

Catherine-de-Barnes Residents' Association

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[REDACTED]
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Re M42 Junction 6

Dear Dee,

Please find below our further comments relating to the above project. I am sorry its so late but hope in time to be considered

- 1) This project is being promoted under the heading of 'M42 Jct 6 improvement'. A new link road enabling traffic from the M42 to exit the M42 earlier(through the mechanism of a new motorway junction) allegedly relieving the movements at Jct6. What is envisaged is a new motorway junction, a new dual carriageway which connects with the local road network. This design has the potential for significantly increasing the level of traffic on the local road network impacting the local villages of Bickenhill, Catherine de Barnes . these villages are already vulnerable to increasing traffic levels when the M42 is heavily congested or blocked . It's a one way improvement in that only traffic to the south can make use of it .
- 2) The project is within the Green Belt and situated within the ' Meriden Gap' both of which are areas to be protected in the Solihull local Plan. The project sits on the edge of Hampton in Arden Conservation Area and significantly negatively impacts this asset.
- 3) We quote extracts from CPRE's letter dated 26th January 2017 to the M42jct 6 project team concerning an alternative option/s north of junction 6.

CPRE(as we do) supports a new Junction north of Junction 6, or an elongated Junction 6 extending northwards, and opposes any new junction on connections to the motorway south of junction.

The consultation booklet shows four other alternatives (called Themes) listed as 'considered and discounted'.

Two of these involve more link roads south of A45, and one would make Junction 6 a 'free-flow' junction with 4/5 levels. Themes 1 and 2 would be as damaging to the Green Belt as Options 1 and 2, if not more so. Theme 4 looks very costly and may be impracticable.

The fourth proposal however proposes a new junction north of and linked to junction next to the NEC and parallel with the planned HS2 station. This plan (Theme 5) offers a solution that meets both UK Central / HS2's needs and protects the Green Belt south of the A45. It is however not offered as an Option in the public questionnaire so support for it cannot be expressed by completing that.



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Highways England advised at local exhibitions that UK Central submitted to it a proposal for a new junction north of Junction 6. The 'Theme 5' Northern Junction is based on that. The booklet says it is 'within budget' but is discounted for two main reasons: because it would 'clash with HS2 structures', and would be too close to M42 Junction 7.

The HS2 bridges have not been designed in detail or committed and their final design can incorporate width for the link roads for the Northern Junction.

On junction spacing, the standard minimum spacing between motorway junctions is 2000 metres 'weaving length'. The spacing (if the 'Theme 5 plan' is put on an OS map) is 1500 m northbound, 1600 m southbound. Comparison with spacing of a number of junctions on M6 and M40 shows a shorter spacing, with two junctions on M6 in the West Midlands (J.8 to J.9 and J.9 to J.10) being 1700 m apart. Other spacings are even less such as 1200m and 1500m on M40 south of Warwick (J.14 to J.15). Thus there are some close spacings now in the West Midlands

We believe the text in red is particularly relevant as it would appear to be promoted by UK Central, a future planned development now known as 'Arden Cross' and the reasons given by HE for not taking the option forward seem to be quite puzzling. The final designs for the HS2 infrastructure, we believe, had not been formulated. The fact that reduced distance between junctions was being put forward as a reason, when in fact they **accepted** similar 'Deviation from Standards' when making their response to Planning Application 2015/51409 (MSA at Catherine de Barnes) where northern slips are required, which under normal circumstances, have failed to conform with the weaving distances required by their Standards.

David Cuthbert – Chair

For and on behalf of Catherine de Barnes Residents Association