

Questions and Answers form 17th December 2020 Broadcast

1. Can you explain what the University of Warwick Aspirational Growth area is on the plans for the Options?

The hatched area shown as Aspirational Growth represents the land that is owned by the University and is shown here to demonstrate the potential relationship between the new transport corridor and the land available to accommodate future growth of the University should this be aspired to by the University. Any proposals in this area would need to come forward as part of a Local Plan review given that the land currently falls within the Green Belt and would be subject to the usual planning processes.

2. If we have further questions who do we contact?

If you have any question or comments on the scheme please email a46linkroad@warwickshire.gov.uk

3. There was some talk about extending the consultation period as there was an issue in informing parts of the community. Is this going to happen?

Additional leaflets have been sent out to residents informing them of the consultation. This includes all areas directly affected by the scheme. We have extended the consultation to 14th February 2021 to ensure these people have a suitable opportunity to take part in the survey.

4. How does the proposed road interact with Cryfield Grange Road?

Under the current proposals it is envisaged that a new bridge would be constructed to either take the proposed link road over or under Cryfield Grange Road. There are no proposals to have a junction here.

5. Will additional cycle paths be provided during the construction of the roads, and remain after the road construction is completed?

The proposals include a segregated cycleway along the entire length of the new road, connecting into the existing cycle network where possible. During construction no new cycle paths will be available, but it is intended that access will continue to be available for any existing routes. A plan of the existing cycle network along with future proposals is shown within the consultation documentation.

6. Has an option to connect the new road to Kirby Corner roundabout rather than Westwood Heath Road been considered?

The early design considered and discounted a number of connections in the Westwood Heath area. During the next stage of the design this option will be reconsidered, with an initial assessment to identify the viability of this option and the impacts on local roads, properties and travel movements.

7. How will the new road cross the A429 Kenilworth Road?

The proposed link road in either option 2 or 3 would include a junction with the Kenilworth Road. It is likely that this would be a roundabout, and this would also

allow for a connection to a possible future transport interchange. The survey asks for views on this connection with Kenilworth Road.

8. Given that a large number of people have been missed off the initial leaflet drop, please can we have another broadcast call in January to cater for those who may have missed the opportunity to join this one.

A broadcast is scheduled to take place on 7th January 2021. A recording of the broadcast on 17th December 2020 is available on the consultation page. If there is sufficient demand, consideration will be given to holding another broadcast.

9. New roads generate more congestion, not less. This is proven via many examples. Why are the Councils not considering alternate modes of transport to support growth?

The proposals include alternative modes of transport, with segregated cycle and footways, and provision for bus and Very Light Rail. The Councils' want to encourage active travel and are proposing to enhance the existing provision. However, these provisions alone will not cater for the predicted travel demand resulting from residential and employment growth over time and therefore a joint solution is needed. These developments will generate travel demand regardless of whether the link road is built.

10. The link road heavily affects residents of Cryfield Grange Road residents and Kenilworth Road. Yet your consultation makes no reference whatsoever to them. Why as Coventry residents and taxpayers have we been totally 100% overlooked / disregarded?

We are aware that these proposals will affect a number of people along the route. The aim of this consultation is to set out the strategic case for new infrastructure and to use the feedback to inform any proposals that are taken forward. We will be undertaking more specific consultation with residents and businesses in the area, and discussing the details of the proposals, if they are taken forward.

11. Will the proposed station allow for a future HS2 station, in the same location, by safeguarding appropriate land?

There are no proposals for an HS2 station in the Coventry South/ Kenilworth area, as this area will be served by the HS2 Interchange station near the Airport/NEC and at Curzon Street in Birmingham. The proposed station in our plans is located on the Leamington Spa to Coventry line.

12. Can you tell us how you will mitigate the loss of trees and habitat as a result of this work please? We have already lost a huge amount of wildlife habitat due to the Stoneleigh roundabout work and HS2.

The route of the scheme will be designed to minimise impact on trees and wildlife habitats, including the ancient woodland on Kenilworth Road and those to the south of the University of Warwick. Early studies have been completed, and during the next stages of work environmental surveys will be carried out to establish more detail regarding the habitats along the route. The proposals for any infrastructure will also include landscaping and habitat protection or replacement with the aim of

maintaining or improving the biodiversity of the area. This will be tested and monitored through the planning process.

13. Do we think there is a genuine need for a train station when we have 3 stations already within a 4-5mile radius in Coventry, Kenilworth and Tile Hill? What are the likely timescales for the proposed rail station? Is this being built for the new sports/football stadium in this area and also to attract new business development on the adjacent green field sites between Coventry and Kenilworth?

