

Regional Investment Programme (RIP)

M6 Junction 19 Improvement

PCF Stage 3 Planning Statement

HA548641-CH2-GEN-M6J19_XX-RP-C-0005

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The M6 Junction 19 (J19) near Knutsford, Cheshire provides the interchange between the M6 and the A556. With the completion of the A556 Knutsford to Bowdon Improvement to the north of M6 J19 and the (under construction) M6 J16-19 Smart Motorway Scheme to the south, this junction has been identified as a constraint to traffic travelling between the M6 and Manchester. Without intervention at the junction, congestion is expected to be such that queues on the slip roads would extend back onto the M6 mainline with associated impacts on safety and network operation. The delivery of the M6 J19 improvement, together with improvements to the A556, M6 and M56, forms part of a comprehensive upgrade of Manchester's southern access.

This Planning Statement is required as part of Project Control Framework (PCF) Stage 3 for the scheme, which requires a Highways Act 1980 Order. The PCF provides a robust and clearly structured process for the management and delivery of Highway England's schemes. PCF Stages 1 and 2 have already taken place and took account of the requirements of local and national planning policies to support the option selection process. This Planning Statement for PCF Stage 3 provides sufficient information to support the submission of an Order to the Secretary of State for confirmation, and to inform any inquiry held by the Planning Inspectorate.

This Planning Statement has been prepared taking account of the complexity of the scheme and identifies national and local planning policy documents that are relevant for the scheme and its context. It also provides an assessment of the scheme against the relevant policies.

The scheme is provided for in various policy documents. It is listed as a commitment in the Department for Transport's (DfT) Regional Investment Strategy (RIS) 1 and Highways England's Strategic Business Plan. It is also provided for in the Macclesfield Local Plan (adopted 2004) (saved Policy T7 (Safeguarded Routes)), Cheshire East Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) update (2016), and the Local Transport Plan (LTP) (2011–2026).

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ABBREVIATIONS

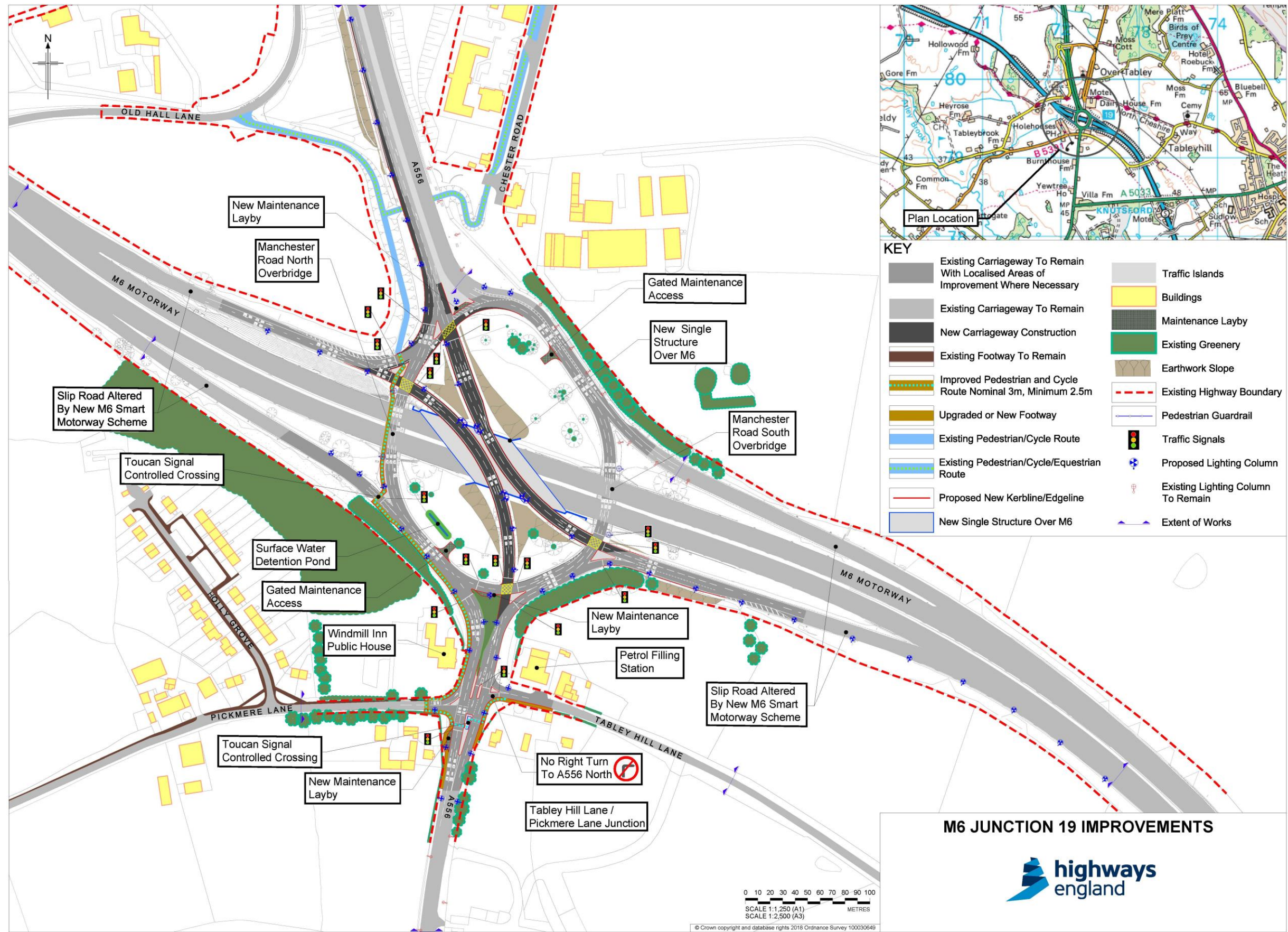
AQA	Air Quality Assessment
BCR	Benefit Cost Ratio
CEC	Cheshire East Council
CEMP	Construction Environmental Management Plan
DCO	Development Consent Order
DfT	Department for Transport
DMRB	Design Manual for Roads and Bridges
EAR	Environmental Assessment Report
EDS	Economic Development Strategy
ESR	Environmental Study Report
IANs	Interim Advice Notes
IDP	Infrastructure Delivery Plan
J19	Junction 19
LPS	Local Plan Strategy
LTP	Local Transport Plan
LWS	Local Wildlife Site
MWDPD	Minerals and Waste Development Plan Document
NMU	Non-Motorised User
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework
NPS	National Policy Statement
NO ₂	Nitrogen Dioxide
NSIP	Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project
PCF	Project Control Framework
PVB	Present Value of Benefits
PVC	Present Value of Costs
RIS	Road Investment Strategy
SADPD	Site Allocations and Development Policies Document
SPD	Supplementary Planning Document
SSSI	Site of Special Scientific Interest
SRN	Strategic Road Network

1 Introduction

1.1 Scheme summary

- 1.1.1 The M6 J19 near Knutsford, Cheshire, provides the interchange between the M6 and the A556 and is identified within the London to Scotland Route Based Strategy as a key junction capacity issue on the Strategic Road Network (SRN).
- 1.1.2 Although the M6 J19 Improvement (the scheme) falls within the boundary of authority for both Highways England and Cheshire East Council (CEC), the scheme is being developed by Highways England as part of the Regional Investment Programme.
- 1.1.3 With the completion of the A556 Knutsford to Bowdon Improvement to the north of the junction and the (under construction) M6 J16-19 Smart Motorway Scheme to the south, this junction has been identified as a constraint to traffic travelling between the M6 and Manchester. Without intervention at the junction, congestion, notably for traffic movements between the M6 northbound off slips and A556 north, it is expected to be such that queues on the slip road would extend back onto the M6 mainline with associated impacts on safety and network operation. The scheme together with improvements to the A556, M6 and M56, forms part of a comprehensive upgrade of Manchester's southern access.
- 1.1.4 The Preferred Route Announcement by Highways England (June 2017) confirmed the selection of Option A which provides for two new internal links to allow better connections between the M6 and A556. This requires the construction of a throughabout bridge within the existing junction. The throughabout bridge will span the M6 motorway. It will remove substantial traffic volumes travelling from the M6 off slips to the A556 north and south from the existing circulatory carriageway. Traffic modelling during PCF Stage 2 concluded Option A would solve anticipated junction performance issues and provide much-improved future performance both in terms of operation and safety up to 2041. These primary operational and safety issues were: congestion on the junction circulatory; which caused queuing on the slip roads, and potential for standing traffic on the M6 mainline.
- 1.1.5 Following the Preferred Route Announcement in June 2017, an additional lane has been included on the northbound throughabout link alongside a short length of widening to three lanes on the A556 northbound. . These changes are illustrated in Figure 1-1.
- 1.1.6 The scheme also includes renewal of traffic signals on the roundabout and its approach roads alongside new traffic signals for the existing Tabley Hill Lane/Pickmere Lane priority junction where future congestion is anticipated to impact on the SRN. Local access for walkers and cyclists will be improved as part of the scheme connecting to new routes constructed as part of the A556 Knutsford to Bowdon project. The General Arrangement drawing for the scheme is provided in Figure 1-1.

Figure 1-1 – M6 J19 Improvement General Arrangement



1.2 Consenting Regime

- 1.2.1 The Planning Act 2008 ('2008 Act') was introduced in November 2008. It makes provisions about, and matters ancillary to, the authorisation of development for any Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP), prescribed by the Act, and any other development where the relevant Secretary of State may direct that the scheme is of National Significance and should be dealt with by a Development Consent Order (DCO) under the 2008 Act.
- 1.2.2 Section 14 of the 2008 Act defines NSIPs. In relation to Highways proposals, Section 14 (h) "*highway-related development*", as defined under Section 22 of the 2008 Act, is a NSIP.
- 1.2.3 In the main, highway projects requiring a DCO are Trunk Road highway works, i.e. works of construction/alteration of a highway for which the Secretary of State (for Transport), or Highways England as the Strategic Highways Company, will be the Highway Authority and which exceed identified works area thresholds; or improvement of a highway which is likely to have a significant effect on the environment and for which the Secretary of State, or Highways England, is the Highway Authority.
- 1.2.4. An assessment has been carried out to determine the appropriate consenting route for the scheme. Whether the scheme requires a Section 10 Highways Act 1980 Trunking (Line) Order or a DCO via the Planning Act 2008 depends on the type of works proposed and certain criteria. The proposed internal link roads will be All Purpose Trunk Roads with a speed limit of 50mph or more, as such:
- a) If the scheme was determined to be a construction or alteration scheme and the area of development does not exceed 12.5 hectares then a Section 10 Highways Act 1980 Order is appropriate. If the area of development exceeds 12.5 hectares then a DCO would be required.
 - b) If the works qualify as highway improvement works (and could be carried out in reliance on the highway improvement powers set out in Part V of the Highways Act 1980) then they could be undertaken under the particular power(s) of improvement set out in part V of the Highway Act 1980 provided that they would not have a significant effect upon the environment. If that is not the case then a DCO is necessary.
- 1.2.5 Taking the above requirements into consideration, the following conclusions have been made:
- a) The scheme comprises new All Purpose Trunk Road highway works which could not be undertaken in their entirety under Part V of the Highways Act 1980. The scheme qualifies as an alteration scheme and Highways England must pursue a legal order which would establish the new internal link roads as new highways in this location.
 - b) The overall area of development for these works does not exceed 12.5 hectares. As such a DCO is not required and the new highways can be authorised by a Section 10 Highways Act 1980 order.

