to move in any westerly direction.
Creates a better route that bypasses the majority of the town and allows more options for housing in the future.
Delivers the best value bypass and best avoids residential areas and only needs one bridge.
I prefer the option 10c as I believe it will address the issue for the long term, the shorter options especially 7a are a bit of a fudge, just moving the problem further down the road. The volume of traffic especially heavy traffic has to be diverted completely.
It runs from the main residential area to the far side of Beanacre with least impact on outskirts of villages like Beanacre and Whitley. It is best value for money and has potential for the future
After careful consideration of presentation.
The 10c Eastern route would not impact on the town or surroundings as greatly as any of the Western routes, especially is the ground is higher, and much less likely to flood, and is a more direct route than any of the Western alternatives

Why have you chosen Option 10c
Greatest potential to relieve/spread congestion in and around Melksham and Beanacre with least collateral impact and lowest risks.
It's a true bypass that will mean traffic passing through Melksham can pass through quickly without clogging up local roads but still being able to take advantage of the services at Hampton business park. It's less invasive to urbanisation than options 8 and 9. Best cost benefits assessment and impact to environment. This is the only option that will be worth the investment.
Best traffic flow, cheaper than 8b, less environmentally destructive, farther from habitation for noise, air pollution.
Least impact on local residents
Safety
Most likely to achieve long term traffic control.
Because 10c offers a solution to Melksham without adverse impact on other communities either now or in the future.
Route would cause the least amount of disruption
10c appears to be smoothest option. Least impact on current assets, gives route option for through traffic and links with the recent large increase in housing
To improve road capacity for as far into the future as possible
It is one of three that is most practical but is the only one that doesn't require a crossing of the Berks and Wilts canal
Best overall cost/benefit
Least impact on existing villages and housing
10c will allow you land for housing
Because it is the only one that gets the traffic away from Melksham & Bowerhill and has long term viability
I prefer route 10c or close second 10d as it will take the most traffic away from Melksham, Forrest Lane and Lacock. All other Western routes seem more complex, have noise issues and do not redirect as much traffic.
No need to go any further than milk churn roundabout as the current road from there onwards is perfectly adequate and could even be widened
These proposals use 7 c which already has 2 bridges along it which have been widened to take dual carriageway.
10c best for coming from Chippenham to new Melksham housing and the dump, and to head further to Devizes and trowbridge
It avoids any central areas of Melksham town
We need the bypass but needs to be Option
Takes the majority of traffic away from the town and reduces pollution for residents
10c is a proper bypass so if it has to be built do it once to achieve maximum effect.
Because a bypass along that route has been the obvious and most cost-effective solution for over 40 years now. Nobody should be surprised. It's a wonderful opportunity for Melksham - Westbury would roll over and die for a by-pass!
This takes traffic away from the town centre as much as possible and impacts on surrounding villages the least.
Adds greatest benefit for reducing traffic, especially HGV's from Melksham, though needs smoother connection to improve flow where it joins the current A350 both to the North and South
Most effective route, lower cost, least impact on residential properties and other existing facilities, and greatest overall benefit.

Why have you chosen Option 10c
10c seems to be most effective route for reducing traffic on all roads around Melksham at what would be a reasonable cost compared to the other longer routes.
Reduce traffic in the Melksham and Lacock area making roads quieter and safer for our children to cycle reduces emissions in the town and noise pollution for 100s of homes reducing holiday traffic that is likely to be worse post Covid.
It is taking the traffic away from residential and school areas
Looking at the options available for consideration, it would seem likely that the improved route would simply move the traffic from one residential area to another. If the route that goes around Bowerhill and Melksham is chosen then it may possibly be an improvement
Least environmental impact for best reduction in traffic and pollution near residential areas
Melksham is expanding rapidly, unless the new road is distanced from the town it will just attract infill development which will clog it up.
This makes most sense to bypass the town with least impact on the environment and expense
Least impact on properties, mainly farming land. The bypass passes on the east side of town which would also help route traffic from the town centre to Calne (which would otherwise remain), and it also backs onto Bowerhill to support needing no further connectivity away from the bypass for industrial vehicles. It also maintains police headquarters being on the primary route.
It seems the most logic route. Bypassing all the problems of the western options. Bypassing all the schools east of the town.
The least disruption to residents of Melksham.
Medium to high impact. Good value for money compared to other options.
It seems the most sensible future-proofed option to take traffic away from the town
It is the most cost-effective and slightly more acceptable in environment terms if forestation opportunities in the Bowerhill-Seend gap are exploited as they should be
This stays clear of as much of the developed area of Melksham and should be the least expensive to build and provide the maximum benefit to Melksham.
It's the most sensible and cost effective option and least disruptive for residents of towns and villages
Less invasive to the environment as opposed to crossing the canal which is destructive.
If there must be a bypass, 10c=best overall value for money
If there must be a bypass, 10c would offer the best overall value for money.
Takes commuter and especially freight traffic away from the built up areas. New distribution centre complex on J17 of M4 will also contribute more freight as well as Bath denying HGV's through access.
It bypasses all of Melksham, it appears the most effective solution in removing traffic through the town.
10c in the long term is the best option, but 10a in the short term would work providing upgrades from the A3102 roundabout to the existing A350 roundabout are done with other improvements to Eastern way/ new road to A365 roundabout.
It is the only option to remove the congestion out of the town area, 10a and 10b will move congestion from the Farmers Roundabout to the A365/Spa Road roundabout and increase the chance of roads such as Kenilworth Gardens becoming rat runs.

Why have you chosen Option 10d
This route is furthest away from any residential properties, and only has one river crossing. The route will open up possible business development alongside it, which already has development ongoing. This will bring much needed employment to the area.
Because it is a proper bypass not just one in a series of link roads.
Will reduce the traffic congestion and noise through Beanacre and Melksham by taking the majority of the heavy goods traffic away from the town plus will ease congestion on the Farmers Roundabout as after the so-called improvements completed last year it has got worse
Because building the bypass ought to be done where it impacts least on the already over expanding urban development of Melksham
Because I feel it needs to benefit the local community just as much as road users passing through. It's a well need road for Melksham. But it must not be in jeopardy of a being a noisy and unpleasant road to wind in and around obstructions, i.e. houses and businesses.
Only proper bypass to Semington I hope
It is a more suitable route for a joined up dual carriageway and is the least intrusive.
Minimise changes to current landscape
Common sense
It is a bypass that is needed, so that should bypass Melksham. It should be set away from housing so that pollution is not brought closer to living areas.
Least impact on residential areas and takes traffic away from the villages and town
Move worst of traffic passing through area that isn't using local facilities. Leaving current infrastructure open and accessible to those who use local community whilst achieving future proofing for 15-20 years time not 5-10
Least impact on surrounding villages and it actually bypasses Melksham rather than moving the issue down to Farmers roundabout.
I think if there's to be a bypass, it's better to do a proper job and have a full bypass like the one around Warminster.
The East side of Melksham appears to be the most sensible route. There are constant issues/delays crossing the Avon during times of flooding and this solution seems to best mitigate the problem.
Best for traffic.
Most reduced journey times
In my opinion it provides the least risk of just moving the traffic jam further along the A350. I also think it will improve the air quality on Melksham.
Clear route south bypassing Melksham and impacting less small villages.
Most benefits to Melksham
It would fit the description of a bypass
Melksham needs a decent through road away from existing properties that can expand to meet future demand and that can be effectively screened.
Although 10C is cheaper taking into account of Bower Hill residents, 10d would be the most beneficial for them.
It will take the traffic away from Beanacre and Melksham has the least environmental impact with the most positive benefits
Makes the most sense
It creates a new road which future-proofs the network around Melksham
Least impact on environment around Beanacre

