

Dunstable Northern Bypass | A5-M1 Link

Non-Technical Summary of the Environmental Statement



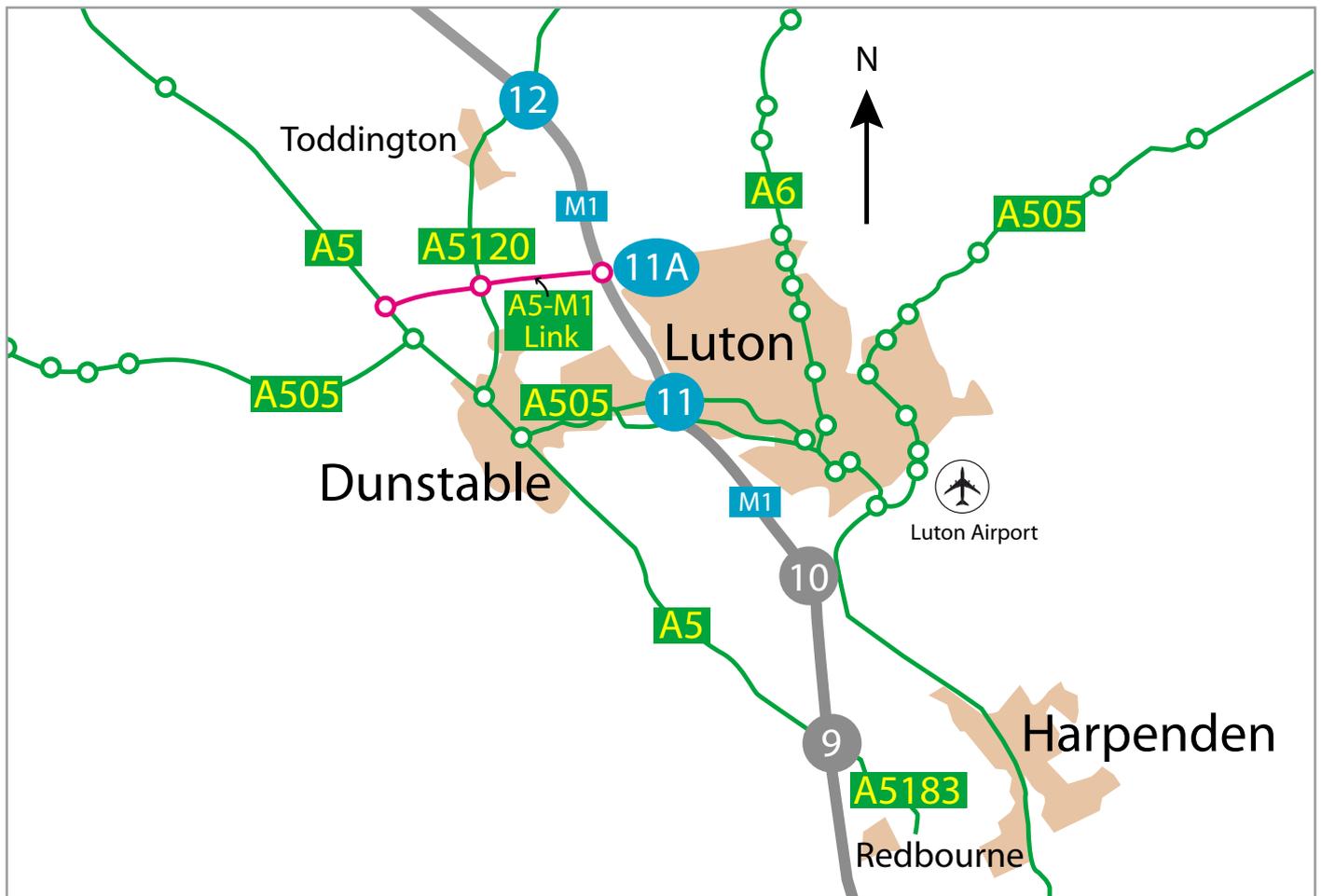
The Environmental Statement

This brochure is the Non-Technical Summary of the Environmental Statement for the proposed A5-M1 Link (Dunstable Northern Bypass).

An Environmental Statement (ES) is a detailed report of the findings of an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) of a proposed development. It describes the existing environmental conditions and then predicts the effects of the scheme on both the man-made and the natural environment. The ES also gives details of the measures proposed to reduce any negative impacts of the scheme on the environment.