1.3 Relevance and purpose of this Planning Statement

- 1.3.1 PCF Stages 1 and 2 have already taken place and took into account the requirements of local and national planning policies to support the option selection process.
- 1.3.2 This Planning Statement is required as part of PCF Stage 3 for the scheme, which requires a Highways Act 1980 Order. The report needs to provide sufficient information to support the submission of an Order to the Secretary of State for confirmation, and to inform any inquiry held by the Planning Inspectorate. As the scheme will be delivered pursuant to the Highways Act 1980 then planning permission is not required as Highways England benefits from the provisions of Class B of Part 9 of Schedule 2 to the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015. That said, the Secretary of State may only confirm the Section 10 Order if satisfied that the requirements of local and national planning policy has been considered.
- 1.3.3 This Planning Statement has been prepared taking account of the complexity of the scheme and identifies the relevant national and local planning policy documents for the scheme and its context. It also provides an assessment of the scheme against the relevant policies - see Section 2.1.

2 The Scheme

2.1 Policy support for the scheme

- 2.1.1 The scheme is listed as a commitment in the DfT's RIS 1 (2015-2020), which was published in March 2015 (see Section 4.2), and Highways England's Strategic Business Plan 2015-2020.
- 2.1.2 The Strategic Business Plan sets out how Highways England will deliver the investment plan and performance requirements set out within the RIS 1 years. It also sets out Highways England's main activities and describes how they will go about delivering the Investment Plan.
- 2.1.3 The scheme is also referenced in the Macclesfield Local Plan (adopted 2004) (saved Policy T7 (Safeguarded Routes)), Cheshire East IDP update (2016), and the Local Transport Plan (2011–2026).

2.2 Key scheme objectives

- 2.2.1 The objectives of the scheme have been developed based on a study into future problems at the junction undertaken during previous project development stages. These objectives contribute to the performance objectives defined in the RIS 1 (see paragraph 2.2.2):
- Make the network safer by reviewing operational safety issues at the junction and reducing the chance of any queues forming that would impact the M6.
 - Improve user satisfaction by providing quicker and more reliable journeys through the junction.
 - Support the smooth flow of traffic by maximising the operational capability at the junction.
 - Encourage economic growth by providing additional junction capacity and making journey times more reliable, enabling proposed economic growth and development to come forward at key locations such as Airport City.
 - Deliver better environmental outcomes by reducing congestion at the junction which contributes to air quality issues.
 - Help cyclists, walkers, and other vulnerable users of the network by considering the needs of these users and how their requirements can be designed into the junctions.
- 2.2.2 The RIS 1 detailed eight objectives which broadly link back to the Strategic Vision, which is to *“Our ambition for the next 25 years is to revolutionise our strategic roads to create a modern SRN that supports a modern Britain”*. The objectives are detailed below:
- Making the network safer

- Improving user satisfaction
- Supporting the smooth flow of traffic
- Encouraging economic growth
- Delivering better environmental outcomes
- Helping cyclists, walkers and other vulnerable users of the network
- Achieving real efficiency
- Keeping the network in good condition

2.2.3 The RIS 1 objective, “*delivering better environmental outcomes*”, includes the following key performance indicators:

- Halting net biodiversity loss
- Mitigating at least 1,150 Defra Noise Important Areas

2.2.4 Highways England's Delivery Plan 2015-2020 sets out a number of strategic outcomes:

- Supporting economic growth
- A safe and serviceable network
- A more free-flowing network
- Improved environment
- An accessible and integrated network

2.3 Key features of the scheme

2.3.1 The scheme includes the following elements:

- Addition of two new one-way links across the junction to allow better connection between the M6 and A556, including a new bridge spanning the M6 motorway within the roundabout. The links will be at-grade with the roundabout.
- An additional third lane will be added to the approach/exit on the north west node of the junction in order to further enhance the connection between the M6 and A556.
- Replacement traffic signals control for all junction approaches, except the A556 southbound.
- New traffic signal control at the Tabley Hill Lane/Pickmere Lane Junction.

- Realignment of the roundabout carriageway near the new A556 approach to increase lane widths.
- New signing strategy to reflect highway and junction layout changes including signs advising drivers of the 'New Road Layout Ahead'.
- Improvements to non-motorised user (NMU) facilities, including a new shared pedestrian/cyclists route on the existing northern arm of the roundabout, with signal-controlled crossings. Crossing facilities would also be provided at the Tabley Hill/Pickmere Lane junction where no crossing provision is currently in place. The improved NMU route will connect into the existing facilities provided to the north and south of J19.
- New lighting will be installed on the roundabout, M6 northbound and southbound on and off slip roads and the A556 south in order to reflect changes to the highway and junction layout.
- Existing kerb and gully, kerb outlet and combined kerb drains on the existing circulatory will be extended or modified to suit proposed layout. New combined kerb drainage systems will be installed on the new links and bridge deck. An attenuation pond will be installed on the inner circulatory south-west quadrant of the junction.

2.3.2 The new bridge will comprise of a two-span weathering steel concrete composite deck with end screen abutments and a pier in the central reserve of the M6 carriageway. The new bridge will be formed from new bridge abutments founded on piles. Earthworks embankments are also required on the approach and to tie in the abutment wingwalls to the existing structures.

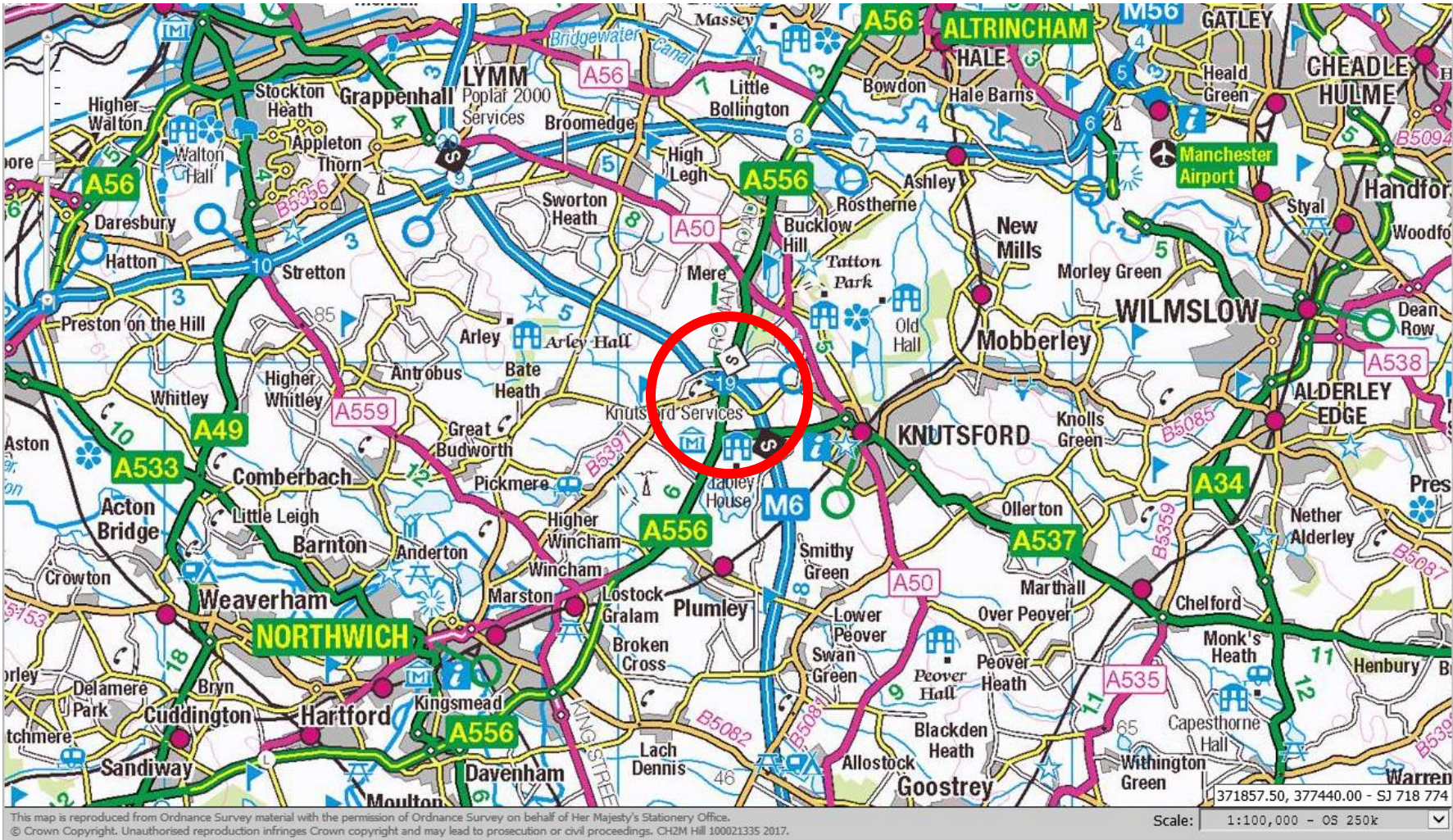
2.3.3 It is not anticipated that works will extend outside the existing highway boundaries. Therefore, no additional land use other than what already forms the footprint of the existing M6 J19 and M6 motorway is expected.

2.3.4 Temporary access for site vehicles during the construction phase is likely to be via the existing M6 carriageway, the circulatory carriageway, Pickmere Lane junction and local link roads.

2.4 Scheme location

2.4.1 The location of the project is at M6 J19, near Knutsford, Cheshire, at National Grid Reference SJ 72276 79490. Figure 2-1 shows the location of the scheme.

Figure 2-1: Scheme location plan



- 2.4.2 M6 J19 is located to the west of Knutsford in the county of Cheshire, in the north-west of England. The junction connects the A556 to the M6. To the north of the junction, following the A556, road users can access the towns of Altrincham and Sale, the city of Manchester, and the M56. To the south of the junction following the A556, road users can access Northwich and Chester. In addition, M6 J19 provides access to Knutsford via Northwich Road to the south.

2.5 Existing land uses and character

- 2.5.1 The Policies Map for the Cheshire East Local Plan Strategy (LPS) (2010–2030) shows that the site is within the Green Belt (Policy PG 3) and Open Countryside (Policy PG 6). Further, the interchange between the M6 and the A556 is a key junction on the SRN.
- 2.5.2 The topography surrounding M6 J19 is low lying and gently undulating, with elevations ranging from 40m to 65m above Ordnance Datum. The land is higher to the north of the junction and lower to the south. Undulations form low ridges restricting local views. The mainline motorway is in a cutting through the junction and is relatively discrete; however, moving traffic is visible on the slip roads and gyratory which is above the mainline.
- 2.5.3 M6 J19 is located in a predominantly open pastoral agricultural landscape. Fields are medium to large and are generally delineated by low, sometimes intermittent hawthorn hedgerows, with mature hedgerow trees. Vegetation on the motorway soft estate through the junction is grass with scattered shrubs and trees. A woodland block adjacent to the northbound on-slip and narrow belts of trees on the north-east and south-east sides of the roundabout filter views of the junction from adjacent areas. Apart from these groups, vegetation in the immediate area of the junction is scattered.
- 2.5.4 New planting associated with the A556 Knutsford to Bowdon trunk road was implemented in the 2016 to 2017 planting season. The scheme includes linear bunds planted with shrubs and intermittent trees along both sides of the new trunk road, and shrubs planted around the new pedestrian underpass. On the west side, the bund is also planted with linear blocks of woodland and there is a native hedgerow with trees.
- 2.5.5 Woodland blocks of broadleaved species or mixed deciduous and evergreen species are found in the wider area. Some are locally designated as Sites of Biological Importance. Tree Preservation Orders protect trees at Over Tabley Hall Farm on Old Hall Lane.
- 2.5.6 There are several small watercourses, ponds and ditches in the surrounding area including Tabley Brook to the south-east which is generally well screened by vegetation. Three large lakes (meres) in the wider area east of Chester Road break the field pattern. The large expanses of open water are partially surrounded by trees and scrub.
- 2.5.7 Other land uses in the surrounding area include residential and commercial uses. Residential development comprises of isolated farmsteads and villages (such as Over Tabley and Holehouses). Chester Road, north and south of the

M6 J19, has commercial development along it, including a hotel, a petrol station, a pub and other businesses. At Dairy House Farm, 10m north-east of J19, there are industrial poultry farming units, warehouses, and workshops.