Why have you chosen Option 10d
Its course is potentially further away from existing housing. Most of the others utilise existing roads, some of which pass through residential areas. 10c routes itself too close to residential areas of Bowerhill and would require sound attenuation barriers given the long stretch of road and the prevailing SW winds. 10d flows about halfway between two communities with adequate separation from residential properties. 10d suggests that it would better meet with the subsequent extension of the strategic road southwards as envisaged by the Western Gateway.
Has the least impact on existing residential areas and the most opportunity for future development once the road has been built. Such as the possibility for dual carriage ways
Best proposals by far
Looking to the future this offers the overall best option, improving commercial and private vehicle traffic flow past and around Melksham and providing ready and easy access to the Bowerhill Industrial Estate and business premises in and around the town centre.
Journey time savings benefits. Beneficial impacts on noise and on residential properties. Will draw through traffic away from the centre of Melksham and existing A350 / Eastern Way routes with associated benefits. 10d route option over 10c will avoid a bottleneck at the southern end of the existing A350 at Semington by splitting the traffic between the existing and new A350 routes.
If landscape mitigation measures can be taken, particularly near to the canal, the 10d route will be the best long term solution to the traffic congestion and have the least impact on current housing,
We need to grasp the nettle and join the north and south of the A350 in a way that is future proofed.
10d is the only one apart from 8b that is an actual bypass
All other options divide parts of Melksham and either Bowerhill or Shaw.
10d creates harm to the smallest numbers of residents
By-passes intersecting the existing roads in Melksham will have limited benefit and will likely just move the problem. 8a and 8b cross agricultural land that is of mixed quality, and low public utility, and the impact on residents would be minimal whilst delivering best effect, especially 8b. 10c will cross land that is of high utility, severing links to the canal and woods that are used by a wide group of both local residents (on foot) and Melksham residents who drive there. 10d keeps these routes intact.
Fully addresses the issues with the current A350 with the least detrimental effect on residents and properties. It also provides a viable alternative to the A361 via Seend for HGVs without diverting them past the Oak School and through the Spa at Melksham.
Just want traffic not going through Melksham, the congestion/pollution caused makes it a no brainer, unfortunately the no brainers will probably get their way
Avoids the town
Would link well to bypass by the rugby club. Ease, it also seems like common sense, not that that is normally taken into account
I proper bypass not a half measure.
Not a half measure. A proper bypass that's needed

Responses to question 14

Question 13 asked whether you would like to see more facilities for walking and cycling within Melksham come forward as complementary measures to a potential A350 bypass. Question 14 asked what facilities you would like to see.

What walking and cycling facilities would you like to see?
What facilities do we have now? Not one I know of.
More dedicated cycle paths similar to the French voie vert
As a small business I would like to see easier movement within Melksham. Provide local people and businesses simple and safe routes to reduce reliance on cars for short trips into town
The ability for families (not just the uber-keen cyclists) to cycle safely and ideally off-road N-S, E-W across Melksham and all the way round the perimeter.
A cycle network around Melksham linking us to surrounding towns & villages i.e. Lacock, Chippenham without using main roads
Larger cycle / footpaths - people seem to walk in the middle, difficult to get around.
Circular cycle route possibly along the new Wilts and Berks canal and Kennet and Avon canal
Improved connectivity between railway station and town centre.
Cycle lane better upkept pathways
Cycle routes alongside the new road rather like the existing Eastern Way
Cycle paths and wider pavements
If a Western option or improvements to existing A350 undertaken, the existing well used canal path Sells Green - Bowerhill - Semington will continue to be enjoyed
Improvement between Devizes and Melksham would be useful.
Cycle lanes, upgraded footpaths and some joined up planning between housing estates and local facilities
Cycle footpaths on all routes
Proper cycle lanes like the Dutch have instead of the half-hearted nonsense we usually have foisted on us.
Large paths, place to lock bikes, benches, trees planted
Some way to stop cyclists needing to use the A350 during busy times. A parallel cycle path
easier access to railway station and more station parking
More dedicated and protected footpaths with fencing from the road
Cycle path between Melksham and Lacock
Smooth wide paths for children to skate/scooter along
Better enforcement of public rights of way and a requirement for farmers / landowners to maintain safe accessibility.
More cycleways and footpaths away from the main roads
A pedestrian/cycle flyover to get to Asda from opposite side of the road and also from perhaps the train station junction.
More family-safe cycling and walking options
Separate cycle/walking paths to Semington.
Better segregated (done properly) cycleways on key routes and cycle networks, improved footpath/bridleway connectivity with outlying villages to existing footpath networks

What walking and cycling facilities would you like to see?
Proper cycle lane, not just shoe horned in.
Dedicated cycle connecting areas of melksham (Milton Keynes has a redway system) something similar would be fantastic especially if restricted byways and byways were included in this to villages
cycle lanes / routes around Farmer's Roundabout (why wasn't this included in the recent upgrades?)
20mph speed limits in Melksham town and other built up areas, so that cars are doing closer to the same speed as bikes
A footpath all the way around the roads on the outskirts of melksham especially link road from a350 to Bowerhill
Pedestrianize and close the town centre to traffic between Market Place and Sainsburys RBT
Designated cycle lanes on the existing A350 if a bypass is built.
More space given over to cycle routes, cycle lanes and pedestrian foot ways on what will become the old A350 linking existing cycle/pedestrian routes, the train station, town centre, parks and canal routes.
Dedicated cycle lanes apart from the main carriageway
Safe bike parking facilities in town centre
Link in with a proposed reopening of the wilts and berks canal I.e. cycle and walking tow paths
If the road is built, then adjustments could be made near Farmers roundabout to improve access to Asda and the station.
Dedicated cycle route and priority over town bridge
Dedicated bike lanes or separate routes from the road. Good connections to the station
Cycle lanes, priority crossing facilities, widened doorways in town centre, junction improvements to major/minors
Bridle paths and footpaths
Cycling network
Safer walking and cycling routes within the town from the outer housing areas linking all parts of the town and it's housing.
Bike stops with pumps, benches, signage
Separated cycle tracks and pavements
Improved pavements
This shouldn't be complementary. It's a major part of the answer. Short unconnected pieces of cycling infrastructure are often worse than none
Cycle path joining Melksham with Chippenham via Lacock
Cycling north is extremely hazardous outside of the summer months. The A350 or parallel lanes are the only real alternative, but are dark, pot-holed and narrow. A dedicated, segregated cycle path would encourage the use of cycles between Melksham and Chippenham.
Some good cycle paths in and out of Melksham, especially the A350. Gambling with your life if you ride that road early in the morning.
With the weight of traffic being taken out of melksham there should be scope for more cycle and walking routes
Cycle routes totally separated from roads and improved pavements.
Safe walking routes to improved bus priority routes.
Safe cycle routes through and around. Melksham town and Bowerhill

What walking and cycling facilities would you like to see?

I don't agree with the bypass but do agree that there should be more cycling/walking options. To achieve this perhaps the use of overpasses for example could be looked at. Perhaps looking at what places like Holland to, with their huge cycling population, could provide some inspiration?

Bike trails

Improved cycle paths, with traffic control measures for crossing the A350.

More paths for people to walk/walk the dogs/exercise.

Separate walk/cycle lane not impacting on the actual road lanes.

Cycling route and EV charging stations

Cycle path, canal improvement between Semington through Melksham

Better marking of pedestrian routes and safe crossings. Traffic isolation where possible.

