

Improving the environment | **A556** Knutsford to Bowdon **Preferred Route Announcement**



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Preferred Route Announcement

Introduction

In March 2007 a Public Consultation exercise began to seek the views of the public on the Highways Agency's initial proposals to improve the A556 between Junction 19 of the M6 and Junction 7 of the M56.

This leaflet summarises the results of the Public Consultation and presents the Preferred Route announced by the Secretary of State for Transport on 16 December 2008.

Scheme Objectives

The objectives of this scheme are to improve road safety and journey reliability by upgrading the existing sub-standard route to modern dual carriageway standards, whilst protecting the environment as far as possible.

Public Consultation

During the last week of March 2007 a public consultation leaflet and questionnaire were distributed through the local free newspaper network to approximately 6500 residential and business properties in the locality. An additional number of leaflets were delivered directly to houses along the route of the existing A556 and copies were also deposited at local shops, post offices and public buildings.

Views of other consultees were also sought, including Parish, District and County Councils,

national environmental protection bodies and local and national non-motorised user groups. Two possible route options were presented to the public. These are known as Option A and Option B.

A Public Exhibition was held on 11 and 12 May 2007 at the Cottons Hotel and Spa, Manchester Road, Knutsford. The period of the Public Consultation closed on 2nd July 2007.

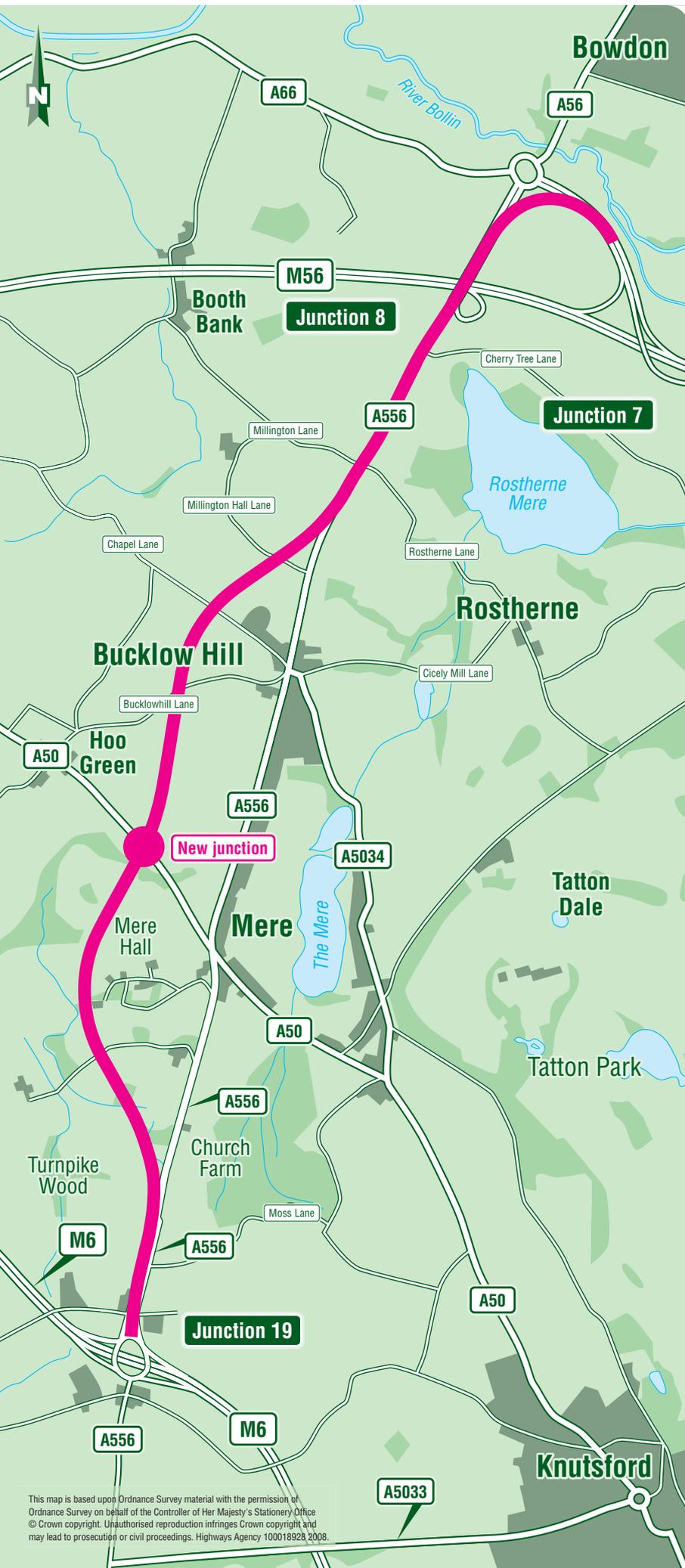
Response to the Public Consultation

A total of 257 people attended the 2-day Public Exhibition. The Highways Agency received 396 completed questionnaires. The responses indicated a high degree of support for the principle of re-routing and upgrading the A556, with 87% of respondents supporting the principle.

The majority of people who responded favoured Option B, with 83% of people expressing their preference for it. 5% of respondents supported Option A and 12% supported neither route.

Amendments following Public Consultation

In response to concerns that were raised by the public during the Public Consultation, minor amendments were made to Option B. These were to relocate the junction with the A50 further north to where the A50 intersects with the



bypass. The proposed link between Chapel Lane and Millington Hall Lane has also been removed.

Decision of the Secretary of State for Transport

The Secretary of State for Transport has considered the views expressed by the public and agrees that Option B, as shown on the adjacent plan, should be the preferred route.

What happens next?

Option B as shown in this leaflet will be designated as the Preferred Route for upgrading this section of the A556. Land in the vicinity of the preferred route will be protected from development.

Further consultation with stakeholders will take place and the design of the Preferred Route will be developed in more detail to identify the land that will need to be acquired to construct the scheme. This will involve the development of junction layouts, drainage requirements and suitable environmental mitigation measures such as landscaping and planting.

Once this work has been completed draft Highway Statutory Orders and an Environmental Statement will be published. The public will then have an opportunity to consider the proposals and make representations and objections to the scheme. If objections to the Draft Orders are received a Public Inquiry may be held.

Map of the area showing the line of the Preferred Route

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