The Environmental Statement is issued in accordance with EC Directive 85/337 (as amended by Directive 97/11/EEC) as applied by Section 105a of the Highways Act 1980, as amended. The Highways Agency (HA) has guidance on the standards and methodology to be used in the preparation of an ES and this has been followed for this assessment.

We would welcome your comments on the scheme. If you would like to view the complete ES, it is available to be viewed free of charge at the locations listed at the end of this brochure.



Scheme Location Plan

The Proposed Scheme

The HA proposes to construct a new road to the north of Dunstable between the existing A5 Trunk Road (just north of its junction with the A505) and the M1 motorway at a new Junction 11A (to the south of the existing Toddington Motorway Services area).

The Link would be a 4.5 km long dual two lane carriageway. There would be three road junctions:

- a roundabout at the western end with the A5;
- a roundabout near the middle at the intersection with the A5120 Bedford Road; and
- a new M1 motorway interchange at the eastern end which would be called Junction 11A.

There would also need to be some alterations to existing roads. A new bridge would carry Sundon Road over the Link. The new Junction 11A would require the B579 Luton Road, on the eastern side of the M1 motorway, to be diverted around the junction. It would also be realigned on the western side of the motorway with two new junctions with Sundon Road - one on either side of the M1, linked by a new overbridge across the M1.

The scheme would include two bridges passing over the A5-M1 Link for use by pedestrians and farm vehicles; one bridge for pedestrians and cyclists and one pedestrian only bridge. The scheme would include lighting from A5 to A5120, as well as signs, safety barriers and drainage to the appropriate standards. Important environmental characteristics of the design include a “low noise” road surface and noise barriers.

The construction programme would start with “Advance Works” (such as site preparation and clearance) from late 2010. Construction would then start on the links with the existing roads and the motorway slip roads starting from Spring 2011. The construction of the main road, including the bridges and other structures, would take place between Spring 2012 and Autumn 2013. The construction programme finishes with the landscaping in late 2013 and the start of a five year aftercare period.



Approach on A5120 from Toddington



View from Sewell Lane over A5 looking north west to landscape of route

Why the Work is Needed

The main scheme objective is to improve unreliable journey times on the A5 by providing a link to the M1 that is an alternative to the A5 through Dunstable. This would reduce the presence of long distance traffic in Dunstable going to or from the M1. In Dunstable, where congestion is worst, it affects safety and environmental conditions (such as air quality).



M1 at the proposed location of Junction 11A

Scheme History

The A5-M1 Link has been considered for development over the last twenty years. Bedfordshire County Council produced a preliminary design in 1988 and variations have been presented in a number of documents since. The Scheme was identified in the London South Midlands Multi Modal Study (2003) as part of an east to west route linking the A5 with the M1. It is currently included in the Local Plan.

Between 2002 and 2006, the two options considered by the Highways Agency for the route were:

- a route running close to Houghton Regis, passing between Houghton Regis Sewage Works and Thorn Road and following the line of the protected route shown in the South Bedfordshire Local Plan. This was referred to as the 'Southern Route'; and
- a route running further north of Houghton Regis, close to the line of electricity pylons north of Thorn Road and close to, but south of, to Chalton Ridge. This was referred to as the 'Northern Route'.

The two routes shared a Junction 11A location on the M1.

The Northern Route was formally announced as the Preferred Route in February 2007 by the Secretary of State for Transport. Since that date, the scheme design has been developed, integrating the road design with structures, earthworks, drainage and environmental requirements.



Typical view of arable landscape

Environmental Effects

The scheme would introduce a new road into a largely rural landscape, which would change the existing environment. The road has been developed to include measures to reduce and off-set any negative impacts on the environment.

The following sections summarise the key effects of the scheme on the environment, whether positive or negative, and indicate how these will be managed. An Environmental Context Plan is presented in the centre of this brochure. The plan shows the most significant environmental features in the area, which have been taken into account in the EIA and development of the scheme design.

Our assessment has collected data from the present and then considered the likely changes in the first year of operation of the scheme (2014) and then a point fifteen years later (2029) when the use of the road and associated environmental mitigation measures have been established.

Policies and Plans

The scheme has been assessed against relevant national, regional, sub regional and local planning policy. The development plan comprises of Regional

Spatial Strategies prepared by regional assemblies and government offices, as well as Development Plan documents prepared by district councils.