Footpath and cycling path links or enhancements to existing Wilts & Berks Canal towpath Melksham->Lacock-> Chippenham

Proper cycle lanes, not just lines on the road which are dangerous and just give motorists and cyclists a false sense of safety

This should be an alternative to road building. Please look at the many imaginative international schemes already in place

A place for Walking dogs would be good

Better access for dog walking in Beanacre - there are none at the moment with public footpaths either blocked by houses or ploughed over by farmers

better foot paths.

Cycleways to take cyclists off the roads.

protected footpaths and cycle paths away from traffic to encourage safe carbon neutral activity.

Existing A350 could be made more walking and cycle friendly and safer for both.

Redesign of schemes to put pedestrians and cyclists first.

Canal paths to be mended and improved

More green parkland walkways cycle paths

Walking, better management of the 'old' A350 in Beanacre and into Melksham towards the station for walking/cycle and more integration into town and the potential canal for outlying estates.

Cycles and pedestrians having priority over vehicles. Electric bike infrastructure.

Cycleways along A350 Melksham to Chippenham.

Joined up cycle routes with better signage.

Mountain bike track. The existing Kennet and Avon canal walks left intact, quiet paved cycle route to Trowbridge via Semington.

Larger/wider footpaths, with social distancing current paths are difficult to maintain social distancing

Cycle path along river and perhaps bridge over/under major roads

More cycle links to the current options like canals etc, could also tie in with the new wilts and berks canal route and maybe put funding through to the restoration into town

Cycle lanes throughout the town and through to the canal at Semington

More exclusive cycle paths. Painting a line on the road and calling it a cycle lane doesn't really make it safe for cycling

Pedestrianisation of central Melksham

A cycle path is long overdue and safety of walkers.

A lot more cycling paths (like in Denmark!)

What walking and cycling facilities would you like to see?
Traffic free centre
More cycle lanes or off road cycle/walking paths
Designated safe space linking Westbury to Chippenham via Trowbridge and Melksham
Use old A350 route to build in routes for cyclists
A cycle route taking bicycles off the road, not having cycleways reducing current road width as this causes congestion and fatal accident waiting to happen.
The existing A350 through Melksham should be entirely 20mph with wide segregated cycle lanes throughout and improved pedestrian routes, especially to the station
Segregated cycle routes designed in accordance with DfT LTN 1/20.
Adequate cycle paths linking conurbations to tow paths etc. ERP facilitate off road commenting to BoA, Bath and beyond
Cycle paths running along the existing A350 route. Instead of cutting grass verges make it a cycle route like in Menorca and become a cycle friendly county.
Cycle route that links up through the county or Melksham
Facilities suitable for dog walking and giving dogs the chance for a good run off lead
Dedicated and segregated routes parallel to the new road and connections to Melksham, Lacock etc. Possibly a canal from Melksham to Chippenham
More cycle paths to Trowbridge and Bradford
Sensible, useful, segregated cycle paths. Not bits of pavement marked off for a few feet. Not white lines on the side of the road.
better pathways on the canal to enable cyclists and walkers to enjoy a better experience
Cycle routes and footways, I suppose. I don't actually ever walk or cycle around in Melksham, so I don't really know.
Cycle ways not on pavements
Clear footpaths. Don't put in cycling scheme they don't work!!
Cycle lanes throughout
Cycle lane would enable lorries to overtake easily.
More cycle paths and foot bridges to avoid busy roads and reducing traffic lights
Cycling mainly as not very safe currently
Obvious things like good signage
I do not want a new bypass. However, I would like to see improved cycling/walking provision.
I do not want a bypass but if there is one I would want walk and cycle ways improved, cycle lock up facilities at schools and in town and supermarkets
Maybe a barrier next to a path
Cycling, improvements to town centre for pedestrians
Safe cycle routes to other towns. Nice walking routes.
I think the town itself should look at cycle routes in and out, providing connectivity to other cycle routes such as through to Semington and the canal
Copy those solar panel bike lanes from Korea
Wider pavements and a verge between the pavement and the road. Footbridges over the road
Better footpaths linking Melksham to Lacock and then south from Bowerhill to the Strand, Keevil and Bulkington.
More walking footpaths a route through similar to that of the Paxcroft estate. Off road walking and cycling paths linking open spaces

What walking and cycling facilities would you like to see?
Every pavement that can be widened should be widened to enable bikes and wheeled vehicles to share them with pedestrians.
Safe walking, including safe road crossings
Cycling and pedestrian priority
Proper cycle lanes as a constant.
Designated and signed cycle paths and footpaths.
Better joined up footpaths and better lighting of these. Permanent cycle paths.
Lockable containers at railway station for bikes
Improved connectivity between Melksham and villages e.g. if the Melksham Link (Wilts & Berks canal) was built the towpath could provide ideal walking and cycling facilities from Melksham to Semington (and onward to Hilperton and Trowbridge and to the North on toward Lacock
Segregated bike lanes and routes, pedestrian priority (e.g. default 'green man' setting at crossings), 20mph speed limit throughout (with enforcement), bike parking, raised crossings etc.
Combines walking and cycling paths
Pavements and good sized, proper cyclepaths
Cycle lanes could be marked out at low cost on those A road sections where no cycle path exists
Lane for cycling running and Buses
Independent cycle lanes. Potential cycle junction at the traffic lights by MCC garage.
Cycle paths west of Melksham linking all smaller villages in a 5 mile radius, providing ability for Melksham populace to exercise.
There are some footpath ways that could be converted to cycle ways and footpath with landowner incentives that take cyclists off roads entirely
Pedestrianize the centre of Melksham and introduce cycle-only routes.
I would like to think that the bypassing of traffic around Melksham would actually reduce vehicular flow in the town and make it more cycle friendly.
Both - dog walking on and off lead options
Pedestrian bridges for busy paths
Better walking facilities in terms of wider pavements, particularly through Beanacre.
The UK as a whole needs to look at rapidly improving public transport, discouraging car journeys, generally improving the carbon footprint and encouraging more safe cycling and walking
Repainted road markings, potholes and poor road surfaces repaired
Cycle lanes and separate footpaths, well-lit to make it easier to use them after dark.
Safety of walking and cycling and improvements to the Town Centre building quality, also if Avon factory decides to move elsewhere the land especially along the river side would make an excellent housing and flats development.
Cycle and walking paths that are actually usable and go where people want to go, Cycling incentive schemes, e-bike hire, electric car club
More nature trails
Speed restrictions within the melksham town area, wider pavements for pedestrian access
Wider pavements, more litterbins.
Cycle/walking routes supported by bus routes

What walking and cycling facilities would you like to see?

The 10c plan should allow the recovery of the existing pavement from north Beanacre and allow its adoption as a natural combined walking and cycle route to and from Chippenham Whitley, Corsham and north Beanacre connecting with the existing pedestrian and cycleway structure. Further reducing the environmental impact to the area.

Safer cycle ways segregated for cyclists and pedestrians rather than together.

If affordable, more pedestrian-only zones in town centre and on housing estates and a canal walk/ cycling path from Semington to Lacock

improve existing A350 for pedestrians

Less air pollution and safety a priority.

If Beanacre is taken as one example the ability walk without being inches from speeding traffic on poorly maintained footways.

I would prefer that a bypass were not built, but I would like to see more routes for cycling and walking and improved facilities (parks, sports, recreation, well being, medical, etc.) for Melksham.

Dog walking areas

Safe routes in and out of town

Cycle and walking links between Melksham and Chippenham

Proper continuous cycle tracks especially around roundabouts and at junctions.

Adequate cycle lanes on or alongside all major roads

Cycling, walking and public transport only routes.

