

The Planning Act 2008 defines the local community as a definitive consultee, with the onus on the applicant to follow the prescribed process and to instigate meaningful consultation to benefit the project. It is accepted good practice that the applicant should engage with the community early in the process and be available to engage with them in the most convenient ways to the community in question.

On the 30th May 2019 I wrote to HE: "Of pressing concern is that there are three alternatives for the A436 link road connections and the possibility of the removal of the existing A417 between the Golden Heart Inn and Barrow Wake. The scoping report states that a decision on which A436 link road alternative to proceed with will be made prior to consultation and the assessment in the Environmental Statement. I would like to know when exactly this decision will be made. What criteria will be used in the decision making? Will there be consultation prior to this so that the residents most affected will have an opportunity to put their views?"

HE response on 11th June stated that "there are currently no plans to hold a consultation with the residents of Cowley specifically."

Can the ExA be appraised as to why it was deemed unnecessary to hold a consultation with the community most affected by this proposal?

On 12th June 2019, I replied to HE: "Thank you for explaining how a decision will be made on which of the three possible link roads is chosen, but I would have thought it was preferable to consult with those most affected by the decision before it is made, especially as we are due to have another consultation period this summer. I add that "there is a strong feeling amongst the residents of Cowley that there has been insufficient consultation with the community and respectfully requesting that at least one of the next round of consultation meetings be held in Cowley. This unfortunately was not acted upon."

Can the ExA be appraised as to why this request for engagement with the community was declined?

On 29th July 2019 I suggest a suitable local venue. "as to date there has been no visit or communication directly with the residents of Cowley, may I respectfully suggest that the Girl Guide centre in Cowley is suitable for a local meeting. This is in fact used for alternate meetings of Cowley (and Birdlip) Parish Council and is a large hall with plenty of parking."

Can the ExA be appraised as to whether this suggested venue was given proper consideration and why it was declined?

Can the ExA be appraised as to whether there has been meaningful consultation with the community most affected by this proposal

given that attempts made by Cowley residents to fully engage in the process were repeatedly ignored ?

The whole title 'The Missing Link' is factually incorrect and totally misleading. Originally, in about 2014, the proposal was referred to as 'The Missing Loop' at some point the applicant began to erroneously refer to the proposed scheme as the 'Missing link'. This inaccuracy has clearly influenced the fairness of the entire consultation process . There is no broken chain in the existing road network, the present A417 runs continuously.

Can the ExA be appraised as to why the title was changed, and when?

Can the ExA be appraised as to why an accurate description of this proposed new road was not used?

Can the ExA be appraised as to whether this misleading title has prejudiced the fairness of the public consultation?

[REDACTED]

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**From:** Linda Turner [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 13 December 2021 15:16  
**To:** Howard Mudd  
**Subject:** Fwd: A417 missing link

Sent from my iPad

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** Linda Turner [REDACTED]  
**Date:** 30 May 2019 at 16:47:00 BST  
**To:** Highways England [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** A417 missing link

I am a resident of Cowley Village and have various concerns about how the planning for the A417 Missing Link project is progressing.

I would note first of all that the village of Cowley was not even shown on your announcement of the preferred option, even though it is the community which will be most affected.

Of pressing concern is that there are three alternatives for the A436 link road connections and the possibility of the removal of the existing A417 between the Golden Heart Inn and Barrow Wake. The A417 Missing Link Environmental Impact Scoping Report (May 2019) states that a decision on which A436 link road alternative to proceed with will be made prior to consultation and that that a single alternative will be presented for public consultation and for reporting in the Environmental Statement. I would like to know when exactly this decision will be made. What criteria will be used in the decision making and what assessment work is being undertaken? Will there be consultation prior to this so that the residents most affected will have an opportunity to put forward their views?

I also have not seen any mention in the scoping report of if and how an assessment will be made of indirect traffic impacts on Cowley, both during construction and operation of the new road. Again, which of the three link road options are chosen could have a huge impact on issues of traffic impacts together with levels of noise and air pollution. There also needs to be proper consultation and modelling undertaken of the impact of removing a large part of the existing A417. It would seem sensible that this stretch of road be retained to serve as an alternative route for access during construction and thereafter as an access route for emergency vehicles and for use if there is an accident or maintenance work required on the new road. One of the stated aims of the new road was to alleviate the use of the single track lanes through villages like Cowley, which at present are often gridlocked when there is a problem on the A417.

Finally the scoping report fails to mention that not only is Cowley in an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), but also that part of the village around historic Cowley Manor with its listed gardens is also a designated conservation area.