The scheme is referred to in the East of England Plan, the Milton Keynes and South Midlands Sub-Regional Study and Development Plans.

The scheme has been designed to, wherever practicable, avoid or minimise environmental impacts through mitigation measures in accordance with policy. The scheme complies with a number of policies, either wholly or in part, including those regarding transport, pollution control, noise and air quality. The scheme does, however, conflict with policy related to land use, ecology and nature conservation.

Whilst the HA does not wish to develop Green Belt land, “very special circumstances” exist to justify the scheme. First, the scheme is supported by the development plan; second, the scheme accords with national transport policy objectives; and finally the scheme’s detailed and individual objectives to improve accessibility while minimising environmental impacts.

The acknowledged wider benefits arising from increased accessibility, reduced congestion and improved safety are considered, on balance, to outweigh any environmental impacts that are likely to arise.

Land Use

Approximately 65 hectares of “best and most versatile” land (as defined by the Department of the Environment Farming and Rural Affairs (Defra)) would be taken as a result of constructing the scheme. This would affect five farms, although each farm would retain enough land, including access across the scheme (where necessary) to remain viable working farms. The livery business at Grove Farm is likely to be most affected through loss of land, although the design (bridge location and bridleway route) has been modified following discussions with the owners to minimise the impact on their key paddock areas. Overall, about 15.5 hectares of agricultural land occupied during construction would be restored to its original condition or better.

The scheme would also require the demolition of five residential properties - four of them on Luton Road on the site of the proposed Junction 11A and Chalton Cross Lodge just to the west of the M1.



View across the valley and Scheme at western end

Cultural Heritage

The term Cultural Heritage includes historic buildings and structures, archaeological remains and the historic landscape. The most important cultural heritage feature within the area is the Thorn Spring medieval moated site, which is designated as a Scheduled Ancient Monument. The alignment of the scheme has been designed to avoid direct physical impacts on this feature. The presence of the road would, however, have some effect on the overall setting of the site by changing, to some extent, the visual aspect (including road lighting) and also the noise level experienced at the site. This would be reduced by the use of a noise bund and landscape planting to screen the monument from the scheme.

A total of nine sites of archaeological significance (including the Thorn Spring Scheduled Ancient Monument) have been identified along the scheme’s route corridor. At each of these sites, appropriate procedures comprising either “preservation in-situ” (leaving it untouched) or “preservation by record” (which is archaeological excavation and recording) would reduce the impacts of the scheme.

There would be adverse impacts on two historic motorway structures, as they would be demolished, and the settings of three undesignated historic buildings. The impact of the scheme on historic buildings would be reduced by using landscaping, noise barriers, tree and hedgerow planting to blend the scheme into the landscape.

The impact of the scheme on the historic landscape would be reduced by appropriate landscape design, screening and where possible the integration of existing historic landscape features into the scheme’s design.

Landscape and Visual Effects

The landscape and visual effects of the scheme have been taken into account in the proposed design. The scheme would have an impact on the landscape including loss of farmland and also some existing vegetation through changing the ground profile with embankments and cuttings. In addition, there would be some effect on tranquillity through the introduction of lighting and traffic noise.

Views of the road from existing houses and public rights of way would be partially screened by planting and construction of earthwork mounds or bunds. These bunds would be shaped so that they blend into the landscape and would also help reduce noise levels at existing houses. Lighting would be provided where it is needed for safety and the lighting would be specified to minimise light intrusion away from the road into the landscape.



Slow worm



Badger

The scheme aims to retain as much of the existing vegetation as possible. Proposed planting would link existing vegetated areas and form routes for use by wildlife. Overall, significantly more planting would be provided than is lost. Clearly, where planting is to be provided, it would take time to mature and provide the full benefit and so the impact during construction and soon after completion is likely to be the greatest.

Ecology and Nature Conservation

Whilst the area of the proposed road is currently rural, the habitat for wildlife is of relatively low quality – most of the land within the area of the scheme is arable, with some pasture. There are very few areas of mature planting with trees and shrubs that are affected by the scheme. There are no statutory or non-statutory designated sites affected by the scheme.

The scheme would sever a number of hedgerows. To compensate, the scheme design includes new hedgerows, linear scrub with trees and woodland planting along the majority of its length.