Generally, more dedicated cycle paths within and between Melksham and other local towns

Cycle Path to Lacock from Melksham

More family walks and connecting with nature for children to learn

Green walkways and cycle ways, safe for everyone, with smooth surface. More bins, and better street lighting

Better signage for foot/cycle paths

More designated walking routes.

Lanes just for cyclists and pedestrians, currently if we want to cycle, we put the bikes in our van and drive to somewhere safe to use them

Cycle/walking lanes free of traffic

Improve what we have with some simple connectivity

There are a number of cycleways around Melksham, trouble is a) they are not maintained and b) they could all easily be connected up through linking into smaller estate roads

Cycleways along western way and into the town centre. Better quality pavements

paths, cycleways, underpasses

Pedestrian and cycle lanes and streets, such as in Trowbridge, Devizes and Corsham. Cycle paths along the river.

Cycling has been a fraught occupation along the A350, so much so that I no longer do it. Without the arterial traffic it will be much improved, possibly with cycling lanes.

Cycle routes and walking routes that don't impact the county we live in and protect the wildlife

The bypass itself should take care not to sever existing routes and connections. Improved cycle crossing of the A350 from Semington to Melksham.

Introduce some safe bridleways

Stop through traffic going through the town and make the whole area above the A3102 pedestrian friendly. Think about access to the proposed canal if it ever comes to fruition. Improve the areas on the river banks because the footpaths are sadly neglected and a mud bath when it's wet. A shelter for the kids that use the skate park would be nice.

What walking and cycling facilities would you like to see?
Priority for active travel and reduced commuting throughout Wiltshire (and globally)
Cycle/Pedestrian segregation
Improve what is already there and join it all up
Finding wide safe level paths (i.e. without drop curbs) to push a wheelchair along is really tough. Taking traffic away from the town and built up areas will make walking routes a more pleasant and safer experience.
More cycle paths to encourage cyclist and keep them safe. Melksham is full of beautiful areas that are not easily accessible for walkers or even people in wheelchairs or mobility scooters. We have an aging population but nowhere for them to walk.
We need to change the way we all habitat this little town, we don't have a choice the A350 is a major connection to the country, but we can hopefully protect our little town from congestion and fumes for our future
Bridleway SEEN13 should be retained with an A350 underpass or over bridge. SEEN13 should be upgraded to provide a sustainable cycling spur off the national cycle route (towpath) enabling sustainable transport access for Melksham residents to the countryside and for Seend schoolchildren, access to Melksham Oak.
Why aren't the current shared paths maintained? How about just connecting various routes t go through estate roads?
This is a dishonest and tendentious question. Walking and cycling facilities should not be dependent on road building.
My family don't think the town roads are safer to cycle on, so fewer cars and lower traffic speeds would help, along with cycle lanes.
More cycle lanes and through the bypass improved safety for walking on pavements and cycling
Please look after the ones we have, widen a pavement or two and join them up.
Get the housing developers to pay for improved cycleways through the CIL
We need some joined up thinking not silly little changes such as at Winsley and Hilperton Road, Trowbridge. Nobody uses them! Complete waste of money
Less speeding traffic would make it safer
Clear and separate from the road bike paths. Going to the trading estate and other areas of work or recreational areas. Park areas. Space that Melksham can be proud of so it isn't just another messy blob of houses in what was once beautiful countryside.
The existing A350 upgraded to allow for a cycle path and some foot paths added. Some work carried out on the existing cycle path by the River Avon to make it more usable for bikes.
There is ample space to have included dedicated cycle and foot ways along Eastern Way and the Semington bypass.
Not a lot of thought has been put into what we already have. They are not joined up, just like the thinking behind it
If you really want to encourage people to walk and cycle it's not reducing town centre traffic you need but making continuous shared pathways into and around town
Safe and covered places to leave your bike. Keep the thieves away and the rain off
there are no cycle lanes in melksham hence there is cycling on pavements which makes walking hazardous
Walking cycling and improvement for long term canal river development
Some proper cycle lanes on the existing A350 and A365

What walking and cycling facilities would you like to see?
There's a short path on the Melksham side at Semington roundabout that only curves round to cross over the A350 to a footpath. Remove the barrier stopping bikes going into the estate Campion Way or Crescent I think.
We cycle for leisure most weekends. mostly there are few places we can leave bikes undercover. Would be nice but not often considered
Better maintenance, signposting and promotion of existing footpath and cycle path networks in the area. Improved maintenance of roadside pavements which have become overgrown with grass/nettles/dead wildlife etc.
Sustrans dedicated route off road not a little marked area on a main road
enhancement of local roads opened up by the diversion of traffic with cycle lanes. Especially on the existing joint A350/A365 and north of Bath Road junction along the present A350. Cycling lanes to be incorporated into the bypass along its whole length.
Designated cycle lanes with better signage so that pedestrians are fully aware that some rights of way are dual i.e. for both pedestrians and cycles.
Cycle lanes and railings
A cycle route on the whole of the new road
Cycle Path that links to North of A350 near Lacock
I don't want to see a bypass if it means building new roads, I do want to see roads maintained, they are so badly maintained they are dangerous for cycling. Dedicated cycle and walking ways would be better, building houses on brownfields should be looked at before green fields and any money from new housing development cannot be used to pay directly or indirectly for WC part of any building costs.
More traffic free cycle routes that are family friendly and away from roads
Cycle /walking pathways into the surrounding countryside
Full hard surfaced cycling tracks to connect with surrounding villages and towns. Separate from the main roads. No cyclists allowed on any road where the maximum speed is >40MPH.
Cycle routes to our nearest big towns, would assist in allowing more people to commute on bikes
Safe bike lane from Chippenham to Trowbridge.
Cycle path alongside or taking similar route to western way, and better crossing facilities at roundabouts i.e. at Farmers Roundabout, Western Way and Bowerhill roundabouts
There lots of ways you could link up what we have. Use some of the developer money to upgrade the footpath between dunch lane and Beanacre to a shared path
Safe dedicated walking and cycling paths alongside all new routes.
Any improvements providing safe through routes for walking and cycling will be good.
Difficult to do much in melksham. Maybe a cycle route around the A350 through current estates?
Adequate cycling and walking facilities connecting entire town with access to the countryside
Cycle paths and a pathway along the A350 through melksham
Running tracks
I don't live in melksham. But walking and cycling opportunities should complement the road upgrade
Separate lanes for cyclists, marked and protected with posts, suitable for all users (young/old/disabled/nervous)
I think you should remove the cycle barrier on Conway Crescent and join it up to Speedwell, then we could cycle through from Semington road to Snowberry Lane
Green space, fields, cycle tracks, dog walking areas