There is a very real sense in this community that our concerns are not being properly addressed. In that regard could you please let me have copy records of all communication to date with Cowley Parish Council or any of its councillors.

I look forward to hearing from you as a matter of urgency,

Regards,

Linda Turner

[REDACTED]

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**From:** Linda Turner [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 13 December 2021 15:25  
**To:** Howard Mudd  
**Subject:** Re A417

Dear Ms Turner

Thank you for your email on 30 May raising your concerns regarding the scheme in relation to the village of Cowley.

Your email mentioned that Cowley was not shown on our announcement. The map we published as part of our Preferred Route Announcement highlighted Cowley, Brimpsfield and Nettleton as locations to the south of the scheme. I have attached this map and it is also available online

a [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] It would be helpful if you could let me know of any maps that have omitted Cowley, as this should not have happened and we would like to correct that if possible.

Regarding our alternative junctions proposals, the project team are in the process of reviewing the assessments carried out and will be making a decision shortly. The assessments carried out are in line with those completed on the rest of the route, and consider a number of factors including effect on landscape, air quality, noise, safety and traffic demand. The decision on which junction alternative is planned to allow sufficient time to prepare designs and finalise assessments ahead of a statutory consultation later this summer. We aim to discuss this with all affected property owners prior to that consultation but there no currently no plans to hold a consultation with the residents of Cowley specifically. Our statutory consultation will present the alternative we have selected, the reasons for doing so but also the assessments made on each of the three possible junctions; Cowley residents will be able to give us their thoughts at that.

You also asked for information on the construction methods and sequencing of work. This is still being considered as the design evolves and we are working with contractors to consider the ways in which we can reduce disruption to residents as well as road users. The road will remain open during the construction period, with all restrictions or temporary closures discussed in advance. Highways England is committed to constructing its projects in a way that is safe and reduces disruption as much as possible.

A key benefit of the new road will be increased resilience - currently many maintenance activities or traffic collisions require a closure of the road. The improved A417, with a central reservation and at least two lanes in each direction, will allow traffic to keep moving in most instances. This resilience, combined with improved journey reliability, means significantly fewer vehicles are forecast to use local roads through villages such as Cowley, and further information on the anticipated improvements can be found in section 7 of the Scheme Assessment Report, available here [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]. We would be happy to discuss any specific areas of this with you, if you would like to.

Your email also noted that our Environmental Scoping Report does not reference that Cowley is within the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). We have double-checked the Report and confirm that it makes a number of references to the AONB but does not list each town or village; it was felt that this was not necessary given that the entirety of the project lies within the AONB boundary. We can also confirm that Section 2.3.5 refers to Cowley Manor as Grade II\* listed and as a Registered Park and Garden, as it is within 1km from the scheme, the boundary in which items are considered 'in scope' and therefore included in the Scoping Report. However, the Cowley Conservation Area falls outside of this assessment area so hasn't been included.

You have also requested for copies of all correspondence with Cowley Parish Council and any of its councillors. Without further information as to what information you require, and for what periods, we cannot fulfil this request. As an example, releasing details of discussions with individual councillors may impinge on their privacy as residents.

I am sorry that you feel that the concerns of Cowley residents are not being addressed. We have regular contact with a range of stakeholders, including parish council across the area in an effort to hear as many people's opinions as possible. Residents also have opportunities to respond to our consultations, with the next planned for later this summer. Nearly 2,000 people responded to our non-statutory consultation on options in early 2018 and we met nearly 800 people at our six public events. We would encourage as many people as possible to respond to the consultations, so that we can gather as much information as possible.

I hope the information above is useful, please contact us again at [REDACTED] if you have any further questions.

If you have 5 minutes, I would appreciate it if you could complete the feedback survey below.

[REDACTED]

Kind regards

**Adam Davis**

**Programme Support Executive**

**Regional Investment Programme South West**

Highways England | Temple Quay House | 2 The Square, Temple Quay | Bristol | BS1 6HA

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Sent from my iPad

[REDACTED]

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**From:** Linda Turner [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 13 December 2021 15:27  
**To:** Howard Mudd  
**Subject:** PDF

Dear Mr Davis ,

Thank you for your reply.

The map used to announce option 30 as the preferred route does not show Cowley.

Could you kindly reconsider whether the conservation area centred around Cowley Manor should have been included as I do not understand how Cowley Manor itself could be within the assessment area but not the conservation area around it.

Thank you for explaining how a decision will be made on which of the three possible link roads is chosen , but I would have thought it was preferable to consult with those most affected by the decision before it is made, especially as we are due to have another consultation period this summer.

You did not reply to my comments regarding the possible closure of part of the existing A417.