Grassland lost would be compensated by the extensive provision of new grassland in the embankments, cuttings and roundabouts which would be managed to be more beneficial to wildlife. The scheme includes a relatively deep cutting where exposure of chalk would allow scope for the encouragement of chalk loving grassland, a habitat characteristic of the local area, but not found in the vicinity of the scheme at present.

Where the scheme passes close to ponds known to have great crested newts, new ecology ponds would be provided (one on each side of the scheme at Thorn Farm and another one at Grove Farm bridge), providing replacement foraging habitat and additional breeding sites.

The scheme would pass through arable fields that are important for their populations of scarce arable flora. To compensate for the loss of these plants, seeds would be collected from affected fields and be made available for planting at other nearby sites.

Surveys of buildings to be demolished indicate they are unlikely to support bats. Only a very few trees would be lost and none of the trees that would be affected are likely to be used by bats. Planting of trees and shrubs is included in the design, to encourage foraging by bats.

One existing main badger sett would be lost to the scheme and a replacement sett would be provided. Mammal tunnels would be provided at various locations to allow safe passage under the dual carriageway and fencing would be used to direct badgers and other animals towards tunnels and overbridges.

The area around the scheme supports a range of breeding and wintering birds, although the densities are low. To minimise impacts, vegetation clearance would be avoided during the breeding season and planting of native shrubs, trees and hedgerows as well as the creation of flower-rich grasslands within the landscape design would result in a net gain in suitable breeding and foraging habitat.



Vegetation alongside Ouzel Brook

Geology and Soils



Agricultural landscape

The road would be built on Chalk, which is about 50m thick, underlain by clay. No significant possible sources of ground contamination have been identified along the scheme from considering the history of the area and taking soil samples.

The most important geological feature associated with the scheme would be a cutting, approximately 6.5m deep and 800m long in the eastern half of the route. This would be left as an exposed chalk face, which would seed naturally over time, providing geological and visual interest.

The scheme would require a considerable amount of material to construct the embankments and bunds. Much of this would come from within the site during excavation and clearance, but some would also need to be brought in from elsewhere. This is discussed in “Disruption Due to Construction” towards the end of this brochure.

Road Drainage and the Water Environment

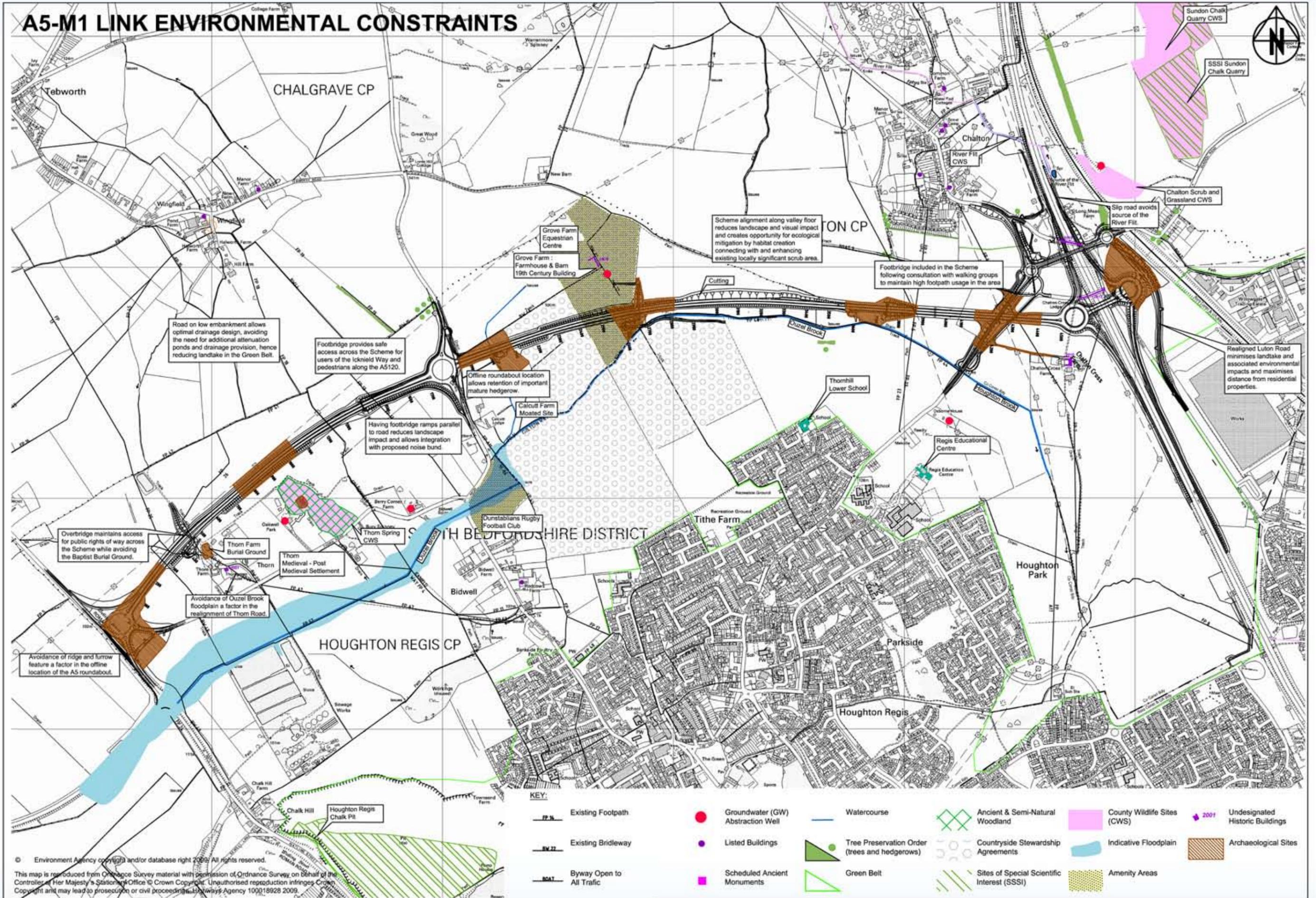
Part of the scheme is close to the Ouzel Brook (which becomes the River Ouzel further to the west). The only watercourse that the scheme crosses is a tributary of Ouzel Brook. The line of the proposed road has been selected to be far enough away from Ouzel Brook to avoid affecting it and its floodplain.

