

From: [Timothy Wheeler](#)
To: [A417 Missing Link at Air Balloon](#)
Subject: Missing Link A417 - (Updated Version)
Date: 03 October 2021 20:45:31

We are emailing to record our full support of Option 30 for the proposed A417 Missing Link Scheme.

We would like to register as interested persons. We appreciate that the time to register has passed, although we believe a precedent has been set by allowing a resident from Cowley to register after the date that was set. We understood that following the consultations with the public and key stakeholders over the last few years that Highways England had identified the best route for the missing link. Highways England have in consultation assessed all the route options and carried out all the necessary surveys.

We are concerned that the Inspectorate will have disproportionate number of objections from activists who may not be local and from persons whose sole concern is their own individual circumstances. The silent majority of local residents', road users and businesses (who have had to suffer for decades and are overwhelmingly in support of the scheme) views may not be proportionately represented to the Inspectorate.

The Missing Link has been a problem for decades, it is the only single carriageway between the M4 and M5, it is the worst congestion hotspot in the county and the delays have a major impact on local residents, commuters and business every single day of the year, with many accidents and casualties. Half the collisions on the whole A417 and A419 trunk road take place on the missing link part. Traffic queues at the Air Balloon roundabout cause significant delays to all the roads off the roundabout. This has a massive detrimental effect to locals, road users and businesses.

For locals the surrounding roads are used as rat runs, causing air quality issues, noise problems and with speeding motorists an increased risk of accidents.

Highways England have examined and consulted on many different schemes and come up with a landscape highway scheme to provide safe and free flowing traffic, whilst conserving and enhancing the special character and natural beauty of the area. We understand that some residents in Cowley are continuing to push for Option 12 where the majority of the existing road remains in place and is widened with the bypassing of Nettleton. This like all the other options has been considered in great detail and at length and has been rejected with 72% supporting Option 30 which was at a lower cost but with greater benefits. Option 12 would not resolve the current and predicted traffic problems with the rat runs continuing for example. Further it would not maximise opportunities to landscape and enhance environment improvements in the area.

This long awaited scheme has already been delayed and at huge cost has been thoroughly assessed, planned and through consultations approved by all stakeholders and the majority of residents and users. The time has now come for action and must not be delayed or derailed by a small minority of objectors at this late stage. The problems are only going to get worse. How many more accidents/deaths are going to happen if we do not act to improve this dangerous stretch of road?

The Parish Council of Cowley and Birdlip support the scheme and have campaigned for it for many years. Highways England have received the feedback during the consultation about the noise and visual impact from the village of Cowley and have done lots of things to reduce the impact. The new road will fall approximately midway between Cowley and Birdlip and therefore not have any greater effect on one or other of the two neighbouring villages. The wishes of the overwhelming majority, the benefits and the detailed/expert planning of Highways England must be respected.

Can you please confirm that we will be added as interested parties.

Kind regards

Tim and Fiona Wheeler

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