2.5.8 Several Public Rights of Way and a long-distance footpath route cross open countryside north and south of J19 including two routes which run close to the junction:

- Tabley Superior BR7 bridleway follows Swains Walk (track) north of Dairy House Farm.
- North Cheshire Way long distance footpath follows Old Hall Lane, crossing the M6 north-west of the junction on Old Hall Lane vehicle and pedestrian bridge.

2.5.9 The following Grade II listed buildings are located near the site:

- Hollybush Farm on Pickmere Lane, 200 m from M6 J19
- St Paul's Church on Chester Road north of the junction
- Over Tabley Hall and farm buildings on Old Hall Lane

2.6 Local Planning Authorities

2.6.1 The site is located within Cheshire East Council's (CEC) area. CEC is a unitary authority area with borough status and was established in April 2009. It is an amalgamation of the former boroughs of Macclesfield¹, Congleton and Crewe and Nantwich, and includes the functions of the former Cheshire County Council.

2.7 Scheme development

Consideration of alternatives

2.7.1 At PCF Stage 1 the scheme initially proposed seven options for J19. These options were expanded into three 'cut-through' options (Options 1 (now Option A) and 2), four 'free-flow' options (Options 3 – 6) and a single roundabout improvements solution (Option 7 (now Option B)). The options identified were as follows:

- **Option 1** – double cut-through (OPTION A)
- **Option 2** – single cut-through
- **Option 3** – free flow: Combined M6 northbound to A556 and J19; M6 northbound to J19 and M6 to A556 northbound

¹ The site was located in Macclesfield Borough Council's area prior to the amalgamation of the councils.

- **Option 4** – free flow: Combined M6 northbound to A556 and J19; M6 northbound to J19 and M6 to A556 northbound
- **Option 5** – free flow: Combined M6 northbound to A556 and J19; M6 northbound to J19 and M6 to A556 northbound
- **Option 6** – free flow: Combined M6 northbound to A556 and J19; M6 northbound to J19 and M6 to A556 northbound
- **Option 7** – roundabout improvement package (OPTION B)

2.7.2 A sifting exercise was undertaken to assess the performance of each option against the strategic objectives of the scheme. The sifting process was carried out by scoring all the options against four independent criteria in two sections:

- It judged how the options would mitigate the known problems and support our objectives for the scheme. It judged the options against deliverability factors such as planning, timescales, cost, and third-party constraints as well as feasibility factors such as physical constraints, land availability and design standards.

2.7.3 Options, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 were rejected for a range of reasons:

- They did not address the anticipated congestion problems at the junction.
- They were not expected to meet the scheme's objectives.
- They were likely to have a significant environmental impact.
- They were too expensive.

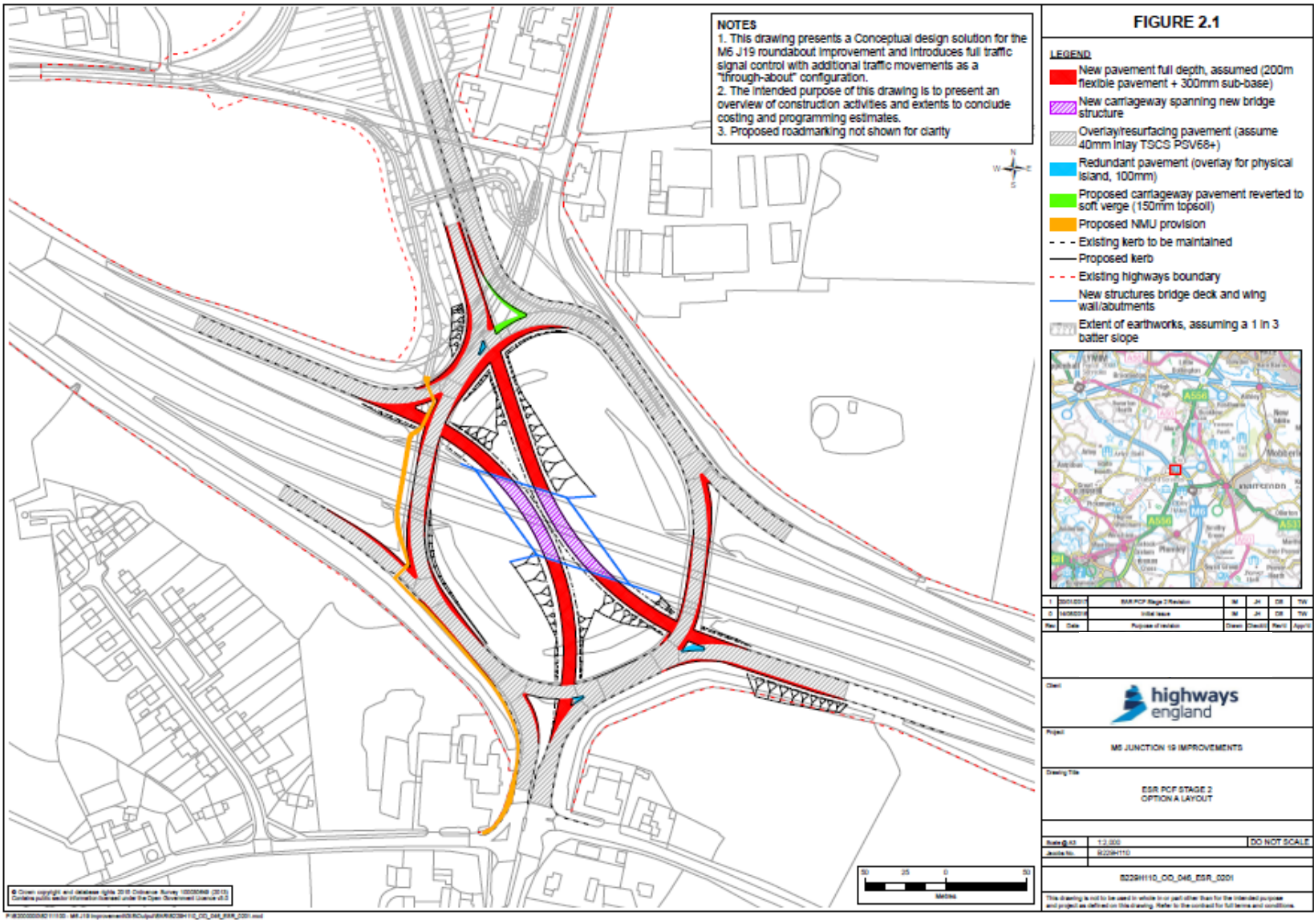
2.7.4 Following PCF Stage 1 the options for junction improvement were narrowed down from seven to two (Options A and B). The two options under consideration were both within Highways England's land ownership boundary; although Option B did require a thin strip of land to the south-west just outside Highways England's ownership and both Options would require temporary land-take for construction compounds on nearby third-party land. The options were as follows:

Option A, Double "Cut-Through" Links – (see Figure 2-2) would provide:

- *"Throughabout"* two-way link, introducing a new bridge spanning the M6 mainline motorway within the roundabout.
- Replacement traffic signals control for all Junction approaches, except the A556 southbound.
- New traffic signal control for all arms of Tabley Hill Lane/Pickmere Lane Junction.
- Realignment of the roundabout carriageway near the new A556 approach to increase lane widths.
- New signing strategy including new gantries.

- Improvements to NMU facilities, including a new footbridge carrying a footway and cycleway spanning the M6 adjacent to the junction. Crossing facilities would also be provided at the Tabley Hill/Pickmere Lane junction where no crossing provision is currently in place.

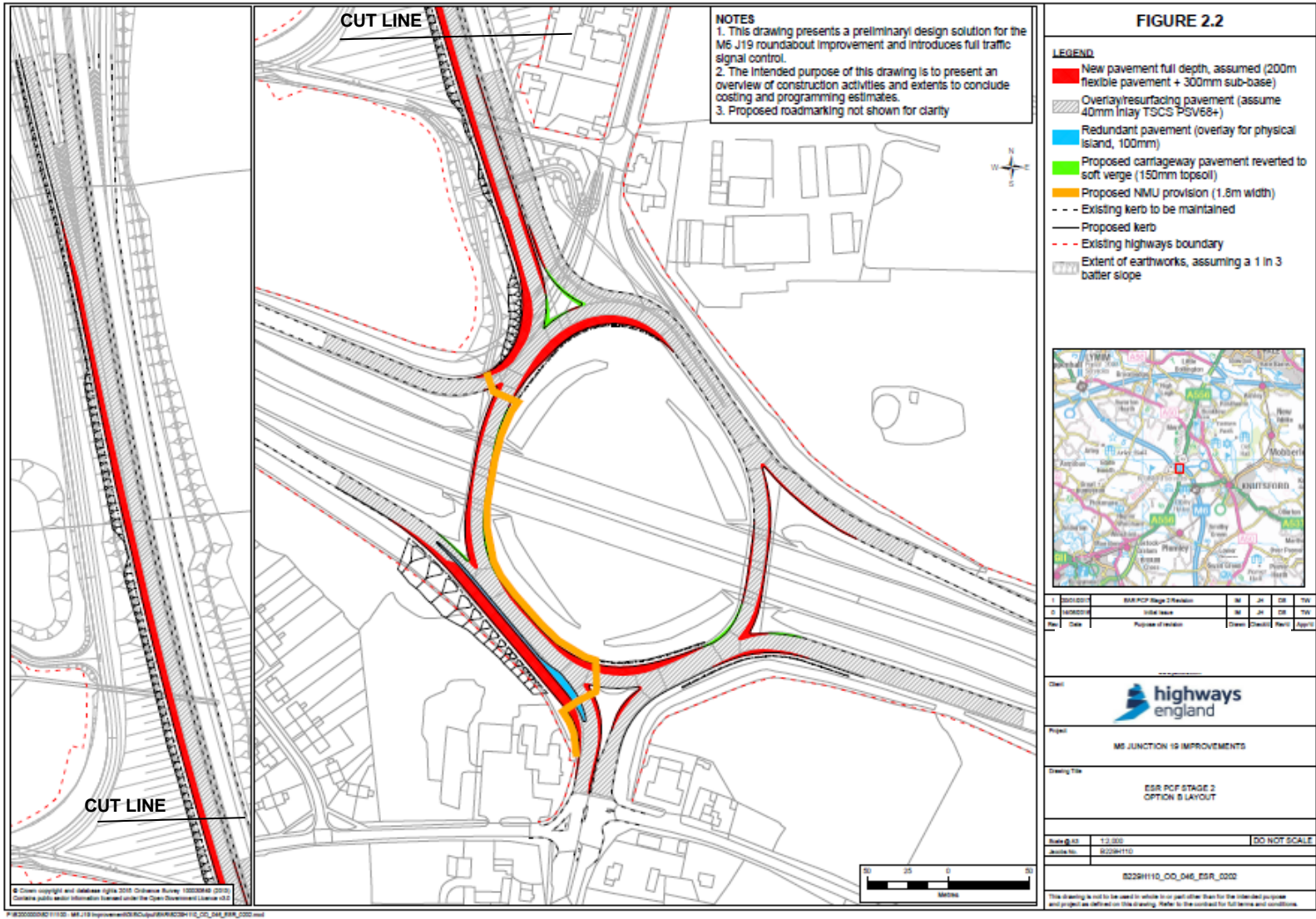
Figure 2.2 – Option A



Option B – Hybrid ‘Do Minimum’ Roundabout Improvements (see Figure 2-3) included the following elements:

- Realignment of the roundabout carriageway to the north and south of the roundabout.
- Addition of a third lane near the A556 arms to the north and the south of M6 J19.
- Addition of a third entry lane at M6 northbound diverge slip road entry to the roundabout.
- Addition of a third lane exit at the A556 northbound.
- Increasing the entry width for A556 southbound entry approach and adding a third lane at the entry.
- Proposed new Segregated Left Turn from A556 northbound to M6 northbound merge slip road with physical island separation.
- New traffic signing strategy and gantries.
- Replacement traffic signals control for all junction approaches, except the A556 southbound approach.
- New traffic signals control for all arms of Tabley Hill Lane/Pickmere Lane Junction.
- Improvements to NMU facilities, including a new footbridge carrying a footway and cycleway spanning the M6 adjacent to the junction. Crossing facilities would also be provided at the Tabley Hill/Pickmere Lane junction where no crossing provision is currently in place.