The scheme is located over ground classified as a Major Aquifer, from which groundwater is abstracted for public water supply in Luton. There are also seven other groundwater abstraction points in the area. There are no surface water abstractions in the area.

The road drainage system has been designed to avoid significant impact on the natural surface and groundwater features mentioned above. The scheme design includes nine culverts to maintain the existing natural drainage flow across the land crossed by the road.

Rainwater runoff from the road would collect in drains and discharge via balancing ponds into the Ouzel Brook, the upper reaches of the River Flit and Houghton Stream. The ponds would be capable of holding a 1 in 100 year storm, plus an allowance for climate change. These ponds allow silt and other material to settle out and also for the water to be held and released into the receiving watercourse gradually. In the event of a serious accident, pollutants washed into the drains would be contained in these drainage networks before being pumped to a tanker and taken away for treatment.

A5-M1 LINK ENVIRONMENTAL CONSTRAINTS



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Noise and Vibration

Although the scheme would introduce a main road into a predominantly rural environment, the areas at the ends of the scheme already experience noise from the existing A5 and the M1.

During construction, the application of considerate work practices should maintain construction noise below relevant guidance levels. Vibration from construction and operation is unlikely to cause building damage, even of a cosmetic nature, to the nearest properties.

When the scheme opens, it is estimated that there would be a short-term increase in the number of people potentially bothered by traffic noise. In the long-term, it is estimated that there would be a slight decrease in the number of people potentially bothered by traffic noise compared to if the scheme did not go ahead.

The new road would be constructed with a “low noise” surface and noise fencing or bunding would be provided at appropriate locations to screen road traffic noise. None of the retained properties in the vicinity would experience increases in noise above levels that would require additional noise insulation at the property.



Noise Fence

Air Quality

The traffic associated with the scheme and the changes in traffic flows on the existing highway network would potentially affect air pollution levels for local residents. This is due to changes in both the amount and location of traffic exhaust emissions. The demolition and construction works associated with the scheme also have the potential to generate dust into the air.

Locations in Dunstable and the Luton area in the vicinity

the M1 have previously been identified by the relevant Local Authorities as being sensitive to air quality impacts and have consequently been declared as “Air Quality Management Areas” (AQMAs). Because the scheme would have a direct impact on traffic on the M1 and A5, our assessment has taken account of potential impacts on both the Dunstable and Luton AQMAs.