What walking and cycling facilities would you like to see?
Useful walking and cycling facilities which allow end-to-end journeys and encourage people out of their cars
More connectivity on foot.
Wider pavements for walking and cycling
Covered bike parks. Link some estate roads
Cycling walking route between holt and Broughton Gifford
Cycle lane providing parallel alternative to A350, so traffic is not held up by needing to overtake bikes on a relatively narrow road
Cycle lanes into Melksham from the local villages
Town centre roads are fairly quiet these days so how about just a marked cycle lane from Market Place to Town Bridge
Bike lanes into Melksham.
Dog walking trails
Wider roads to protect cyclist and allow motorist to pass unhindered
I'd like to see more facilities for walking and cycling as part of the alternative measures to a bypass, not complementary. Consistent cycle lanes, rather than a hotchpot of partial disjointed short lengths, which ensure cyclists cannot simply hop onto pavements to avoid traffic lights, junctions but allow HGV's, emergency vehicles, etc., to pass safely and keep traffic flowing, etc. Better maintained level pavements and walkways that are well lit and kept clear of leaves, ice, etc.
More use of overbridges (including facilities for mobility scooters) and less use of traffic light crossings as these will only reduce the traffic flow.
Improvements to existing footways to make shared cycleways
Melksham town and surrounding area is largely flat, and therefore suitable for cycling. I would like to see dedicated cycling routes and improved cycle storage.
A few dedicated cycle lanes. Don't have to be too wide, just enough to keep cars at a distance
Cycling Routes in the country
Part pedestrian areas in the high street
More walking option where you are not dodging cyclists
Separate cycling from walking by providing protected cycle lanes, not cycle/pedestrian paths.
Safe cyclepaths in countryside and more parks
An easier way for cyclists to get from Melksham bridge along A3102 to Bath Road (avoiding Farmer's Roundabout and one-way system)
An easier way for cyclists to get from Melksham bridge along the A3102 past Lidl to the Bath Road (avoiding having to cycle around the Farmer's Roundabout and one-way system)
Please do not link the bypass to walking and cycling facilities. If more people can cycle, we may not need bypass.
Better cycling routes to the railway station and secure cycle storage at bus stops.
The answer is not to build more roads it is to make better the public transport system and improve cycle lanes
Greater cycle and walking along A350 from Melksham to Lacock, child safety cycle routes to Lacock for children attending school there who live on the A350
More cycle paths (preferable to lanes), more footpaths into and around town but away from main roads where possible. People will use them less if they are next big roads.
Cycle lanes, pedestrian infrastructure incentives for electric cars residential properties supported by less Centralised facilities

What walking and cycling facilities would you like to see?
No bypass but better walking and cycling opportunities.
More cycle lanes - this form of exercise has greatly increased in recent years
Not building routes 10d and 10c as these would cut through a very popular walking and cycling area between Bowerhill, Seend and the canal.
More footpaths and cycle lanes
Safe cycle paths but not at the expense of the environment
Some covered parking. Perhaps one or two marked cycle lanes here and there. Cycling really isn't much of an issue through Melksham. Not enough traffic to worry about.
Cycle lanes through the town centre
Take down the barrier on Conway Crescent so we can cycle through from Semington road
Keep cycles and Scooters off the pavement in the town centre
No drive through town centre. Pedestrian only
More cycle lanes but not with the ridiculous bollards that are currently being put in place. They are simply dangerous
Retain the picnic area around the canal
More scenic walks around town
Continuous routes between melksham and surrounding areas of Bowerhill, Semington, Seend etc.
Green spaces, money spent on pavement improvements
More and safer cycling routes, which are joined up; not cycle lanes/paths which come to an abrupt halt.
Some dedicated cycle lanes through all these new estates you keep building
No bypass, dedicated cycle lanes, pedestrianisation
Segregated cycle lanes. Priority for bikes and pedestrians
Cycle lanes and refuge from sudden inclement weather for cyclists and walkers
Walking and cycling - I do not drive to the centre of town, I walk
Every new road built in this country now should have a walking and cycle path. And all cyclist should be made to use the cycle path and be fined for using the road. It is so irritating when you are stuck behind a cyclist on the road when there is a cycle path next to the road
Designated pedestrian and cycle routes. Pedestrian only area in Melksham.
New cycle lanes and improved pavements and lower speed limits.
A good cycle way in Melksham when a bypass is put into place
There is a walking trial between Melksham and Lacock, would be nice if it was "unblocked" by removing the deliberate placement of electric fencing!
Easy cycling access across the A350 to the B3107. If you are improving access to the station it would be good to continue a cycle lane along that road for safe access to the country lanes.
Ideally cycle lanes, but even a footpath here and there would be nice.
Proper cycle routes with proper signage, not the rubbish ones we have now
More designated cycle lanes. Hopefully if the bypass goes ahead it will alleviate many of the current problems and risks. At the moment if I want to cycle to Melksham it a case of taking one's life in someone else hands - cycling from Beanacre to Melksham is quite a high risk strategy.
Cycle round routes or walking round routes
A cycle route to head south on the A350
Routes from Melksham to Lacock where you can walk safely
I would like to more walking and cycling routes in the Leacock/ Beanacre/ Melksham / Bowerhill areas.

What walking and cycling facilities would you like to see?
Cycle paths/pavement linking Melksham to Lacock
A joined-up system of combined walking and cycling routes
An extensive cycle network from north and west of Melksham into the town centre.
I would like to see a cycle/ walkway between Berryfield Lane & Whaddon Grove Farm (which would entail going around about 2 fields) but would be very safe then to get to Hilperton and down to Trowbridge not using any main roads, but would require farmers agreement and a tarmac path to be built for about half a mile etc.
Ensuring cyclist and walkers can access the countryside safely still
Separated cycle lanes; joined up routes through built up areas to encourage walking; adjustment of roads to degrade the priority of motorised traffic; more secure cycle parking in town.
How about maintaining the ones we have?
Safer walking - footpaths without cycles - safer crossing areas - better access to schools, shops and other facilities
High pavement in the town centre needs railings before someone is killed. Not directly connected I know but gives me a chance to voice an opinion I have long held, along with many many other Melksham residents.
Improved pathway construction, many footpaths around the river by Sainsbury's becomes impassable for much of the winter, also link the a350 between the Semington Road turn off and Spa Road turnoff.
Priority for pedestrians in town centre
Provision for cycling other than pedestrian pavement
Cycle lanes on all roads including A roads. Country walks and cycle routes, as part of an environmental mitigation package, to include extensive tree planting. I'd rather see a shorter bypass and better landscaping and screening, if that would be the opportunity cost of a longer bypass.
A riverside cycleway and footpath would be ideal
Joined-up cycle routes to enable safe walking and cycling as a means of transport.
Family safe cycle lanes.
Once a new road is built the quieter roads could be used by cyclists safely compared to currently.
Completely segregated cycle lane, and separate pavement for walking. They should be of the highest standard, wide and well-lit. They should attract people out of their cars, and the cycle lane and pavement should have a priority wherever there is a crossing, or side road.
Fully Segregated cycle and walking facilities. Paint is not segregation.
safer roads for children to cycle to school and for adults
Large green spaces, forestry and country parks with accessibility to all in the community. There spaces are being rapidly developed at the cost of the mental and physical health of the Melksham community.
Cycle only lanes or paths. There is no need for a new road.
Cycle lanes/wide paths hidden from the road itself or using existing lanes as more attractive to cycle and walk.
Better paths along the canal and access lanes as well as along main roads
Cyclists prohibited from bypass and directed onto dedicated walking / cycling routes
Protection of green spaces where people are already walking and cycling for fitness and to aid their mental health and well-being
More safe cycle paths that connect with the canal and river
Cycle lanes on A365 and A350 for a 5 mile radius around melksham