A new station would take several years to bring forward, and it is likely that this would be outside of the timescale of the development of a link road. Early feasibility studies are being undertaken by WCC and Midlands Connect to identify the need for a new station, which is likely to be linked to increased housing and employment in the area and to clarify the infrastructure improvements that would be required to support its provision and to support improved rail services on the Coventry to Leamington line. This work is being developed separately and will be brought to the public at an appropriate point in the project development process. For any new railway station, a robust business case needs to be made including consideration of the potential patronage and the impacts on existing stations. If the business case does not identify that the new station is justified, then it would be unlikely to secure funding to go ahead.

There is no link between the station proposal and the stadium proposal (see response to the following question). A new station would, however, serve planned development such as the 4,000 houses at King's Hill, providing residents of that development with more direct access to the rail network.

14. Where is the new Football Stadium planned? Is this being considered in your plans?

We know as much information regarding the football stadium proposal as has been made public. Currently there is no planning application and exact site details have not been made available. There have been no discussions between the University, the football club and the three Councils in regard to the stadium proposal, and no stadium proposal is included within any of the relevant Local Plans. Should more information become available on the stadium, this will be assessed against the proposals.

15. Will there be park and ride from the new railway station to the University and Kenilworth?

Details of what the station scheme will comprise of are still in the early stages of development. As it stands there is a desire to have some park and ride element, as well as interchange with other modes of travel, such as bus, Very Light Rail and bike, providing onward travel options between the station and the University campus.

16. Are council taxes going to be reduced for impacted residents given the significant impact this will have for many years before and after?

No changes to council tax will be linked to this scheme.

17. Covid 19 has been a massive game-changer. Many firms are now putting in place hybrid working arrangements where employees can elect to work from home or in an office environment significantly reducing the number of individuals travelling on a daily basis and thereby traffic congestions and public transport needs. How has this radical and very recent change been taken into consideration in your planning considerations? The world has moved on and I fear the Council will be investing unwisely in development?

Any link road rationale should be based on forward looking 10year+ long term initiatives (eg age of technology, use of internet teaching / meetings witnessed during Covid, hardly any traffic during term time, etc), rather than outdated 30-40y highways assumptions just moving traffic from Stoneleigh Road to Westwood Heath area ? (as seen with the mistakes at TGI Friday roundabout once the airport roundabout was opened up)

We are monitoring the impact of COVID-19 on travel patterns across Coventry and Warwickshire. Home working is likely to become a more significant element of life for some professions that have previously been mostly office based, and this may impact travel demand during the peak periods; in this period however deliveries and off-peak travel have increased. It is worth noting that traffic levels are currently at 90% of the pre-COVID-19 levels when compared year on year, and there is also evidence of some switching from public transport to car where people have that option. Sensitivity testing will be carried out to assess the proposals against previously predicted and currently expected travel patterns and this will be done in accordance with current government guidance.

18. The proposed junction improvements on Cromwell Lane are clearly inadequate to support the additional traffic that Option 3 proposes. How will the Councils address this?

The junction of Westwood Heath Road and Cromwell Lane is already a dangerous junction though fortunately not in terms of deaths and serious injuries. What enhancements are planned to deal with inevitable traffic volume increases at this junction?

The Cromwell Lane / Westwood Heath Road junction is expected to carry more traffic than at present as a result of the proposed link road, particularly in option 3, and this junction has been identified as one of a number which will require improvements in order to allow for different traffic flows. The current proposal at this junction is for the installation of a mini roundabout, but this will be reviewed and further detail developed as the scheme progresses. The intention is to maintain a two-lane entry on the Westwood Heath Road approach, which is expected to be delivered as part of an existing planning condition identified at this junction.

19. I live in Westwood Heath and work at UoW. Will there be cycle lanes to allow local people to avoid the car congestion?

Yes - and we are currently working with the University to further improve cycle routes through the campus linking Westwood Heath with cycle routes towards the city centre.

20. What compensation packages will be in place for residents and will there have to be compulsory purchase orders for the options you have outlined?

Residents, where property value is affected as a result of pollution or disturbance from the use of any new or altered road, are entitled to claim compensation under the terms of the Land Compensation Act 1974. Residents and businesses, where land is required for the scheme will also be compensated and it is likely that Compulsory Purchase Orders will be made. Any negotiations for land will be developed under a shadow CPO process in order to ensure a fair result for those affected.

