



# The Planning Inspectorate

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Our Ref: TR010061

Date: 5 May 2023

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Dear Mr Burrough

## **Planning Act 2008 (as amended)**

### **Application by National Highways for an Order Granting Development Consent for A358 Taunton to Southfields Dualling Scheme**

Thank you for your letter dated 12 January 2023

I apologise for the delay in this response reaching you however I can confirm as part of the pre-application engagement on the proposed A358 Development Consent order, the Planning Inspectorate is aware the Applicant has carried out both a statutory consultation between 12 October and 22 November 2022 and a supplementary consultation on design changes to the scheme between 24 May and 26 June 2022 for the project.

As part of the Planning Act 2008 (PA2008) process, Applicants are required to have regard to relevant responses received during the period of statutory consultation as stated in Section 49(2) of the PA2008. Applicants should clearly set out such comments received from the consultation, along with their response to each, within the consultation report submitted as part of the application. This could, for example, include where the Applicant has received responses about alternative routes or designs for the scheme. It is advisable that an Applicant includes any other consultation undertaken prior to an application being submitted.

An application submitted for the scheme should include the Applicant's rationale for selecting a preferred route for the scheme.

How the matter of alternatives is examined and reported to the Secretary of State is a matter for the Examining Authority. The consideration of alternatives is set out at paragraphs 4.26 and 4.27 of the [National Policy Statement for National Networks](#) which identifies that option testing need not be considered by the Examining Authority or the decision maker if the project has been subject to full options appraisal within a road

investment strategy. The Examining Authority should be satisfied that proportionate option consideration for alternatives has been undertaken.

Yours sincerely

*Kay Sully*

**Kay Sully**  
**Operations Lead**

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