What walking and cycling facilities would you like to see?
A walking and cycling route along a restored canal to Lacock
Wherever possible cycleways should be included in new road construction. This makes it safer for cyclists and therefore encourages more people to cycle. Lighting of cycleways is also important. In the winter routes in town for walking and cycling should have adequate lighting to encourage their use.
Safe route from Semington to Melksham and on to Lacock
Improved cycle lanes, walking routes prioritised over roads especially in relation to supermarkets
Designated cycleway and retention of public footpaths
More incentives for those actively choosing to drive less or who choose to have less cars as a household. Also, separate cycle lanes, a local cycling velodrome for building up cycle confidence and wider pavements for pedestrians.
For walking clear pavements without A-boards and cyclists. Sections of the towns road made pedestrian only or copy the system adopted in Poynton, Cheshire
Dedicated footpaths and cycle ways into the town
More footpaths and cycling tracks alongside or near the road/route
Better upkeep of footpaths
I regularly use the cycle paths within Melksham and the stop and start nature of them makes it tricky to use them with my children. As a family we try everything that we can to avoid car use, but it is difficult given the current network.
Walking and Cycling but not mixed with traffic
Safe, separate cycle and footpaths alongside all main roadways
Low Traffic Neighbourhoods, segregated cycle lanes along the A350 allocating vehicle road space to the more vulnerable users, connected routes along the arterial routes in and out of Melksham
Off road route for cyclists between Chippenham and Melksham without having to navigate via Lacock.
Wider pavement for cycling and walking/ running separate from the road to improve safety
Footpaths / cyclepaths to be better maintained.
This is a bit of a silly question - we should be looking at improvements regardless of a bypass
A fully integrated cycle network
Better road conditions and cycle pathways throughout to encourage public to use them
Where possible include many cycle ways on any new road building or road modifications
Reduced speed limits on roads
More cycle/footpaths some places are just not accessible unless you drive.
Large natural green spaces with woodlands being established.
Get some cycle ways, improvement to walking areas. Like the Bowerhill one to picnic area. Lots of people use this
Safe cycle lanes between Trowbridge and Chippenham and to canal and river paths.
Cycle lanes on main roads and better buses
Better cycling facilities to link Melksham to Chippenham
Consideration to be given to, and validated by consultation, for more dedicated walking/cycle routes into Melksham town centre from its hinterland. Improved safe cycle storage/cycle rack facilities in the town centre / train station / bus termini. Establishing a 'Priority for People' culture in the town centre, which depending on the results of consultation may include dedicated cycle lanes, reduced town centre speeds, high quality shared surfaces in the town centre, establishing the 'Melksham Standard' for street scene / public open space.

What walking and cycling facilities would you like to see?

Cycle lanes that protects cyclists from cars but also doesn't disrupt day to day traffic. Avoid building more houses and roads that take up our countryside so that walking access is still possible across fields and canals. Put a leisure centre in Melksham with gyms, restaurants and leisure activities to improve the attraction to Melksham and increases jobs for the ever-increasing population.

More cycle paths that don't run out after 200 metres, this could be developed alongside the existing 350. Also, if you start up digging the countryside as in some of the proposed routes this will decrease current scenic walking routes that already exist.

Safe rest places and public toilets

Better signage of footpaths. Cycle routes by waterways.

Better parking.

Cycle and walk route easily accessible and to access all of Melksham and a way to access neighbouring towns

I believe we need improved walking and cycling but don't need another bypass

Most definitely more cycle routes. We are cut off from accessing neighbouring villages and towns safely by bicycle. i.e. Lacock, Corsham

Whatever the facilities, they must not be detrimental to the landscape and the scenery

Improvements in accessing the railway station via bicycle and foot.

New footpaths accessible to baby buggies etc should be planned within the new road and to the station.

Circular Lacock route. More paths out to the canal from brabaxon way and red stocks. More circular all-weather routes. Suitable parking.

Better cycling facilities between Trowbridge, Melksham and Chippenham

Pathways from melksham to Lacock

Links across existing A350

Cycle paths. However, this should be done in places other than the bypass too. We don't need a bypass to introduce cycling measures in fact many of the above routes obliterate lovely country cycle routes so presenting the bypass as a way of getting cycle paths is disingenuous.

Responses to question 15

Question 15 asked for any further comments about the proposals to improve the A350 in Melksham. Similar comments have been grouped together to help identify the emerging themes.

Further comments on the proposals	Number
Bypass not required	95
Adverse effect on countryside and landscape	90
Bypass would be a good thing	57
Get on with it quickly	42
High cost of scheme	36
Improve existing road instead	34
Concern about additional housing as a result of scheme	30
Traffic figures have reduced following Covid-19	24
Adverse effect on wildlife and biodiversity	24
Adverse effect of Option 10d	22
Consider impact on residential areas and access to open spaces	20
Concern about safety of journeys to school with Options 10a and 10b	17
Time saving in journeys does not justify scheme	17
Adverse effects on residential properties	15
Further services need to be provided after recent housing developments	15
Plant trees to screen road and provide CO absorption	14
Stop building roads	14
Options 10a and 10b will cause traffic problems for residents	12
Adverse effect of scheme on canal	10
Eastern route is best	10
Westbury Bypass should be considered	10
Scheme will only move the problem, not solve it	10
Improve rail, buses and cyclepaths instead	9
More roads will just increase traffic	9
Don't ruin or pollute the countryside	7
Option 10c would be best	7
Should be dual carriageway	7
Concern about health for residents on existing A350	7
A350 traffic has increased considerably in past 20 years	6
Eastern routes damaging environmentally	6
Snowberry Lane and Eastern Way unsuitable as part of bypass	6
Traffic made worse by situation in Bath	6
Concerned about high cost of Option 10d	6
Longer bypass options would best	6
Link road into Melksham from Beanacre instead	6
Improve public transport	6
Road safety concerns about existing A350	5
Adverse effect of noise and pollution with scheme	5

Further comments on the proposals	Number
Improvements needed to the whole of the A350 route	5
In current climate crisis we should reduce the impact of cars	5
Walking cycling facilities instead of a bypass	5
Repair the existing roads instead	5
Scheme will destroy the area	4
Leave Giles Wood alone	4
Adverse effect of Options 10c and 10d on landscape	4
Take notice of public opinion	4
Make use of existing space for dualling with option 7c	4
Only Options 10c and 10d would remove traffic	3
Thinks the decision has already been made	3
Should be the full bypass option	3
Traffic problems between Beanacre and Asda must be addressed	3
Scheme would be environmental disaster	3
Western routes would impact local villages	3
Should not proceed because of world climate crisis	3
Do not push problem onto other side of Melksham	3
Improve broadband infrastructure for working at home	3
Concerned about the effect of the scheme on farmland	3
Option 10d would be best	3
Routing traffic around the town will kill off many businesses	3
Scheme would improve traffic flows	2
Provides opportunity to improve access to railway station	2
Concern about road safety on A350 at Farmers Roundabout and Aldi	2
Scheme is a continuation of outdated car dependent transport policies	2
Concern about increased noise and pollution with scheme	2
Melksham has a lot of through traffic which is a health risk	2
Shorter bypass options would be a waste of money	2
A350 in Beanacre is a nightmare with so much traffic	2
Beanacre has been disadvantaged for years and problem should not be shifted to another area	2
The overall quality of the roads needs improving	2
Provide electric vehicle chargers in Melksham	2
Need to address noise and vibration issues on existing road with a bypass	2
Bypass needed to ease congestion and pollution on existing route	2
More cycling routes required	2
Scheme should be re-evaluated after assessing the new green agenda	2
Options 10c and 10d would be best	2
Bypass must not affect any local villages	2
Improving walking and cycling not as an add on to the bypass	2
See the benefits to Semington after that bypass	2
Previous investment will be pointless if Options 7b and 7c are not used	2
Think about transport policy and what the climate emergency means	2
Concern about more traffic on A3102 and A365 with scheme	2
Money should be spent on keeping the country afloat after Covid-19	2