Figure 2-3 – Option B



- 2.7.5 Options A and B were subsequently consulted on before 17 August 2016 to 23 September 2016. Information about the proposed options and a questionnaire were available on Highways England's website (www.highways.gov.uk/M6-Junction19), at deposit points close to the scheme and were sent to stakeholders and residents affected by the scheme. The consultation was advertised in the local press and two consultation exhibitions were held, on 17 August 2016 and 17 September 2016, to seek views from members of the public. The *'Report on the Public Consultation'* (June 2017) is available here:
www.gov.uk/government/consultations/m6-junction-19-improvement-scheme-options
- 2.7.6 The results of the consultation were considered in the selection of the preferred option, along with other factors such as value for money, safety and meeting the scheme's objectives.
- 2.7.7 Option A was the most preferred option (75 respondents stated this is their preference), whilst seven preferred Option B and 16 had no preference. Consultation also generated 3 further free-flow suggestions that were ultimately discounted (Option 8 - a full re-design of the junction into 3 roundabouts, Option 9 - involving tunnelling under the M6 and Option 10 - an overbridge over the Junction).
- 2.7.8 During the consultation exercise, Option B raised concerns regarding potential increases in noise, due to the extra lane from the M6 to the A556, and the loss of trees. To address these concerns, Option B was amended (also called Option 11) to remove the segregated left turn lane from the A556 onto the north bound M6 (see Figure 2-4).

FIGURE 2.3

NOTES

1. This drawing presents a preliminary design solution for the M5 J19 roundabout improvement and introduces full traffic signal control.
2. The intended purpose of this drawing is to present an overview of construction activities and extents to conclude costing and programming estimates.
3. Proposed roadmarking not shown for clarity.

LEGEND

- New pavement full depth, assumed (200mm flexible pavement + 300mm sub-base)
- Overlay/resurfacing pavement (assume 40mm Inlay TSCS PSV66+)
- Proposed carriageway pavement reverted to soft verge (150mm topsoil)
- Proposed NMU provision (1.8m width)
- Existing kerb to be maintained
- Proposed kerb
- Existing highways boundary
- Extent of earthworks, assuming a 1 in 3 batter slope

REVISIONS

No.	Date	Issue	By	CR	DR
1		Issue for review			
2		Issue for review			

Client

highways england

Project

M5 JUNCTION 19 IMPROVEMENTS

Drawing Title

**RBR PCP STAGE 2
OPTION BAMEDGED LAYOUT**

Author: JG **13/03/2021** **DO NOT SCALE**

Issue No: **8023H110_OD_046_RBR_0203**

8023H110_OD_046_RBR_0203

This drawing is not to be used in whole or in part other than for the intended purpose and project as indicated on this drawing. Refer to the conditions for full terms and conditions.

2.7.9 In summary, following a review of the options, Option A was selected as it provided additional network capacity, greater network resilience and enhanced safety benefits in comparison to Option B and Option B amended. The work also concluded that for Option B and Option B amended there would be a requirement to revisit the junction in future years as the scheme did not provide sufficient network capacity and these options were not considered to be economically viable.

3 Economic Case Overview

3.1 Economic assessment and methodology

3.1.1 The Economic Appraisal Report for PCF Stage 3 details the economic assessment undertaken for the scheme. It presents monetised costs and benefits of the scheme, and describes the methodologies used to derive these impacts. The monetised impacts presented in the report inform the overall Value for Money assessment of the scheme. The report also identifies non-monetised benefits.

3.1.2 The economic assessment of the scheme includes consideration of the following impacts as defined within the DfT's Transport Analysis Guidance:

- a) Transport Economic Efficiency benefits, consisting of 2 elements:
 - i. Travel time and Vehicle Operating Cost benefits and disbenefits, calculated using the DfT's Transport User Benefit Appraisal software.
 - ii. Travel time and Vehicle Operating Cost benefits and disbenefits as a result of construction and maintenance activities.
- b) Changes in taxes, calculated using the DfT's Transport User Benefit Appraisal software.
- c) The impact of the scheme on Accidents calculated using the DfT's Cost and Benefits to Accidents Light Touch software.
- d) The Environmental Impacts (air quality, noise, greenhouse gases) calculated as part of Environmental Impact Appraisal and converted to monetary values using standard Transport Analysis Guidance spreadsheets.
- e) The Costs of the scheme, consisting of 2 elements:
 - i. Construction, land and compensation, preparation and supervision costs.
 - ii. Changes in maintenance costs.

3.2 Monetised benefits

3.2.1 The Economic Appraisal Report provides a detailed description of how the monetised impacts of the Scheme have been estimated. To determine the transport benefits of the Scheme, the situation without the Scheme is compared to the situation with the Scheme, and the differences represent a net benefit or disbenefit following the improvement. A summary of the scheme benefits is in Table 3.1.

Table 3-1: Summary of scheme benefits

Cost/Benefit	Value	Notes
Noise	£ 575.30	(12)
Local Air Quality	-£264,222.10	(13)
Greenhouse Gases	-£4,225,908.0	(14)
Journey Quality	£ -	(15)
Physical Activity	£ -	(16)
Accidents	£ 5,417,900.00	(17)
Economic Efficiency: Consumer Users (Commuting)	£ 13,343,350.00	(1a)
Economic Efficiency: Consumer Users (Other)	£ 6,126,788.0 0	(1b)
Economic Efficiency: Business Users and Providers	£ 30,623,826.00	(5)
Wider Public Finances (Indirect Taxation Revenues)	£ 4,528,851.00	- (11) - sign changed from PA table, as PA table represents costs, not benefits
Present Value of Benefits (see notes) (PVB)	£ 55,551,160.17	(PVB) = (12) + (13) + (14) + (15) + (16) + (17) + (1a) + (1b) + (5) - (11)
Broad Transport Budget	£ 28,737,445.00	(10)
Present Value of Costs (see notes) (PVC)	£ 28,737,445.00	(PVC) = (10)
OVERALL IMPACTS		
Net Present Value (NPV)	£ 26,813,715.17	NPV=PVB-PVC
Benefit to Cost Ratio (BCR)	1.93	BCR=PVB/PVC

3.2.2 Although as previously noted the WebTAG predominately focuses on impact and therefore benefits have been extracted from the EAR. The WebTAG appraisal for noise indicates decreases in noise occurring as a result of the traffic speed reduction on the A556 links to the south of the junction as part of the Scheme design. This is because there are only negligible noise increases and decreases forecast due to the Scheme, i.e. of less than 1dBA in the short-term and less

than 3 dBA in the long-term. The WebTAG appraisal results in a positive Net Benefit which indicates there are, overall, more decreases than increases in noise level.

- 3.2.3 The Air Quality assessment advises that in regard to NO₂ there are no receptors for which the worsening of air quality is expected. There are three receptors which experience an improvement in air quality (medium positive change). All other receptors exceeding the 40 µg/m³ are expected to experience 'imperceptible impacts' (less than +/- 0.4 µg/m³ i.e. less than 1% of the AQS) from the operation of the scheme. Further, it goes on to state that the count of positive and negative effects at receptors for magnitude categories shows that the scheme is expected to bring more benefits than adverse impacts. In regard to PM₁₀, the expected effect of the Scheme is 'Imperceptible' at all receptors, meaning that the scheme will not have any significant positive or negative effects on PM₁₀ concentrations at assessed receptors.
- 3.2.4 The Climate chapter of the EAR (Chapter 6) provides an assessment of greenhouse gas emissions and states *"Based on the available information, the proposed scheme is anticipated to result in small percental changes in CO₂e emissions during both the construction and operational phases of the project within the region. This is based on expected changes in traffic flow within the area, the use and sourcing of materials, as well as on the size of the scheme in relation to the area"*. In regard to the overall likelihood and consequence of climate change impacts occurring at receptors for the duration of the project, the impacts are Low as the scheme resilience to climate change is assumed to be embedded in the scheme design.
- 3.2.5 The initial BCR presented in Table 3.1 can be adjusted to account for other monetised impacts which include Reliability, Regeneration and Wider Impacts under Economy; Landscape under Environment; and Reliability and Option and non-use values under Social. For the M6 J19 Improvement, only the Output change in Imperfectly Competitive Markets component of wider impacts has been monetised. This is estimated by applying an uplift of 10% to the business and freight user benefits obtained from TUBA. This results in a benefit of £3.06m over the appraisal period. Table 3.2 shows the adjusted BCR for the scheme.

Table 3-2: Adjusted BCR

Wider Impacts not included in initial BCR	3,062.4
Adjusted PVB	58,613.4
Present Value of Costs (PVC)	28,737.4
Adjusted BCR	2.04

3.3 Non-monetised benefits

- 3.3.1 Although the monetised benefits detailed above relating to the environment have been extracted from the WebTAG appraisal, the appraisal process focuses on key impacts rather than benefits/disbenefits. No non-monetised benefits or disbenefits have been identified for Biodiversity, Cultural Heritage, the Water Environment or Landscape (planting proposed for Landscape impacts and the SUDs is considered mitigation).
- 3.3.2 Chapter 10 of the EAR advises that the impacts of the scheme on 'People and Communities' will vary depending on the affected receptor and a proportion of impacts may be beneficial, such as those associated with improving road safety, reducing congestion or enhanced NMU facilities.

4 Policies and Guidance

4.1 Introduction

4.1.1 This section of the report examines relevant national and local policies and guidance, and the scheme's alignment and conformity with them. Allocations and designations within and near the site, and relevant planning policies have been identified.

4.1.2 The following documents have been reviewed:

- RIS 1 (Department of Transport, March 2015)
- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government, July 2018)
- Planning Practice Guidance (Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government, March 2014 to September 2018)
- National Policy Statement (NPS) for National Networks (Department for Transport, December 2014) (note the NPS is only applicable as this is a SRN development, and the NPPF is the more relevant national policy consideration)
- Cheshire East LPS (2010–2030) (Cheshire East Council, July 2017)
- First Draft Site Allocations and Development Policies Document (SADPD) (Cheshire East Council, September 2018)
- Saved Policies from the Macclesfield Local Plan (former Macclesfield Borough Council, January 2004)
- Saved Policies from the Cheshire Replacement Waste Local Plan (Cheshire County Council, July 2007)
- Minerals and Waste Development Plan Document (MWDPD) Issues Paper (Cheshire East Council, April 2017)
- Nature Conservation Strategy Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) (Cheshire East Council, 2006)
- Cheshire East Local Plan IDP update (Cheshire East Council, July 2016)
- LTP (Cheshire East Council, 2011–2026)
- LTP (Cheshire East Council, 2018–2023)
- Economic Development Strategy for Cheshire East (EDS) (Cheshire East Council, June 2011)

4.2 Road Investment Strategy and other national transport and infrastructure policy and guidance

Road Investment Strategy 1

4.2.1 The RIS 1 was published in March 2015 and outlined a long-term programme for motorways and major roads with the stable funding needed to plan ahead. The RIS 1 comprises:

- A long-term vision for England's motorways and major roads, outlining how we will create smooth, smart and sustainable roads.
- A multi-year investment plan that will be used to improve the network and create better roads for users.
- High-level objectives for the first roads period 2015 to 2020.