The scheme would contribute to the achievement of national air quality standards within Dunstable town centre, by reducing the amount of pollution. The proposed retention of the speed limit mitigation system on the M1 J10 – 13 Improvement (Hard Shoulder Running) scheme would help to reduce vehicle exhaust emissions within the Luton AQMA. Overall, the scheme would not have a significant effect on the achievement of national air quality standards for nitrogen dioxide, within the AQMAs.

During construction, the application of considerate work and environmental management practices should avoid any significant effects on air quality.

The scheme would result in a slight net decrease in total emissions of pollutants from the affected surrounding roads and new link road compared to predictions without the scheme in 2014 and in 2029.

Pedestrians, Cyclists, Horse Riders and Community Effects

There are twelve Public Rights of Way and four local roads that would be crossed by the scheme (A5, A5120 Bedford Road, Sundon Road and B579 Luton Road) that provide routes for Non-Motorised Users (NMU) between housing, workplaces and community facilities in the area. These routes include public footpaths and bridleways, a Byway Open to All Traffic and the established long-distance route known as the Icknield Way.

The most used routes in the area are, firstly, Sundon Road, which is used by cyclists and horse riders on circular routes from Grove Farm (where the horses are stabled) and, secondly, public footpaths between Chalton, Houghton Regis and industrial units in north Luton used by local people to access key community facilities and employment.

The scheme would provide a number of crossing points to preserve these routes. The four roads would be retained, although with some modification, and four footbridges (one suitable for horses) would be built. As many of the existing Public Rights of Way are close to each other, some would be combined and cross at one

of the bridges or roads. The diversions to the bridges are generally less than 500m long.

Vehicle Travellers

The scheme has been designed to provide a safe and reliable road and to reduce congestion in Dunstable. The scheme would include clear signage and lighting at appropriate locations, such as on the approaches to junctions, to minimise driver stress.

The scheme also has benefits for drivers on the existing highway network by relieving congestion on other roads, in particular through Dunstable town centre.



Public footpath

Disruption Due to Construction

Construction should begin in the Spring of 2011 (although site preparation will start in late 2010) and the road should be complete by the end of 2013. This period will see a lot of activity to construct the road, although disruption would be kept to a minimum.

The construction works can be divided into a number of overlapping activities. First, there will be a number of site preparation tasks; these include clearing the site, making it secure and setting up a number of site compounds for staff and materials. There would be temporary access to the M1, at the location of the proposed Junction 11A, as an access to the site. This means that use of local roads for many of the vehicles and deliveries can be avoided. This phase would also include putting in place many of the environmental action plans, such as relocating ecological habitats, archaeological recording and preservation, and early landscaping to provide screening from some of the construction works. Most of the construction works, including temporary compounds, would be within the final road boundary, although some land would be taken temporarily during the construction

period before being reinstated.

The main construction activities include demolition of five properties at the eastern end of the scheme and the existing bridges over the M1, building embankments, excavating cuttings and constructing the road and associated junctions. The main construction phase will also include the building of the main structures, which are the Junction 11A and Luton Road bridges over the M1, the new Sundon Road bridge over the A5-M1 Link, the two farm access over bridges (at Thorn Farm and Grove Farm), and the two footpath bridges (on Icknield Way and also on the footpath between Chalton and Houghton Regis).

All material excavated during construction would be used wherever possible for the construction of earthworks and landscaping purposes. The scheme has been designed to minimise the requirement to import earthworks materials to the site, however it will be necessary to import up to 80,000 m³ of material to construct the scheme.

The main environmental impacts that can occur during construction of a scheme of this scale include:

- construction noise and vibration;
- generation of dust, for example from stockpiles and haul roads;
- deposition of mud on roads;
- accidental spillages of fuels, oil or other materials from poor management;
- visual intrusion;
- impacts on ecology and cultural heritage features
- traffic delays; and
- footpath diversions.

The scheme has been designed to minimise this disruption as much as possible during construction. Detailed action plans would be developed to manage these issues, including a Construction Environmental Management Plan, which would identify all of the relevant environmental issues, explain why they might be sensitive, how they would be managed and how the impacts would be minimised during the site works. All of the construction site staff will be made aware of these issues and receive appropriate environmental training.

Throughout the construction works, liaison would be undertaken with the relevant authorities and local residents to keep them informed of planned activities and respond to any comments and queries which may arise.