Further comments on the proposals	Number
Reduce speed limits on residential roads with 20mph zones, traffic calming and speed cameras.	2
Council should live up to climate emergency declaration	2
Eastern route should be as short as possible	2
Effect on Wiltshire Air Ambulance needs to be considered with options 10c and 10d	2
Avoid western routes	2
No need for it as Farmers Roundabout has been improved	2
Very few accidents occur	2
Options 10a or 10b should include bridge over old canal route	2
Options 10a and 10b would have adverse effect on residential properties	2
Options 10c and 10d would have adverse impact	2
Scheme would increase flood risk	2
Not long bypass routes	2
Since Farmers Roundabout improvement the traffic flows better	2
Electric vehicles will reduce the pollution problem	2
Should be looking to restrict traffic not give it reasons to grow	2
Other solutions could be found for a possible future traffic pressure point at Semington	2
Option 10a would have adverse effect on residents and road safety	2
Need to stop hgvs in Beanacre for safety reasons	1
Build new houses at the Beanacre end first	1
Will increase size of Melksham	1
Route to Poole is not significant	1
Option 10d is best but should be extended further south	1
Drainage on Eastern side will need special consideration	1
Consultation material too complicated	1
Central Government north-south route study being undertaken	1
Option 10a would be a slow route with multiple roundabouts	1
Questionnaire is complex	1
Scheme would reduce hgvs on other narrow roads	1
Clear that Council want to build a new road to the east	1
Options 10a, 10b, 9a or 9b would be best	1
Most expensive options would bypass the Semington Bypass which is pointless	1
There has been limited investment in infrastructure investment in west Wiltshire	1
Ban lorries	1
Need a high-quality busway	1
Support public transport to provide viable alternative	1
Keeping traffic moving must be the priority	1
Widening of existing road would not work	1
Scheme must take account of new developments being built	1
Route must leave room for town to expand	1
Consider drivers who do not live in Melksham and queues Lacock to Melksham	1
Wide cycle lane required	1
Put the bypass through Beanacre and knock down the houses	1
Combine north junction of Bypass with Lacock junction	1

Further comments on the proposals	Number
Residents should be compensated for loss of value of property	1
Better to review how we do life, work and trade instead	1
This consultation seems like a tick box exercise	1
Consider how to improve things with as little impact on Melksham residents as possible	1
A350 is a major transport route for lorries	1
Small sensitive changes would yield similar results instead	1
Options 10a and 10b would seriously affect house prices	1
With Option 10c access to canal and countryside from Bowerhill required	1
Benefits for walking and cycling with longer bypass options	1
West Ashton and Yarnbrook must fixed at same time	1
Dualling from Semington to Bowerhill required	1
Walking and cycling would not be improved by scheme	1
Already a subway to station	1
Compulsory Purchase Orders would be required for scheme	1
Adverse effect of Option 10d on listed buildings, canal and countryside	1
Upgrading existing road could be Melksham could complement bypass	1
Against any proposal that affects access from Bowerhill to canal	1
Improving walking and cycling routes to Chippenham should be a consideration	1
Western routes would increase flood risk	1
Carry on with the A 350 Chippenham Dualling project	1
One of the Option 10 routes seems the most obvious	1
Options 8a, 8b and 9a should be avoided	1
Western routes would conflict with proposed new canal routes	1
Dual carriageway to M4 required	1
Increase levy on hgvs	1
Proposals need to be synchronised with housing developments	1
Will make a busy road even more busy	1
Should be thinking about the impact of traffic on the environment	1
Any solution must minimise the environmental impact of the new road	1
Option 10c provides opportunity to make A365 the hgv route and reduce hgvs in Seend	1
Make sure the new road is surfaced properly	1
Improve facilities for families to cycle as well	1
Adverse effect of Options 10c and 10d on agricultural land	1
Effect on residents and the environment is more important than cost	1
Consider needs of those living in and travelling from the town centre	1
Bypass needs to be outside Melksham area and pedestrian free	1
Option 10d would adversely affect countryside, canal and floodplain	1
Object to building between Bowerhill and canal	1
Sound screening would be important with new route	1
Why did the air survey only survey eastern route	1
With Option 10c walking and cycling in the town would be safer	1
Money would be better spent supporting the NHS	1
Should not be done if the correct solution is too expensive	1
There should be no compromise solution	1

Further comments on the proposals	Number
Objections will delay work until it is unaffordable	1
Too many options to choose from	1
If implementing cycle facilities consult cyclists	1
Keep as close as possible to existing routes	1
Dual A350 from Western Way to Semington Roundabout	1
Concern about South Brook and flood risk in the Roundponds area	1
Flood risk at properties in Northbrook, Southbrook and Dunch Lane	1
There has been an increase in hgvs in Beanacre since roads in Bath closed	1
Suggest getting funding from adjoining counties in view of diverted traffic	1
Wider pavements as at Snowberry Lane make walking and cycling easier	1
Bypass needs higher priority as situation in Beanacre and Melksham already intolerable	1
Access to canal is vital for Bowerhill residents	1
Bypass needed as the current situation can only get worse with local growth	1
Hgv emissions must be reduced	1
Difficult and dangerous to overtake hgvs on single carriageway roads	1
Build a Salisbury Bypass instead	1
Be more sympathetic to residents of Bowerhill and the countryside	1
Route to the east could be paid for by developers	1
Important that Melksham Campus project progresses	1
Please be honest about why you want a bypass and the aims of the Strategic Transport Body	1
Not Options 9a, 9b or 9c	1
Concern about increasing numbers of hgvs on existing road	1
Main roads should be for commuting. Local roads should have safety measures for pedestrians and cyclists	1
Provide additional planting between Beanacre and Lacock to off-set carbon and provide for wildlife	1
Needs to link up with other improvements	1
People still need to come to Melksham and a reason to stop there	1
Adverse effect of pollution on Bowerhill with scheme	1
Think of the future not just the present	1
Money should be spent on local facilities to improve the town instead, especially the High Street	1
Make the right decision that Melksham residents want not what the Council thinks will work	1
This is a government handed gift please don't waste it	1
The Melksham - Seend gap should be compulsory purchased and the residual land use for reforestation and mitigation	1
Reduce traffic on A350 at Beanacre to improve safety for pedestrians and cyclists and facilities for homeowners	1
The routes across the valley would be so bad for everyone	1
Install better safety features and improve residential streets	1
Need to see more detail about the proposals on better maps	1
Careful thought is needed	1
Asda should not have built where it was as it increases problem	1

Further comments on the proposals	Number
Creating a new route with multiple junctions connecting new housing estates would render the bypass useless	1
Some proposals are for building houses and not improving A350	1
The scheme should end now. These investigations are a waste of money	1
Consider effects of reduction in petrol and diesel vehicles by 2030	1
Spend our money wisely, not on some council ego trip	1
Adverse environmental impact of Options 10a, 10b and 10c on Avon valley	1
Important that parking and access to Melksham is maintained	1
Consider 10 to 20 years ahead not just short term	1
Consider impact of disruption to local residents on long term project	1
Very expensive and will not solve traffic problem	1
Not beneficial financially to the region	1
Change things at Aldi, Bath Road and Asda instead	1
Repurpose the town centre for housing now its almost dead	1
Keep it simple	1
Option 10d could be extended southwards	1
Scheme will be obsolete with petrol vehicles being outlawed from 2030	1
Electric cars with less people travelling to work will be an improvement	1
Concern about impact on countryside around Bowerhill and canal	1
Scheme will create problems to the south and south-east of Melksham	1
Scheme will just pass Beanacre problems to Bowerhill residents	1
Scheme needs to allow traffic to split to reduce traffic density	1
Concern about adverse effect of traffic on residents along existing A350	1
Option 10c would have less impact than Option 10d	1
Options 10a, 10b, 10c and 10d would be a disaster	1
About time but not a new road please	1
Joined up routes	1
Get rid of all the other traffic lights on the A350	1
Less talk more action	1
Should not be built over the wildlife between Bowerhill and Semington	1
Melksham needs infrastructure	1
Health and safety of children should not be impeded through residential areas	1
Melksham has become a featureless bypass town	1
Route should be well clear of existing development	1
Look at the benefits a bypass brought to Chippenham	1
A350 does not go through Melksham	1
Easiest option only please	1
Adverse effects of Options 10c and 10d on wildlife	1
Avoid opening green belt land to traffic	1
Melksham is becoming a commuter town and focus should be to avoid this	1
North-south traffic is a minor consideration	1
Spend our scarce money on sensible options not pet projects	1
Support for CAWS submission	1
Restrict hgvs wherever possible to trunk roads	1
A bypass is needed and wanted by most locals	1