4.2.2 The scheme is included in the RIS investment plan commitments, comprising *"Upgrades to the M6 at junction 19, to help the movement of traffic from the upgraded A556 to the new section of smart motorway from Cheshire to Stoke"*.

4.3 National Planning Policy Framework and other national planning policy and guidance

National Planning Policy Framework

4.3.1 A revised NPPF was published in July 2018 and updates the original NPPF, which was published in 2012. Paragraph 7 of the NPPF advises that *"The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. At a very high level, the objective of sustainable development can be summarised as meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs"*. Paragraph 8 of the NPPF sets out the three objectives for achieving sustainable development, including economic, social, and environmental objectives".

Engagement

4.3.2 Chapter 4 of the NPPF deals with pre-application engagement and paragraph 39 advises that *"Early engagement has significant potential to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the planning application system for all parties. Good quality pre-application discussion enables better coordination between public and private resources and improved outcomes for the community"*.

Details about the consultation undertaken for the scheme are provided in the 'Report on the Public Consultation' (June 2017). This report is available here:

www.gov.uk/government/consultations/m6-junction-19-improvement-scheme-options

Sustainable Transport

- 4.3.3 Chapter 9 of the NPPF is in regard to sustainable transport. Paragraph 102 of the NPPF states *“Transport issues should be considered from the earliest stages of plan-making and development proposals, so that:*
- a) The potential impacts of development on transport networks can be addressed.*
 - b) Opportunities from existing or proposed transport infrastructure, and changing transport technology and usage, are realised – for example in relation to the scale, location or density of development that can be accommodated.*
 - c) Opportunities to promote walking, cycling and public transport use are identified and pursued.*
 - d) The environmental impacts of traffic and transport infrastructure can be identified, assessed and taken into account – including appropriate opportunities for avoiding and mitigating any adverse effects, and for net environmental gains.*
 - e) Patterns of movement, streets, parking and other transport considerations are integral to the design of schemes, and contribute to making high quality places”.*
- 4.3.4 The objectives for the scheme are listed in paragraph 2.2.1 of this report and include making the network safer by reviewing operational safety issues at the junction and reducing the chance of any queues forming that would impact the M6, and to deliver better environmental outcomes by reducing congestion at the junction which contributes to air quality issues (further details are provided in the Air Quality chapter of the EAR (Chapter 5). Further, local access for walkers and cyclists will be improved as part of the scheme, connecting to new routes constructed as part of the A556 Knutsford to Bowdon project.
- 4.3.5 Paragraph 104 of the NPPF advises that planning policies should:
- a) “Provide for any large scale transport facilities that need to be located in the area, and the infrastructure and wider development required to support their operation, expansion and contribution to the wider economy. In doing so they should take into account whether such development is likely to be a nationally significant infrastructure project and any relevant national policy statements...”.*
- 4.3.6 The scheme is listed as a commitment in the DfT’s RIS 1 and Highways England’s Strategic Business Plan. It is also provided for in various policy documents, including the Macclesfield Local Plan (adopted 2004) (saved Policy T7 (Safeguarded Routes)), Cheshire East IDP update (2016), and the LTP (2011–2026).
- 4.3.7 The scheme is not a NSIP as detailed in Section 1.2 of this report.

Design

- 4.3.8 Chapter 12 of the NPPF deals with design and states *“Design quality should be considered throughout the evolution and assessment of individual proposals. Early discussion between applicants, the local planning authority and local community about the design and style of emerging schemes is important for clarifying expectations and reconciling local and commercial interests. Applicants should work closely with those affected by their proposals to evolve designs that take account of the views of the community”* (paragraph 128).
- 4.3.9 The design of the scheme has taken account of the existing environment, CEC’s requirements, and views of the local community. A number of design options were considered for the scheme. The options were subject to environmental assessments, and the preferred option was selected based on a number of criteria. Further details are provided in Section 2 of this report.

Green Belt

- 4.3.10 Chapter 13 of the NPPF is in regard to the Green Belt and states *“The Government attaches great importance to Green Belts. The fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open; the essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and their permanence”* (paragraph 133).
- 4.3.11 Paragraph 143 of the NPPF states *“Inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances”*. Further, paragraph 144 states *“When considering any planning application, local planning authorities should ensure that substantial weight is given to any harm to the Green Belt. ‘Very special circumstances’ will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm resulting from the proposal, is clearly outweighed by other considerations”*.
- 4.3.12 Paragraph 146 of the NPPF provides details for developments that are not considered to be inappropriate in the Green Belt provided they preserve its openness and do not conflict with the purposes of including land within it. This includes:
- “c) *local transport infrastructure which can demonstrate a requirement for a Green Belt location”*.
- 4.3.13 M6 J19 and the A556 are located within the Green Belt; however, the works are within the existing highway boundary and will not result in the further loss of Green Belt. The Scheme will have a number of local benefits including improving safety and reducing congestion in the area. As noted above, the NPPF advises that *‘local transport infrastructure’* is not inappropriate in the Green Belt provided it can demonstrate a requirement for a Green Belt location.
- 4.3.14 The scheme will reduce congestion and improve safety as detailed elsewhere in this report. There are no other suitable locations for the scheme, and by its

nature, being transport infrastructure, it is not considered to be inappropriate development in the Green Belt.

- 4.3.15 The landscape character of the area is already heavily influenced by major road infrastructure and has been assessed in Chapter 12 of the EAR. The summary of significant effects states *“Due to the proximity of the existing motorway and the retention of views across or through new road elements, there is unlikely to be a decrease in the openness or change in the character of the landscape due to the proposed scheme. Landscape character, and visual amenity for receptors in the adjacent area is already heavily influenced by major road infrastructure; therefore, significant changes to landscape character and views would be unlikely, particularly given that there will be no changes to the existing highway boundary. Slight Adverse localised landscape and visual effects would be experienced during the winter of opening year, mainly because of removal of approximately [twelve] scattered trees in the bowl of the roundabout and the mass and unweathered finish of the concrete associated with the new bridge structure. There would be no effects on the character or amenity value of the Green Belt in the wider area”* (section 12.9.42).

Climate Change and Flooding

- 4.3.16 Chapter 14 of the NPPF (*titled ‘Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change’*) states in paragraph 150 *“New development should be planned for in ways that:*
- a) Avoid increased vulnerability to the range of impacts arising from climate change. When new development is brought forward in areas which are vulnerable, care should be taken to ensure that risks can be managed through suitable adaptation measures, including through the planning of green infrastructure*
 - b) Can help to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, such as through its location, orientation and design. Any local requirements for the sustainability of buildings should reflect the Government’s policy for national technical standards”.*
- 4.3.17 Section 6 of the Environmental Assessment Report (EAR) deals with climate change and concludes that *“The overall vulnerability of the project to climate change during both construction and operation is not anticipated to be significant. In addition, the resilience of the proposed scheme to projected climate changes is assumed to be embedded into the design of the proposed scheme, following the requirements of the Environment Agency throughout the life cycle of the project”*. Section 11 of the EAR deals with flooding and advises that the scheme is located within Flood Zone 1 and therefore has a low risk of fluvial flooding. A Drainage Strategy has been prepared to detail how flows from the highway will be attenuated. Section 6 of the EAR details the high-level options that will be applied and developed in seeking to reduce greenhouse gas emissions associated with the proposed scheme, these include; Avoidance/prevention by maximising the potential for re-use and/or refurbishing existing assets to reduce the extent of new construction required, and/or explore alternative lower carbon options to deliver the project objectives (i.e. shorter route options with smaller construction footprints). Section 6.8 also details the how the government plans, reports (i.e. The IPCC Fifth Assessment Synthesis Report (2015)) and Highways England licence requirements which relate to the

reduction of greenhouse gases and how the scheme will adhere to relevant requirements. For these reasons it is considered that the scheme meets the requirements of the NPPF

Natural Environment

4.3.18 Chapter 15 of the NPPF deals with conserving and enhancing the natural environment. Paragraph 170 of the NPPF states *“Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:*

- *Protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan)*
- *Recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services – including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland*
- *Minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures*
- *Preventing new and existing development from contributing to, being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by, unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability. Development should, wherever possible, help to improve local environmental conditions such as air and water quality, taking into account relevant information such as river basin management plans*
- *Remediating and mitigating despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated and unstable land, where appropriate”.*

- 4.3.19 The findings of the landscape character assessment are detailed in Chapter 12 of the EAR and the summary of significant effects is reiterated above in paragraph 4.3.16.
- 4.3.20 The scheme will be constructed within the existing highway boundary and established vegetation will be largely unaffected by the scheme except for some minor self-set vegetation on the M6 northbound exit slip road and grass verges, and some shrubbery and low trees within the roundabout itself.
- 4.3.21 The statutory designated and non-statutory designated sites relevant to the scheme are noted in Section 7 of the EAR and include two European sites - the Midland Meres and Mosses Phase 1 Ramsar site, and two national sites - Rostherne Mere Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) Ramsar site, Tabley Mere SSSI and The Mere SSSI. Also, there are nine non-statutory designated sites - Swains Walk Marl Pits Local Wildlife Site (LWS), Meremoss Wood LWS, Tabley Pipe Wood LWS, Rinks Wood and Round Wood LWS, Belt Wood LWS, Rinks Wood and Round Wood LWS, Arley and Waterless Brook Corridor Local Wildlife Site LWS, Bongs Wood and Rough LWS, and Knutsford Heath LWS.
- 4.3.22 The presence of important ecological features has been taken into account during the preliminary design stage (PCF Stage 3). During construction and operation standard best practice and pollution prevention measures will avoid significant impacts on designated sites, sensitive habitats and protected species. The mitigation/enhancements planting scheme seeks to achieve a net gain in biodiversity, through the use of native species and shrubs, particularly those that provide a food source for birds and invertebrates. No significant impacts have been identified on statutory or non-statutory designated sites during scheme construction or operation (see Section 7 of the EAR). Further, a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) will be in place during the construction works in order to mitigate and minimise any potential adverse effects which could arise as a result of construction activities (e.g. leaks and spillages, tree damage, etc.).
- 4.3.23 The EAR considers sources of pollution for the scheme (i.e. in Sections 5 (Air Quality), 7 (Biodiversity), 8 (Geology and Soils), and 11 (Road Drainage and the Water Environment). Ways to minimise pollution have been embedded in the design of the scheme, as detailed in the EAR. Further, there is a risk from contaminated land; however, it will be managed during construction and a CEMP will be in place during the construction period. As such, the scheme is generally in line with the requirements of the NPPF.

Planning Practice Guidance

- 4.3.24 Planning Practice Guidance is a web-based resource which was launched in March 2014, with subsequent updates to some of the guidance, and provides guidance for a range of topics. The relevant topics for this assessment include:
- **Consultation and pre-decision matters** – sets out processes and expectations for consultation for planning applications.
 - **Climate change** – advises how planning can identify suitable mitigation and adaptation measures in plan-making and the application process to address the potential impacts of climate change.

- **Design** – this guidance provides advice on the key points to take into account on design.
- **Flood risk and coastal change** – this guidance advises on how planning can take account of the risks associated with flooding and coastal change in plan-making and the application process.
- **Natural environment** – explains key issues in implementing policy to protect biodiversity, including local requirements.