Summary of Environmental Effects

The table below and on the following page summarises the environmental impacts of the scheme proposals on the local environment. A plan showing the environmental constraints on the scheme is included in the centre pages of this document.

Topic	Key Issues	How would we reduce the impact	Long term impact
Policies and Plans	Consideration of national, regional and local policies.	Measures to address issues and protect features identified by national, regional and local policies.	The scheme is generally consistent with the aims and objectives of planning policy and guidance regarding transport and facilitating development. However, the scheme would conflict at least in part with policies on agriculture, archaeology, ecology and landscape and visual impacts.
Land Use and Agriculture	Loss of 'best and most versatile' agricultural land. Demolition of five properties. Temporary disruption to farming activities and permanent severance of grazing fields impacting upon five agricultural units and Grove Farm Livery business.	Measures incorporated to reduce farm severance and improve accessibility. Restoration of land required temporarily on completion of construction. Relocation of BW22 to avoid closure during construction.	Permanent loss of 65ha of 'best and most versatile' agricultural land. Demolition of five residential properties (1-4 Chalton Cross Cottages and Chalton Cross Lodge).
Cultural Heritage	Impacts on setting of nine archaeological sites including one Scheduled Ancient Monument of High Value, one site of Medium Value and four sites of Low Value; and Moderate Adverse effects at three other sites, all of Medium Value. Also impact on the setting of some low value historic buildings.	Detailed programme of archaeological works would be carried out prior to construction. Screening, landscaping and scheme design elements would be used to minimise the effect of the scheme on the buildings and one Scheduled Ancient Monument.	Overall the scheme would have a slight adverse effect on cultural heritage within the scheme corridor.
Landscape and Visual Effects	Visual impacts on occupants of nearby properties and users of Public Rights of Way. Extensive removal of existing vegetation. Introduction of lighting and sign gantries.	Extensive new landscape planting that will mature, integrating the majority of the features into the landscape.	Overall it is considered that the scheme would have a moderate adverse residual effect on the prevailing landscape and the identified visual receptors.
Ecology and Nature Conservation	The scheme would pass through fields containing scarce arable flora, and would also require the severance of several hedgerows. The area around the scheme supports a range of breeding and wintering birds, although the densities are low. Loss of a main badger sett.	Off-site mitigation for arable flora impacts, subject to agreement. New foraging habitat and breeding sites provided for great crested newts. Vegetation clearance would be avoided during the breeding season. Planting within the landscape design would result in a net gain in suitable bird breeding and foraging habitat. Replacement badger sett would be provided prior to closure of existing sett, mammal tunnels provided to allow road to be crossed.	In general, by fifteen years after opening, the Scheme would have a slight adverse effect on ecological features of the area, due to the severance and habitat loss being largely offset by the increased semi-natural habitats and greater diversity.

Topic	Key Issues	How would we reduce the impact	Long term impact
Geology and Soils	Potential to encounter contaminated soils from localised historical and current potentially contaminative land uses.	Good site practices as identified in the Construction Environmental Management Plan would be strictly adhered to.	Potential residual impacts are considered to be negligible from contaminated land.
Road Drainage and the Water Environment	Impacts associated with road runoff. Risk of impacts on watercourses and groundwater during construction.	Surface water runoff would be transferred to attenuation ponds capable of holding a 1 in 100 year storm, plus an allowance for climate change.	Overall the scheme would have a neutral effect on the surface water and groundwater resources of the area.
Noise and Vibration	Construction noise levels at nearby locations. Increased traffic levels generating more noise.	Employment of good site practices, including well maintained plant, will ensure that construction noise levels are kept as low as is practicable. Provision of noise bunding and/or fencing to sensitive locations adjacent to the scheme. Construction of new road with a low noise surface.	Overall the scheme would have a slight adverse impact on nearby receptors upon opening, tending towards a negligible impact over the long term.
Air Quality	Levels of air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions. Traffic affected in Air Quality Management Areas in Luton and Dunstable.	Speed control on the M1 through Luton when necessary.	Overall the scheme would have a negligible impact terms of emissions of pollutants compared to if the scheme did not go ahead. Greenhouse gas emissions would also decrease slightly with the scheme.
Pedestrians, Cyclists, Equestrians & Community Effects	Disruption to the local Non Motorised User (NMU) network during the construction phase through temporary severance and diversion of routes. Some NMUs would also experience a temporary reduction in amenity value.	The erection of site fencing and soil and material storage piles may act as temporary mitigation measures in terms of screening views of construction activities. The Construction Environmental Management Plan would further mitigate against adverse impacts. New crossing facilities provided over the Link.	Some adverse effects on rights of way but beneficial community effects from the scheme include the provision of new shared footways/ cycleways and the extension of the bridleway network across the study area.
Vehicle Travellers	Visual impacts of construction activities upon vehicle travellers using the local road network. Current congestion is likely to result in driver stress.	Comprehensive designed planting scheme would ensure that vehicle traveller's views from the surrounding road network would suffer no adverse impact at operation of the scheme. The scheme would improve safety and traffic flows in the area.	Overall the scheme would reduce stress experienced by vehicle travellers by reducing congestion.
Disruption due to Construction	Noise, dust, nuisance and visual impacts during the construction phase.	Good site practices as identified in the Construction Environmental Management Plan would be strictly adhered to.	Effects of construction would be temporary, lasting approximately two years.