Whilst I appreciate your reference to the fact that “ significantly fewer vehicles are forecast to use local roads through villages such as Cowley,” [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] I would expect a detailed assessment on the changes in expected car journeys through Cowley itself together with assessments of possible increases in noise and air pollution. I do not think a proper assessment can be made at present, as which of the three link road options are chosen could have a huge impact on these issues. There also needs to be proper consultation and modelling undertaken of the impact of removing a large part of the existing A417. It would seem sensible that this stretch of road be retained to serve as an alternative route for access during construction and thereafter as an access route for emergency vehicles and for use if there is an accident or maintenance work required on the new road. One of the stated aims of the new road was to alleviate the use of the single track lanes through villages like Cowley, which at present are often gridlocked when there is a problem on the A417. I would note also that the single track lanes through the village have virtually no passing places and have been designated as unsuitable for HGVS.

I certainly would not expect information regarding a resident’s private communication with you but I think I am entitled to information on communication with my Parish Council or its Chairman, Mr Lavington in his official capacity.

Lastly, as there is a strong feeling amongst the residents of Cowley that there has been insufficient consultation with the community as a whole , might I respectfully request that at least one of your summer consultation meetings is actually held in Cowley?

I await your response,

Kind regards,

Linda Turner.

Sent from my iPad

Sent from my iPad



[REDACTED]

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**From:** Linda Turner [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 13 December 2021 15:29  
**To:** Howard Mudd  
**Subject:** PDF

**From:** A417 Missing Link at Air Balloon [REDACTED]  
**Date:** 1 July 2019 at 16:07:10 BST  
**To:** Linda Turner [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** Highways England response - A417 Missing Link at Air Balloon & Cowley

Dear Ms Turner

Thank you for your response to our email on 12 June. I'm sorry for the late response.

We have reviewed the material we used for our Preferred Route announcement earlier this year but have not spotted any errors. We would be happy to correct any maps that do not show Cowley if and when they are brought to our attention.

The conservation area centred around Cowley Manor covers approximately all of the same area as the Cowley Manor Registered Park and Garden, which is referenced within the scoping report. Both the Registered Park and Garden and conservation area will be included within the Environmental Assessment Impact process, in addition to Cowley Manor. To avoid further confusion, the conservation area will be specifically referenced within the Environmental Statement. Thanks for bringing this to our attention.

The consultation later this year is the chance to share views and does not represent the final design. We will present the assessments made on all three alternative options and the reason(s) behind our decision, which has been timed to allow sufficient time to complete preliminary design and appraisal ahead of consultation launching in September. No alternative junction materially changes access to or from Cowley but residents are welcome to share their thoughts on them ahead of the consultation. Any comments received will not be considered part of the formal consultation but could inform the project team's thinking.

Regarding the location of consultation venues, we are reviewing which venues would be suitable. As well as availability, venues need to be accessible for all and so finding suitable locations that can cater for these requirements means we cannot guarantee that an event will be in Cowley. We are keen to hold events close to the scheme as well as the wider region and so should we be unable to visit Cowley, we will be nearby.

Regarding the operation of the new road, we do consider emergency and maintenance access during design, and our current proposals do not require the existing road to remain open beyond Stockwell. This presents the opportunity to remove significant amounts of highways infrastructure from the sensitive Cotswolds escarpment, with potential to create a traffic free route to enhance the enjoyment of residents and visitors alike. By removing the roundabouts at Cowley and Air Balloon

the new A417 will be more reliable, reducing instances of drivers choosing to avoid congestion by taking routes through the villages along the route.

Finally, we are currently compiling records of any discussion with the Birdlip and Cowley Parish Council. Once this is complete we will pass them to the Parish Council for sharing with individual members.

I hope this information has gone some way to help, please let me know if we can provide any further information.

Kind regards

**Adam Davis**

**Programme Support Executive,**

**Regional Investment Programme South West**

Highways England | Temple Quay House | 2 The Square, Temple Quay | Bristol | BS1 6HA

Web: 

Sent from my iPad

[REDACTED]

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**From:** Linda Turner [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 13 December 2021 15:31  
**To:** Howard Mudd  
**Subject:** 29th July PDF

Dear Adam,

I am resending in full my official request , originally sent on the 5th July , under the Freedom of Information Act as so far I have not even had the courtesy of an acknowledgement .

As for other matters raised, as to date there has been no visit or communication directly with the residents of Cowley, may I respectfully suggest that the Girl Guide centre in Cowley is suitable for a local meeting. This is in fact used for alternate meetings of Cowley (and Birdlip) Parish Council and is a large hall with plenty of parking.

Kind regards,

Linda Turner

Sent from my iPad=