4.3.25 The scheme has been designed taking account of the requirements of the above-mentioned guidance. Further details about how the scheme addresses these topics is provided in the paragraphs identified below:

- **Consultation** – see paragraph 4.3.3.
- **Climate change** – see paragraph 4.3.18.
- **Design** – see paragraph 4.3.10.
- **Flood risk** – see paragraph 4.3.18.
- **Natural environment** – see paragraphs 4.3.14, 4.3.16, 4 and 4.3.21 - 24.

National Policy Statement for National Networks

4.3.26 The NPS for National Networks was published in December 2014 and sets out the need for, and Government's policies to deliver, development of NSIPs on the national road and rail networks in England. It states, "*The Secretary of State will use this NPS as the primary basis for making decisions on development consent applications for national networks nationally significant infrastructure projects in England*" (para. 1.2). This NPS has been included in the review as the works are on the SRN; however, a planning application is not required for the scheme under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. It has also been determined that the scheme is not a NSIP and does not require a DCO, as detailed in Section 1.2 of this report. However, the NPS is a material consideration for the scheme, and has been used to guide the development of the design.

4.3.27 Paragraph 1.3 of the NPS states "*Where a development does not meet the current requirements for a nationally significant infrastructure project set out in the Planning Act (as amended by the Threshold Order), but is considered to be nationally significant, there is a power in the Planning Act for the Secretary of State, on application, to direct that a development should be treated as a nationally significant infrastructure project. In these circumstances any application for development consent would need to be considered in accordance with this NPS. The relevant development plan is also likely to be an important and relevant matter especially in respect of establishing the need for the development*".

4.3.28 Paragraph 1.4 of the NPS goes on to state "*In England, this NPS may also be a material consideration in decision making on applications that fall under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 or any successor legislation. Whether, and*

to what extent, this NPS is a material consideration, will be judged on a case by case basis”.

- 4.3.29 The document advises that the overall strategic aims of the NPPF and the NPS are consistent; however, the NPS was published prior to the NPPF being updated in July 2018. It provides guidance and imposes requirements on matters such as good scheme design, as well as the treatment of environmental impacts.
- 4.3.30 Paragraph 3.2 of the NPS states *“The Government recognises that for development of the national road and rail networks to be sustainable these should be designed to minimise social and environmental impacts and improve quality of life”*. Further, paragraph 3.3 goes on to state *“In delivering new schemes, the Government expects applicants to avoid and mitigate environmental and social impacts in line with the principles set out in the NPPF and the Government’s planning guidance. Applicants should also provide evidence that they have considered reasonable opportunities to deliver environmental and social benefits as part of schemes”*.
- 4.3.31 Paragraph 4.27 of the NPS advises that all projects should be subject to an options appraisal. Also, paragraph 4.28 advises that applicants should include design as an integral consideration from the outset of a proposal.
- 4.3.32 Paragraph 4.31 of the NPS deals with design and states *“A good design should meet the principal objectives of the scheme by eliminating or substantially mitigating the identified problems by improving operational conditions and simultaneously minimising adverse impacts. It should also mitigate any existing adverse impacts wherever possible, for example, in relation to safety or the environment. A good design will also be one that sustains the improvements to operational efficiency for as many years as is practicable, taking into account capital cost, economics and environmental impacts”*.
- 4.3.33 An Environmental Study Report (ESR) has been prepared for PCF Stage 2, which identifies and assesses the potential environmental impacts and effects of the options for the scheme. The ESR also provides information on environmental risks and mitigation, as well as opportunities for environmental enhancement, to be implemented by a project. The PCF Stage 2 ESR assisted in the selection of the preferred route and informed decision makers and stakeholders of the environmental constraints and potential risks associated with each option identified at PCF Stages 1 and 2; in line with guidance set out in the DMRB – Vol 11 – Environmental Assessment (Ref 1.5) and associated Interim Advice Notes. Following the selection of the preferred option, an EAR has been prepared for PCF Stage 3.

4.4 Local planning and transport policies

Cheshire East Local Plan Strategy (2010 – 2030)

- 4.4.1 The Cheshire East LPS was adopted in July 2017 and sets out the overall vision and planning strategy for development in the borough and contains planning policies to ensure that new development addresses the economic, environmental and social needs of the area. It also identifies strategic sites and strategic

locations that will accommodate most of the new development needed. The following policies are considered to be relevant for the scheme:

Policy MP 1 - Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

- 4.4.2 The scheme will be compliant with Highways England's Licence (2015) which confers duties on Highways England to protect, maintain and enhance the environment and provide sustainable development and design. It will also be compliant with Highways England's Delivery Plan 2015–2020, which sets out detailed requirements to ensure that all activity on the network is delivered in a manner that does not harm the environment; but instead delivers long term benefits to the natural and built environment, creating a sustainable future for all.
- 4.4.3 The scheme seeks to protect and enhance characteristic habitats, landscape, wildlife, open spaces, and the manmade environment as detailed in the EAR.

Policy PG 3 - Green Belt

- 4.4.4 Policy PG 3 of the LPS sets out the aim of the Green Belt, which is to keep land permanently open or largely undeveloped. Point 2 of the policy states *"Within the Green Belt, planning permission will not be granted for inappropriate development, except in very special circumstances, in accordance with national policy"*.
- 4.4.5 Point 4 of the policy advises that certain forms of development are not inappropriate in Green Belt provided they preserve the openness of the Green Belt and do not conflict with the purposes of including land in Green Belt. This includes local transport infrastructure that can demonstrate a requirement for a Green Belt location.
- 4.4.6 M6 J19 is located within the Green Belt; however, the works are contained within the existing highway boundary extents.

Policy PG 6 - Open Countryside

- 4.4.7 Policy PG 6 of the LPS states *"Within the Open Countryside only development that is essential for the purposes of agriculture, forestry, outdoor recreation, public infrastructure, essential works undertaken by public service authorities or statutory undertakers, or for other uses appropriate to a rural area will be permitted"*. However, point 3 goes on to say that exceptions may be made.
- 4.4.8 Point 4 of the policy states *"The retention of gaps between settlements is important, in order to maintain the definition and separation of existing communities and the individual characters of such settlements"*.
- 4.4.9 Point 5 of the policy advises that particular attention should be paid to design and landscape character so the appearance and distinctiveness of the Cheshire East countryside is preserved and enhanced.
- 4.4.10 The scheme will be located within the highway boundary and will maintain the existing gaps between settlements. The design and landscape character of the

scheme has been subject to detailed assessments as mentioned in paragraph 4.3.16.

Policy SD 1 - Sustainable Development in Cheshire East

- 4.4.11 Policy SD 1 of the LPS is in regard to sustainable development and sets out the considerations that will apply to development. This includes contributing to creating a strong, responsive and competitive economy for Cheshire East; and providing appropriate infrastructure to meet the needs of the local community including transport.
- 4.4.12 The scheme will help achieve the requirements of this policy as it will improve the operation and safety of M6 J19, and provide monetary benefits.

Policy SD 2 - Sustainable Development Principles

- 4.4.13 Policy SD 2 of the LPS sets out the expectations for development in order to protect the landscape, heritage assets, agricultural land, minimise waste and encourage the use of recycled materials.
- 4.4.14 See comments for Policy MP 1 of the LPS in paragraph 4.4.2.

Policy IN 1 - Infrastructure

- 4.4.15 Policy IN 1 of the LPS states *“Infrastructure delivery will take place in a phased co-ordinated manner guided by the Infrastructure Delivery Plan and any additional site specific requirements to support the Local Plan Strategy proposals”*.
- 4.4.16 The scheme is included in the Cheshire East Local Plan IDP update (July 2016); see paragraphs 4.5.6 to 4.5.7 of this report.

Policy SE 1 - Design

- 4.4.17 Policy SE 1 of the LPS advises that proposals should make a positive contribution to their surroundings and sets out the requirements for this. This includes encouraging sustainable construction practices including the use of appropriate recycled and sustainable materials of high quality.
- 4.4.18 Sustainable construction practices will be implemented for the scheme and resource use (including primary, secondary and recycled raw materials) and waste during the construction phase and the measures which would be implemented to mitigate them have been considered for the scheme.
- 4.4.19 Highways England's *‘The Road to Good Design’* document has been used to inform the design. The link roads will be at plane of the existing junction circulatory. Structures, drainage, road restraint systems, street lighting, traffic signals and signage products would be procured with consideration of the environmental impacts associated with their manufacture, as well as other considerations such as structural design, carbon footprint, energy consumption,

long-life performance, visual impacts, durability and cost. Both reinforced concrete and steel structures include a measurable recycled content in their manufacture. Where possible, the availability of responsibly sourced local and recycled materials would be considered in order to reduce potential environmental effects, such as from transport emissions. Further, the principles of the waste hierarchy would be applied to minimise waste generation and maximise re-use of materials on-site, where possible. Where re-use is not possible, alternative options would be sought off-site such as reprocessing into aggregate or the use of inert materials on local farms.

Policy SE 3 - Biodiversity and Geodiversity

4.4.20 Policy SE 3 of the LPS seeks to protect and enhance areas of high biodiversity and geodiversity value. Point 5 of the policy advises that all development must aim to positively contribute to the conservation and enhancement of biodiversity and geodiversity and should not negatively affect these interests. Also, point 6 states that development proposals that are likely to have a significant impact on a non-designated asset or a site valued by the local community identified in the SADPD will only be permitted where suitable mitigation and/or compensation is provided to address the adverse impacts of the proposed development, or where any residual harm following mitigation/compensation, along with any other harm, is clearly outweighed by the benefits of the development.

4.4.21 Impacts on biodiversity have been assessed in the EAR (Section 7) which states *“The construction and operation of the Proposed Scheme is described in Section 3. The construction activities that could have impacts on ecological features include:*

- *Site clearance as required for the works*
- *Replacement and renewal of drainage systems*
- *Construction of over-bridges within junction footprint*
- *Additional lighting*
- *Installation of ducting and cabling in the verge”*

- 4.4.22 The EAR goes on to state *“During operation, the changes in traffic could affect air quality (Section 5), with possible effects on sensitive vegetation due to elevated nitrogen deposition”*.
- 4.4.23 Mitigation measures have been identified in Section 7 of the EAR, including the following generic mitigation measures: Work access tracks etc. would not be located in, or adjacent to, areas that are of ecological value; Site fencing would be used to prevent access to areas outside working areas, particularly in areas adjacent to features of ecological value; All machinery and materials would be stored in appropriately sited, secure compounds; and An induction and appropriate task-specific briefings would be given to contractors regarding the biodiversity issues associated with the site. Further, a CEMP will be in place during the construction works.
- 4.4.24 The landscape design proposals for new planting and management of both existing and new planting, as described in Section 12 of the EAR, will help to achieve objectives related to biodiversity, which is in line with the requirements of Policy SE 3 of the LPS.
- 4.4.25 There are no areas of high geodiversity value affected by the scheme.

Policy SE 4 - The Landscape

- 4.4.26 Policy SE 4 of the LPS advises that the high quality of the built and natural environment is recognised as a significant characteristic of the borough. It states, *“All development should conserve the landscape character and quality and should where possible, enhance and effectively manage the historic, natural and man-made landscape features that contribute to local distinctiveness of both rural and urban landscapes”*.
- 4.4.27 The policy advises that development will be expected to incorporate appropriate landscaping which reflects the character of the area through appropriate design and management.

4.4.28 As previously stated, impacts on the landscape have been assessed in the EAR (Section 12). The ‘*Summary of Significant Effects*’ advises that prior to mitigation “*Due to the proximity of the existing motorway and the retention of views across or through new road elements, there is unlikely to be a decrease in the openness or change in the character of the landscape due to the proposed scheme. Landscape character, and visual amenity for receptors in the adjacent area is already heavily influenced by major road infrastructure; therefore, significant changes to landscape character and views would be unlikely, particularly given that there will be no changes to the existing highway boundary. Slight Adverse localised landscape and visual effects would be experienced during the winter of opening year, mainly because of removal of approximately eleven scattered trees in the bowl of the roundabout and the mass and unweathered finish of the concrete associated with the new bridge structure. There would be no effects on the character or amenity value of the Green Belt in the wider area*”.