Viewing the Environmental Statement

You can inspect the Draft Orders and Environment Statement free of charge during normal office hours from 9th December 2009 for 12 weeks until 2nd March 2010 at the following locations:

- Government Office for the East of England,
Eastbrook,
Shaftesbury Road,
Cambridge
CB2 8DF
- Highways Agency,
5 Broadway,
Broad Street,
Birmingham
B15 1BL
- Highways Agency,
Manton Lane,
Manton Lane Industrial Estate,
Bedford
MK41 7LW
- Bedford Borough Council
Borough Hall,
Cauldwell Street
Bedford
MK42 9AP
- Luton Borough Council,
Town Hall,
George Street,
Luton
LU1 2BQ
- Central Bedfordshire Council
The District Offices,
High Street North,
Dunstable,
LU6 1LF
- Houghton Regis Town Council,
Council Offices,
Peel Street,
Houghton Regis
Bedfordshire
LU5 5EY
- Dunstable Town Council,
Grove House,
76 High Street North,
Dunstable,
Bedfordshire
LU6 1NF

The full Environmental Statement will also be available via a link on the Highways Agency website, www.highways.gov.uk



The Ouzel Valley

Your Views

Your views are important to us. If you wish to support, comment on, or object to the Draft Orders, you should write to the HA (quoting reference HA 065/009/000387) at the address on the back page of this brochure no later than 2nd March 2010.

The information you send us may need to be passed to colleagues within the Highways Agency, or agents acting on our behalf. We will assume that you are content for us to do this. Please ensure that, if you want your name or response to be kept confidential, you state this clearly in your response. Confidential responses will be included in any statistical summary of numbers of comments received and views expressed.

Printed copies of the Environmental Statement can be purchased at a cost of £300 each or at a charge of £25 on CD ROM. To obtain copies, you should contact the Highways Agency at the address on the back page of this brochure quoting PR221/09.

What Happens Next?

Depending upon the nature and number of objections received, a Public Inquiry may be held before an independent Inspector. If an Inquiry is to be held, all those who have responded will be notified of the date and the venue at least six weeks beforehand. Notices will also appear in the local press.

All comments received will be made available to the Inspector, who may decide to make them public. Should any alternative routes be proposed by objectors, they would be publicised in the local press so that anyone affected would have the opportunity to support, comment on or object to them.

The Secretary of State will consider the Inspector's report, together with any objections and representations made, before making his decision on the future of the scheme.

Booklets explaining the statutory procedures and arrangements for rights of compensation can be obtained free of charge from the project team at the Highways Agency address on the back of this brochure.

Further Information

If you have any questions please write to:

**A5-M1 Link Team,
Highways Agency,
5 Broadway,
Broad Street,
Birmingham
B15 1BL**

Email: A5-M1Link_DunstableNorthernBypass@highways.gsi.gov.uk

Website: www.highways.gov.uk

Safety at roadworks



The Highways Agency is working with the industry and road users to reduce the risks of working on the roads.

For the safety of roadworkers and all road users, when you are approaching roadworks:

- Keep within the speed limit – it is there for your safety.
- Get into the correct lane in good time – don't keep switching.
- Concentrate on the road ahead, not the roadworks.
- Be alert for works traffic leaving or entering roadworks.
- Keep a safe distance – there could be queues in front.
- Observe all signs – they are there to help you.

