

Deadline 5 " ISH 4 Responses

ISH4 Questions

1. A recent but relevant development since the last hearing is that the Head of Environment for National Highways has imposed 60mph limits on four stretches of the M6, M5, M602 and M1. He states that hard acceleration produces a lot more pollution, specifically NO2 and that 60mph is "about the sweet spot". Would it be accurate to assume that none of those stretches of road have a gradient that is greater than or equal to that of the A417 at Birdlip Hill?

2. The reason for developing Option 30 is due to volume of traffic with a proposed 70mph speed limit which can surely no longer be in tune with the times when Option 12 with a 50mph speed limit can deliver the same goal of improving traffic flow and safety but without the increase in pollution, specifically NO2. Option 30 is contrary to the recent National Highways edict on reducing speed limits on multiple roads but will no doubt set the tone for all roads in the future. An example is the Heads of the Valleys Road and as we react to UK and global policy on reducing emissions, is it an accurate statement therefore that Option 12 is a better environmental solution than Option 30?

3. Is it fair to surmise that the current A417 Option 30 and the process to reach this option is archaic based on the rapidly evolving world that we live in? When Option 30 or Option 12 were presented at the beginning of this process 15 plus years ago the idea of a hearing via Teams would not have been vaguely in our psyche, yet we've had to evolve to debate over multiple screens. How can a road development that destroys the natural habitat, decimates local farms and communities, and increases NO2 over the current heightened base level be at all relevant when the world has moved so rapidly? It feels as though we're dragging an archaic proposition for the sake of egos, not legacy.

4. As global oil and material prices react to a protracted war in the Ukraine and a decision required on this scheme is to be made by May 16, it can only be assumed that any contractor must have had fixed costs associated with this scheme to ensure that it would not go wildly over budget. Would it be pertinent to assume that 15 years ago this scheme was already past its sell by date but now it is fully redundant?