4.4.29 This will be mitigated with native tree and shrub planting which by the summer of the fifteenth year after opening, would reduce the adverse effects to Neutral for landscape character and for the majority of visual receptors. Slight adverse visual effects would remain for the following visual receptors as this mitigation will have little effect on views for these receptors:

- *Visual Receptor 8a (receptors at the road junction of Tabley Hill Lane and Chester Road) (low sensitivity)*
- *Visual Receptor 8b (residents in Almond Tree Cottage, Chester Road) (high sensitivity)*
- *Visual Receptor 9a (receptors at the road junction of A556 Chester Road south of M6 J19) (low sensitivity)*
- *Visual Receptor 9b (commercial receptors and residents at The Windmill Inn) (high sensitivity)*
- *Visual Receptor 10 (residents in property at Dairy House Farm, Chester Road) (high sensitivity)*”.

Policy SE 5 - Trees, Hedgerows and Woodland

4.4.30 Policy SE 5 of the LPS states “*Development proposals which will result in the loss of, or threat to, the continued health and life expectancy of trees, hedgerows or woodlands (including veteran trees or ancient semi-natural woodland), that provide a significant contribution to the amenity, biodiversity, landscape character or historic character of the surrounding area, will not normally be permitted, except where there are clear overriding reasons for allowing the development and there are no suitable alternatives.*

Where such impacts are unavoidable, development proposals must satisfactorily demonstrate a net environmental gain by appropriate mitigation, compensation or offsetting”.

4.4.31 Impacts on trees, hedgerows, and woodland are covered in Section 12 of the EAR (Landscape) and the biodiversity chapter of the EAR (Section 7). Approximately twelve semi-mature trees would need to be removed within the

central area of the roundabout. Access facilitation pruning will be required on some or all of a group of approximately eight small trees at the base of the northbound exit slip road embankment to accommodate construction works for a new exit lane. Recent planting at the new underpass on the A556 is unlikely to be affected by adjacent road widening.

- 4.4.32 Along the edge of the northbound entry slip road, ruderal vegetation, brambles and self-set trees will need to be removed from the verge, and overgrown trees on the embankment will require access facilitation pruning to accommodate a new 3m wide NMU route replacing an existing overgrown path. There may also be a small loss of hedgerows required for the construction of the scheme.
- 4.4.33 Mitigation and enhancement measures are detailed in Section 12 of the EAR. In summary, these include replacement planting of trees and reinstatement of verges and open grassland. For these reasons it is considered that the scheme will meet the requirements of Policy SE 5.

Policy SE 12 - Pollution, Land Contamination and Land Instability

- 4.4.34 Policy SE 12 of the LPS advises that CEC will seek to ensure all development is located and designed so as not to result in a harmful or cumulative impact upon air quality, surface water and groundwater, noise, smell, dust, vibration, soil contamination, light pollution or any other pollution which would unacceptably affect the natural and built environment, or detrimentally affect amenity or cause harm.
- 4.4.35 Point 3 of the policy states *“Development should support improvements to air quality, not contradict the Air Quality Strategy or Air Quality Action Plan and seek to promote sustainable transport policies”*.
- 4.4.36 The scheme is located within an Air Quality Management Area. Section 5 of the EAR deals with air quality and details mitigation measures for the construction and operational phases of the scheme. Sections 5.9.33 and 5.9.34 state:

“Construction

- 5.9.33 *During the construction of the proposed scheme and development, construction activities have the potential to give rise to fugitive dust, which can cause annoyance to neighbouring properties, and thus result in complaints. However, with appropriate mitigation, short-term impacts can be avoided, and no residual effect is anticipated from the temporary construction works.*

Operational phase

- 5.9.34 *Although the scheme is delivering a significant reduction in NO₂ concentrations within the Cheshire East Air Quality Management Area and along the A556, it is not possible to state that the scheme alone will be sufficient to remove all exceedances of the NO₂ annual mean objective”.*

4.4.37 Section 8 of the EAR deals with geology and soils and states “There are no geological features of significance within influencing distance of the scheme. The main areas where significant environmental impacts relating to ground conditions and land contamination could occur during construction and/or operation of the proposed development are:

- *The management and handling of material excavated during construction, specifically arisings generated from excavating through, cutting, planing and/or demolishing the existing carriageway construction due to the possible presence of coal tar contaminated materials.*
- *Potential contamination within made ground.*
- *Unexpected contamination encountered during construction.*
- *Creation of preferential pathways, through a low permeability layer, to cause contamination of groundwater in an aquifer due to the insertion of piles.*
- *Human receptors could be subjected to an increase in exposure to potentially contaminated dust released during excavation through, cutting, planing and/or demolition of the existing carriageway construction through inhalation/ingestion and direct contact”.*

4.4.38 Mitigation measures are proposed in the EAR to reduce, minimise or avoid impacts wherever possible. The residual impacts relating to geology and soils are detailed in the EAR:

“Bedrock beneath the proposed scheme comprises the Northwich Halite Member of the Mercia Mudstone Group. The area is therefore considered to be at high risk from dissolution cavities within the bedrock. These could potentially pose a risk to the proposed scheme, should they be at shallow depth beneath the site. As part of the proposed scheme piled foundations are being considered which, if extended into bedrock, could provide a pathway for water and encouraging dissolution of the halite. Furthermore, changes to the groundwater regime within the wider area, for example as a result of adjacent construction; may potentially negatively impact the bedrock material and result in instability to existing assets. Appropriate pile design would manage this risk”.

First Draft Site Allocations and Development Policies Document

4.4.39 The consultation on the first draft of CEC’s SADPD took place during September and October 2018. The SADPD is an emerging policy document and has therefore been given material consideration. The SADPD will be the second part of the new local plan and will replace the detailed policies from the local plans from the former districts, including Macclesfield. Once adopted, the SADPD policies will be used alongside the LPS policies to determine planning applications.

4.4.40 The SADPD is at a relatively early stage, and once the consultation has been completed, CEC will consider all responses received and carry out any further background research and evidence as required to produce a final draft SADPD. There will be further public consultation on the final draft SADPD in 2019 and

following that CEC will submit the SADPD to the Secretary of State for its independent examination.

4.4.41 The following policies are considered to be relevant for the scheme:

Policy GEN1 – Design Principles

4.4.42 Policy GEN1 of the draft SADPD is in line with LPS Policy SE 1 'Design' and advises that development proposals should *“contribute positively to the borough’s quality of place through appropriate character, appearance and form in terms of scale, height, density, layout, grouping, urban form, siting, good architecture, massing and materials. Development that fails to take the opportunity to support the quality of place of the local area will be resisted”*.

4.4.43 See comments for Policy SE 1 of the LPS.

Policy ENV1 - Ecological Network

4.4.44 Policy ENV1 of the draft SADPD advises that *“In line with LPS Policy SE 3 'Biodiversity and geodiversity', new development should seek opportunities to protect, conserve, restore and enhance the ecological network for the borough”*.

4.4.45 See comments for Policy SE 3 of the LPS in paragraph 4.4.21 - 25. In regard to the ecological network, the EAR states *“The Highways England Biodiversity Plan sets out ways to halt overall biodiversity loss, support healthy well-functioning ecosystems and establish coherent ecological networks. Specific initiatives which are relevant to the Proposed Scheme include the identification of locations suitable for the enhancement and creation of invertebrate friendly habitats including wildflower rich grasslands, in line with the National Pollinator Strategy. Enhancement planting and seeding, such as species-rich grassland and use of species-rich pond edge mixes around the detention pond are proposed in the Landscape assessment chapter”*.

Policy ENV2 - Ecological Implementation

4.4.46 Policy ENV2 of the draft SADPD advises that all development proposals must deliver an overall measurable net gain for biodiversity using a biodiversity metric calculation.

4.4.47 The policy sets out a mitigation hierarchy whereby all development proposals must make sure losses of, and impacts to, biodiversity and geodiversity are:

- i. *“Firstly avoided; then*
- ii. *If impacts cannot be avoided, identify and implement measures to acceptably mitigate these impacts; then*
- iii. *Finally, and as a last resort, if impacts are unavoidable and cannot be acceptably mitigated, compensation measures should be provided”*.

- 4.4.48 The mitigation/enhancement planting scheme will seek to achieve a net gain in biodiversity, through the use of native species and shrubs, particularly those that provide a food source for birds and invertebrates. The proposed landscape design is detailed in Section 12, Figure 12-13, of the EAR and will be finalised at the detailed design stage.

Policy ENV3 - Landscape Character

- 4.4.49 Policy ENV3 of the draft SADPD states *“Development proposals should respect the qualities, features and characteristics that contribute to the distinctiveness of the local area as described in the Cheshire East Landscape Character Assessment (2018) or subsequent update, taking into account any cumulative effects alongside any existing, planned or committed development”*.
- 4.4.50 See comments for Policy SE 4 of the LPS in paragraphs 4.4.26 - 29.

Policy ENV5 - Landscaping

- 4.4.51 Policy ENV5 of the draft SADPD requires development proposals to include and implement a landscape scheme and sets out the requirements for this.
- 4.4.52 See comments for Policy SE 4 of the LPS in paragraphs 4.4.26 - 29.

Policy ENV6 - Trees, Hedgerows and Woodland Implementation

- 4.4.53 Policy ENV6 of the draft SADPD advises that development proposals should seek to retain and protect trees, woodlands and hedgerows. Also, where tree loss is unavoidable it must be compensated for on the basis of at least three new trees for every tree removed.
- 4.4.54 See comments for Policy SE 5 of the LPS in paragraph 4.4.31 - 33.

Policy ENV12 - Air Quality

- 4.4.55 Policy ENV12 of the draft SADPD advises that proposals that are likely to have an impact on local air quality will be required to provide an Air Quality Assessment (AQA). It states, *“Where the AQA shows that the construction or operational characteristics of the development would cause harm to air quality, including cumulatively with other planned or committed development, planning permission will be refused unless measures are adopted to acceptably mitigate the impact”*.
- 4.4.56 In line with the requirements of Policy ENV12 of the draft SADPD, the Air Quality assessment in the EAR (Chapter 5) advises that in regard to NO₂ there are no receptors for which the worsening of air quality is expected. There are three receptors which experience an improvement in air quality (medium positive change). All other receptors exceeding the 40 µg/m³ are expected to experience ‘imperceptible impacts’ (less than +/- 0.4 µg/m³ i.e. less than 1% of the AQS) from the operation of the scheme. Further, the count of positive and negative effects at receptors for magnitude categories shows that the scheme is expected to bring more benefits than adverse impacts. In regard to PM₁₀, the

EAR advises that the expected effect of the Scheme is 'Imperceptible' at all receptors, meaning that the scheme will not have any significant positive or negative effects on PM10 concentrations at assessed receptors.

Policy INF3 - Highway Safety and Access

- 4.4.57 Policy INF3 of the draft SADPD states that development proposals should comply with the relevant Highway Authority's and other highway design guidance.
- 4.4.58 Relevant Highways England guidance, and other design guidance has been used to design the scheme and select the preferred option. This includes the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges and Interim Advice Notes.

Saved Policies from the Macclesfield Local Plan

- 4.4.59 The Macclesfield Local Plan was adopted in January 2004 and contains the planning policies and proposals to shape the environment of the whole borough up to 2011. A number of policies from the Local Plan were saved under the Secretary of State's Direction in 2007. Some of these saved policies have now been replaced by policies in the LPS (adopted in July 2017); however, the following saved policies are still relevant for the scheme:

Policy NE3 - Landscape Conservation

- 4.4.60 Policy NE3 of the Macclesfield Local Plan states *"The conservation and enhancement of the rural landscape will be encouraged through the creation and restoration of hedgerows, woodlands, drystone walls and ponds and other natural features"*.
- 4.4.61 See comments for Policy SE 4 of the LPS in paragraphs 4.4.26 - 29.

