

Following on from my initial representation (dated 02/09/21), I would again like to voice my opposition to this scheme. My main concerns centre around improper consideration of route options (the scheme not being landscape led), the impact on both biodiversity and the visual environment, loss of heritage and value for money.

Improper consideration of route options (the scheme not being landscape led)

1. I firstly would like to express my extreme disappointment that option 30, along with its subsequent ancillary roads, has been chosen. This has replaced an existing road with a significantly larger urban footprint, resulting in a larger area dominated by roads and human interference.
2. One main issue is the **rerouting of the B4070 to Birdlip via Barrow Wake**. The below quote is from Table 3-3 (Page 9) of 6.2 Environmental Statement Chapter 3 Assessment of Alternatives.

“The rerouting of the B4070 to Birdlip via Barrow Wake removes the need for a crossing on the ‘Air Balloon Way’ and introduces natural surveillance to the Barrow Wake car park to help manage anti-social behaviour.”

I struggle to see how the above decision was made with the landscape or environment in mind, moving the B4070 closer to the Barrow Wake SSSI to stop anti-social behaviour.

3. I now further refer back to Missing Link Scheme Assessment Report (March 2019). Given this is meant to be a landscape-led scheme (as required by the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan 2018-2023), it is felt that very little discussion is had on the benefits of each scheme in terms of Landscape design (with both simply being described as major adverse). It also seems to be clear that monetary value is more important than landscape, based on the conclusions. Furthermore, changes were required to be made to Option 30 to make it suitable in terms of landscape for progression; one of these changes (Link Road to Barrow Wake) has since been reserved in the final design.

The impact on both biodiversity and the visual environment, loss of heritage

4. The Environmental Statement Summary Chapter highlights Permanent adverse significant effects to Cultural heritage, Landscape and visual, Biodiversity, Geology and soils and Noise. I also note that the Archaeological Assessment (Appendix 6.2 of the ES) concludes:

“a possibility for associated remains of up to Medium or even High significance (i.e. potentially of equivalent value to a Scheduled Monument)”.

5. It is further noted that operation adverse effects on biodiversity appear to primarily be related to road traffic impacts from vehicle emissions. This makes the choice to move the B4070 closer to Barrow Wake seem less environment-led. Furthermore, there is no mention of the impacts from ammonia tailpipe emissions on nutrient nitrogen deposition levels at these sites. Ammonia from tailpipe emissions has a greater relative effect on nitrogen deposition than NOx and is not anticipated to reduce through better engine technology. The impacts on these habitat sites have the potential to be greater than predicted and should be re-considered.

Value for money

6. Since the scheme was first brought to design and options decided, there has been large changes to societies lifestyles/attitudes, as well as environmental regulatory changes. These, such as an increased desire to act on climate change, the COVID-19 pandemic, or the government's commitments through the Environment Act 2021 (which has consequences for biodiversity net gain requirements), will impact on the role of transport. As the scheme has not changes dramatically since 2017/2018, it is clear non have these have been considered in any form. To produce a scheme that is modern, fit for purpose and value for money, time should be spent to redesign the scheme in light of the above.
7. Overall, as the modern world evolves around less personalised transport, smaller modifications to the existing road should be considered to improve safety, and money spend on other areas of public transport. As opposed to larger hard engineering projects that could well be redundant in the future.