Further comments on the proposals	Number
The field affected by Options 9b and 9c is an amazing field for dog walking	1
Further information required on traffic	1
Relocate existing retail facilities away from the main road	1
Adverse effect on countryside of Options 10a, 10b and 10c	1
Repair existing A350 at Semington Roundabout	1
Makes sense to provide a direct route to M4	1
Crazy to build a bypass off a bypass	1
Should be quiet noise road surface	1
Bowerhill is experiencing loud helicopter noise and racing car noises	1
Children need to be safe round school	1
Need to consider economic impact on town	1
Money would be better spent on electric vehicle infrastructure	1
Turn off Farmers Roundabout traffic signals outside rush hours	1
Western routes would be best	1
It's a well put together consultation document	1
Nobody asked for a bypass. Looks like Chippenham all over again	1
Melksham centre does not need improved walkways. Architecture and general aesthetics would benefit from funding	1
Do not bring the bypass into Bowerhill	1
More roads do not solve traffic problems	1
There are places where the A350 could have short dual carriageway sections like Chippenham	1
Southern section of A350 has room for dualling	1
Option 10d would increase operating costs for Bowerhill Trading Estate hgvs	1
Total waste of money consulting as Council will do what it wants regardless of what people want	1
Spend money on the town for the people of Melksham not on more roads	1
Would welcome further engagement with the project team	1
Use full cut off lighting at roundabouts and junctions on scheme	1
Remove existing traffic signals on A350 at Asda and Bath Road	1
A350 could be improved along Wester Way	1
Stop the bypass at Bowerhill	1
Building more roads is not the answer	1
If existing road was repaired traffic would flow better	1
Improve A350 towards Westbury and Warminster	1
Bypass needed to return Melksham to quieter town which is safe for cyclists	1
Take the opportunity to create a separate cycle path alongside the bypass	1
Build a forest for the people in Melksham	1
Option 10c has not been compared properly to Option 10d	1
Understand the impact of the improvements at Farmers Roundabout before proceeding	1
Adverse effect of Option 10c on residents of Bowerhill	1
Option 10c would be long and expensive	1
With Options 10a and 10b hgvs using satnav may navigate through residential areas	1
With Bypass my life and health would greatly improve	1

Further comments on the proposals	Number
Ensure there are wildlife corridors under and over the bypass	1
Appears that bypass will go ahead anyway as a vanity project	1
Cycleways and paths should be much better to encourage people out of their cars	1
With large residential developments planned Options 10a and 10b would have a worse impact than indicated	1
Reduce car use - no more out of town developments	1
Supports improvements to cycling along A350	1
Make provision for a large hospital	1
Don't disrupt local villages	1
Replace A350/Bath Road traffic signals with a small roundabout	1
Options 10a and 10b would have adverse effect on the Spa	1
Western options would require high bridge over the railway	1
Western route would lead to more development and only resolve congestion in short term	1
As A350 becomes important hgv route it should avoid residential areas	1
Need to implement scheme before additional housing wins approval on route	1
Need to make it as easy as possible for people to walk or cycle for short journeys	1
Reduce cars so lorries can deliver to those less able to use active travel	1
Bridge in Bath needs to be repaired to reduce traffic on A350	1
Western route only ruins land and shifts the problem	1
Options 10c and 10d do not offer best value for money	1
Proximity to open countryside is areas greatest asset and must not be destroyed	1
Local environment should be protected for future generations	1
Stop lying about the fact that this is about building houses - not road congestion	1
Do not destroy Semington area as it is a haven for wildlife	1
Please consider preventing use of Sandridge Road, Blackmore Road and Queensway as 'cut through'	1
Would be devastating to rip up beautiful countryside around Bowerhill	1
Diverting traffic away from the town would be detrimental to businesses	1
Opposed to new route through Bowerhill	1
Traffic usage on new roads expands until it becomes self limiting	1
Concern that Options 10a, 10b and 10c are close to Lacock and area of beauty	1
Bypass should not be connected to Woodrow Road for safety reasons	1
Concern about Option 10d forming a start point for extension to Yarnbrook and Westbury	1
Concerned about options over farmland and flood plains towards Sandridge	1
A good road surface would be beneficial, especially for cyclists	1
Pedestrian access has already been improved by the Market Place development	1
Option 10c would be better than Option 10d	1
Welcome the detailed information provided in the consultation	1
Options 10a and 10b would be best	1
Noise and major route lighting to be reduced	1
Make money the least constraint and preserving the environment first	1
Bypass is a 1980's solution	1
Increased size of hgvs is having damaging effect on roads, houses and environments	1

Further comments on the proposals	Number
Consultation does not acknowledge the Climate Emergency	1
Building roads does not reduce carbon, it only increases it	1
Better investment required to mitigate traffic	1
Scheme needs to have least impact on the environment	1
Shorter routes to the east will reduce the traffic using the bypass	1
Keep route away from the golf course	1
None of the consultation material references TransWilts as a stakeholder	1
It would be great to get holiday makers to visit the town	1
Bring custom to the town instead of promoting out of town shopping	1
Dual the wider parts of A350 instead	1
Let's get Melksham on the map for its cycle network	1
Council should be thinking of the resident's wellbeing and not build scheme	1
Council should stop selling land to developers	1
Sort out the hospitals and schools instead	1
Claiming consulting when already building more infrastructure for housing	1
Scheme would have negative environmental and mental health impacts	1
Scheme would not be a good thing for Melksham	1
More houses would increase traffic congestion in the town centre	1
Much of the A350 delay is related to a McDonalds queue	1
Cost to transport companies of existing delays must be considerable	1
Restrict the number of large housing developments which is fuelling the need for roads	1
Encourage more home working to negate need for more roads	1
Bypass around the town is required before any more houses are built	1
Scheme would impact on the water table	1
Scheme would increase effect of transport emissions on greenhouse gasses	1
Devises should be a higher priority than Melksham for improvements to the road system	1
Strongly oppose Options 10b, 10c and 10d	1
Western route just transfers problem onto another set of residents	1
It appears that Beanacre can take the volume of traffic	1
With more people working from home traffic does need to be reduced to allow for walking and enjoyment of gardens	1
Someone have the moral courage to decide whether we need this	1
Scheme will make Melksham ready for the next 30 years as traffic will continue to increase	1
Major land work would be required to avoid causing flooding at floodplain crossings	1
Scheme would not bring major improvements to connectivity to Melksham and further destinations	1
Routes are restricted by relatively new building. Council needs to look at whole route so that development is in appropriate place	1
This north-south route needs to be properly improved, not piecemeal improvements	1
Removing the A350 Asda traffic signals would improve flow	1
Route should be preserved before any further housing developments	1
Some residents may be unaware of proposals because of lack of physical consultation	1

Further comments on the proposals	Number
Option 10d would lead to increased housing	1
Bypass was promised over 40 years ago	1
Melksham should be reducing its carbon footprint not increasing traffic	1

Melksham Bypass

Appendices

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