Policy NE11 - Nature Conservation

- 4.4.62 Policy NE11 of the Macclesfield Local Plan states *"The borough council will seek to conserve, enhance and interpret nature conservation interests. Development which would adversely affect nature conservation interests will not normally be permitted"*.
- 4.4.63 See comments for Policies SE 3 and SE 4 of the LPS in paragraphs 4.4.21 - 25 and 4.4.26 - 29.

Policy GC1 - Green Belt - New Buildings

- 4.4.64 Policy GC1 of the Macclesfield Local Plan states *"Within the Green Belt approval will not be given, except in very special circumstances, for the construction of new buildings unless it is for the purposes set out in the policy"*.
- 4.4.65 See comments in paragraphs 4.3.14 – 4.3.16 regarding the Green Belt.

Policy T7 - Safeguarded Routes

- 4.4.66 Policy T7 of the Macclesfield Local Plan advises that land along the routes of the road schemes identified in the policy will be safeguarded from other development. This includes the A556 (M) M6 to M56 link.
- 4.4.67 The scheme by its very nature complies with this policy.

Policy T11 - Improvements to Strategic Highways Network

- 4.4.68 Policy T11 of the Macclesfield Local Plan advises that the borough council support the improvements to the strategic highway network identified in the policy. This includes links between Macclesfield and the M6 motorway.
- 4.4.69 The scheme by its very nature complies with this policy.

Saved Policies from the Cheshire Replacement Waste Local Plan

- 4.4.70 The Cheshire Replacement Waste Local Plan was adopted by Cheshire County Council in July 2007 and covers the period 2007-2017. All policies within the Cheshire Replacement Waste Local Plan were saved by the Secretary of State in March 2010. A number of policies have now been replaced by policies in the LPS (adopted in July 2017); however, the following policy is still relevant for the Scheme:

Policy 10 – Minimising Waste During Construction and Development

- 4.4.71 Policy 10 of the Waste Local Plan deals with waste generated during construction and development. It aims to ensure that the maximum amount of waste arising from the site development process is incorporated within the new development.
- 4.4.72 It will be ensured that the construction of the scheme adopts mitigation measures which comply with the legislative and policy drivers aiming to increase the efficiency of resource use, reduce carbon emissions and minimise waste. A CEMP with inclusion of materials and waste protocols will minimise impacts on the environment.
- 4.4.73 For these reasons it is considered that the scheme will comply with Policy 10 of the Waste Local Plan.

Minerals and Waste Development Plan Document Issues Paper

- 4.4.74 The MWDPD Issues Paper was published in April 2017 and will form the third part of CEC's Local Plan. The Minerals and Waste Issues Paper Consultation and associated call for sites exercise took place between April and June 2017. The issues paper identified a range of matters that the MWDPD is likely to address and was the first consultation in the preparation of the MWDPD.

- 4.4.75 A Report of Consultation on the MWDPD Issues Paper was published in October 2017. Following consideration of all the comments received, a draft version of the MWDPD will be prepared and will be publicly consulted on before a revised draft is prepared for further consultation and submission to the Secretary of State for an independent examination. Saved policies from the Cheshire Waste Plan and Cheshire Minerals Plan will continue to be used until the MWDPD has been adopted.
- 4.4.76 Due to the relatively early stage of the MWDPD it has not been considered further in this assessment.

4.5 Other relevant policies

Nature Conservation Strategy Supplementary Planning Document

- 4.5.1 The Nature Conservation Strategy SPD was adopted by Macclesfield Borough Council in 2006. The SPD supports policies in the Macclesfield some of these policies have been saved therefore this SPD has been considered in this review.
- 4.5.2 The SPD provides a focus for actions with the overall aim of promoting the Borough's natural assets resource for the future. The strategy highlights opportunities for action by a wide range of people and organisations, acting on their own or in partnership.
- 4.5.3 The objectives of the SPD are set out in Section 1.1.7 of the document, and include:
- *“To PROTECT existing habitats and species, particularly those with Biodiversity Action Plans (BAPs)*
 - *To MITIGATE against potentially adverse impacts to habitats and species*
 - *To COMPENSATE for losses to these habitats and species where damage is unavoidable*
 - *To ENHANCE existing environments and create new habitats and linkages where possible*
 - *To RAISE AWARENESS and UNDERSTANDING of the importance and value of the local natural environment in all its forms”.*
- 4.5.4 The scheme seeks to protect existing habitats and species where ever possible, and mitigation measures will be in place to avoid or reduce impacts, including the following:
- Work access tracks etc. would not be located in, or adjacent to, areas that are of ecological value
 - Site fencing would be used to prevent access to areas outside working areas, particularly in areas adjacent to features of ecological value
 - All machinery and materials would be stored in appropriately sited, secure compounds

- An induction and appropriate task-specific briefings would be given to contractors regarding the biodiversity issues associated with the site

4.5.5 Further details are provided in Chapter 7 (Biodiversity) of the EAR. As such, it is considered that the scheme is in line with the SPD.

Cheshire East Local Plan Infrastructure Delivery Plan Update

4.5.6 The Cheshire East Local Plan IDP update was published in July 2016 and is a supporting document for the LPS. This updated version of the IDP covers the period from 2015 to 2030. The IDP is supportive of the scheme and below are some examples of supportive text from the document.

4.5.7 Chapter 5 of the IDP deals with NSIPs. Section 5.5 of the report states:

“One project in Cheshire East, the A556 Knutsford to Bowdon Scheme, has been considered under the NSIP process. The project incorporates the construction of a new section of highway and improvements to the existing A556 trunk road between the M6 Junction 19 near Knutsford and the M56 Junction 7 near Bowdon, Greater Manchester, and includes improvements to the M6 southbound carriageway between the M6 Junction 19 and Knutsford Services”. Section 5.6 goes on to say that the scheme was granted consent and is now under construction.

4.5.8 Section 6.9 of the report states that having taken account of the development proposed in the LPS the key highway constraints are as follows:

“Strategic Road Network

The M6 junctions 16 to 19 link is running at, or close to capacity. Incidents are therefore likely to have greater consequences as there is insufficient spare capacity to cope with additional pressure. In the Chancellors 2013 Autumn Statement it was confirmed that this section of the M6 would be upgraded to feature additional highway capacity through use of the hard shoulders as running lanes. This Smart approach to motorway improvement is also now planned to the M56 motorway from Manchester Airport to the A556.

Within the period to 2025, taking account of the recently completed Pinch Point junction improvements at junctions 16 and 17 on the M6 and the Smart motorway proposals, the strategic road network is considered by Highways England to be reasonably able to accommodate the development proposals in the Local Plan Strategy. In the later years of the plan period and by the end of plan delivery some notable congestion issues are expected within the network particularly associated with junctions 16, 17 and 19 of the M6.

At junction 19 an improvement scheme is being prepared for implementation by around 2020....”.

Local Transport Plan (2011 – 2026)

- 4.5.9 The LTP (2011-2026) is a strategic plan for the development of transport within Cheshire East over the period 2011 to 2026. The LTP (2011–2026) outlines how transport will contribute to and support the longer-term aspirations of the borough. Delivery of the plan will be set out in a short-term implementation plan to allocate resources and prioritise key transport measures. It will eventually be replaced by the LTP (2018-2023).
- 4.5.10 Section 3.24 of the LTP (2011–2026) advises that the M6 is one of the key routes through Cheshire East, and Section 3.25 goes on to say that it is one of the most heavily trafficked routes in Cheshire East and states *“Congestion along the route causes disruptions to freight, business, commuter and visitor travel, and may pose a threat to the future economic growth of the borough. Much of this growth originates beyond the borough and the Council needs to work with strategic partners to influence the management of traffic along these routes”*.
- 4.5.11 Section 3.27 of the LTP (2011–2026) states *“The A556 (T) between the M6 and M56 has been identified as a key congestion corridor in the Connecting Cities: Northwest study (2010) resulting in poor air quality (at Mere Crossroads) and noise issues for local residents. The Highways Agency [now Highways England] has identified this link as a priority in its investment programme and is currently developing proposals for the upgrade of the road subject to funding availability”*. Section 3.28 of the LTP (2011–2026) goes on to state *“The provision of additional housing and employment in Cheshire East will lead to further pressure at these key junctions and links”*.
- 4.5.12 Policy B1 (Strategic Partnerships for Economic Growth) of the LTP (2011–2026) states *“Work with neighbouring authorities, appropriate regional/sub-regional organisations, public transport operators and providers to enhance cross-boundary and strategic investment opportunities in transport”*.
- 4.5.13 One of the ‘Policy Initiatives’ for Policy B1 states:
- “Strategic road network: Work with the Highways Agency to improve the management of traffic on the motorway and trunk road network in Cheshire East through supporting proposals for ‘Active Traffic Management’ and by taking a partnership approach to solving safety and congestion problems at motorway junctions. Also seek to ensure that the local communities concerns are captured and reflected in the Highways Agency’s designs (e.g. for the proposed improvements to the A556 (T))”*.

Local Transport Plan (2018 – 2023)

- 4.5.14 CEC have recently consulted on a new LTP which will cover the period 2018–2023. The updated strategy considers all forms of transport over the next 5 years (2018 to 2023). It is a framework for how transport will support wider policies to improve the economy, protect the environment and make attractive places to live, work and play. The Plan outlines the role transport will play in supporting the long term goals of Cheshire East.

- 4.5.15 The draft LTP mentions the scheme as being a planned SRN scheme (page 84).

Economic Development Strategy for Cheshire East

- 4.5.16 The EDS for Cheshire East was published in June 2011 and sets out objectives and priorities for the following 15 years. The EDS sets out the current state of the economy of Cheshire East, and identifies in particular its strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. The EDS also identifies strategic economic development objectives and underpinning priorities for the borough, which includes 'connections and linkages', and provides a strategic policy context. One of the strengths identified in the EDS is the areas transport links, including the M6 motorway
- 4.5.17 The scheme will benefit the M6 J19 and A556 by improving transport links; therefore, it has the support of the EDS.

5 Conclusion

- 5.1.1 The scheme is listed as a commitment in the DfT's RIS 1 and Highways England's Strategic Business Plan. It is also provided for in various policy documents, including the Macclesfield Local Plan (adopted 2004) (saved Policy T7 (Safeguarded Routes)), Cheshire East IDP update (2016), and the LTP (2011–2026).
- 5.1.2 The proposals have fully considered the key policy controls and would continue to adhere to any restrictions or planning guidance throughout the design and build process. Particular reference has been paid to the impact of the scheme on landscape and habitats. Various policy documents, including the NPPF (Chapter 15) and the draft SADPD (Policy ENV2 – Ecological Implementation) state the requirement for a net gain for biodiversity as part of schemes. In order to meet this policy requirement, the mitigation/enhancement planting scheme will seek to achieve a net gain in biodiversity, through the use of native species and shrubs, particularly those that provide a food source for birds and invertebrates.
- 5.1.3 Overall, the scheme is aligned and generally in compliance with policy and is expected to bring significant long-term benefits to the area, including monetary and non-monetary (i.e. environmental) benefits.

6 Figures

Table 6-1: Figures

Reference	Title
Figure 1-1	M6 J19 Improvement General Arrangement
Figure 2-1	M6 J19 Scheme Location Plan
Figure 2-2	Option A, Double “Cut-Through” Links
Figure 2-3	Option B – Hybrid ‘Do Minimum’ Roundabout Improvements
Figure 2-4	Option B – Amended Layout