21. How would the access road onto the Westwood Business Park work as it does not appear wide enough to allow the 2-way flow of traffic, HGV or not?

An additional connection into Westwood Heath Business Park has not yet been designed and at this stage the consultation is seeking views on this possible connection. It is expected that a connection here would only be for cars and light vehicles, with HGV's continuing to use the current access given space constraints.

22. A very light railway was mentioned, does this mean trams?

Coventry City Council is collaborating with Warwick Manufacturing Group, Transport for West Midlands and Dudley Council to apply innovative research and development to the urban light rail sector. The aim is to create a reliable, frequent, environmentally friendly, battery driven hop-on hop-off transport system that will work in small to medium sized towns and cities at a fraction of the cost of a traditional tram.

A pioneering world first, VLR will operate autonomously at a high frequency to provide a turn up and go service. There will be no unsightly overhead cables and the track will be able to be laid without the need to relocate utilities which can be time consuming and expensive. VLR aims to provide a real alternative to the car and it is anticipated that a route would link the University campus with the city centre.

23. Given the University of Warwick (UoW) will be the main beneficiary to the scheme and they own much of the land in option three, how are they contributing to the overall funding? How much is being funded by taxpayers money?

The overall option 3 route is expected to cost in excess of £70million, and a number of public and private funding sources are likely to contribute to this total. The results of this consultation will feed into applications for funding from a number of sources including West Midlands Combined Authority, Department for Transport and Homes England. It is likely that developments coming forward in the area will provide some private sector funding towards the scheme, but the combination of these sources has not yet been determined.

24. What width of land does a double carriageway, along with bus lanes, cycle ways, walkways on both sides actually take up?

A standard dual carriageway is 7.3m wide in each direction, with additional space for hard shoulder and central reserve, the total width of the road will be around 31m. The preferred width for segregated cycleway and footway is 5m, and an allowance will need to be made for earthworks and landscaping. As an indication around 50m

width should be assumed, but this will depend upon a range of factors and the precise figures will not be known until after detailed design of the scheme has been completed.

25. Is it appropriate that the work is being done at the same time as the disruption for the delayed HS2 works? It seems that residents of Stoneleigh and those living on Dalehouse Lane are suffering because of both sets of works.

The Councils aim to minimise disruption caused as a result of any infrastructure works. Large parts of this scheme would be away from the existing road network, and as such would only directly impact of the road network during some parts of the construction where connections would be made into the existing network. During the design and planning of any works we will continue to engage with HS2 Ltd to ensure that the construction traffic as a result of both projects are taken into account, in order to minimise impacts and construction traffic as far as possible.

26. Doesn't this mean complete suburbanisation across the former green belt between Coventry and Kenilworth?

The current local plans for Warwick District Council and Coventry City Council set out expectation in terms of residential and employment sites until 2029 and 2031 respectively. These are detailed further in the consultation documentation. Further development in this area would be subject to the planning process or be part of future versions of the local plans, these would be subject to consultation and scrutiny.

27. You said that you would avoid the HS2 safeguarded area, but this extends almost to the Coventry boundary on the A429. Does the new design by BBV for this area now include provision for a new road junction which would presumably have to be a roundabout?

Our proposals sit outside the HS2 safeguarded area, although this does leave limited space for the proposed junction at Kenilworth Road. It is expected that this would be a roundabout. This would be a separate junction to any proposed by HS2 to access their works.

28. Will the track have to be increased to two lines before the station for the VLR goes ahead?

VLR does not sit on the existing rail network, this would be constructed in the existing and proposed road network similar to a tram. Feasibility studies are currently being undertaken to identify the need for a railway station and this will include a review of whether the existing single-track line would need to be doubled. The current single-track line does restrict the number of rail services and freight services that can operate between Leamington and Coventry and doubling the track would enable more services to be run.

29. Why do the Councils believe it's appropriate to dump huge amounts of traffic on Westwood Heath and Burton Green in order to provide a bypass for Stoneleigh Road and Warwick University?

The initial analysis shows that option 3 proposals would be likely to result in a substantial reduction in journey times across the local network, during

both morning and evening peak periods. This is expected to reduce congestion and deliver network-wide benefits, along with localised benefits on critical parts of the network such as the A45 and A46. These improvements in local network performance and connectivity could support the delivery of housing and employment growth allocated within Local Plans as well as the aspirational growth of the University of Warwick.

We recognise there are community concerns over the impact of the connection into Westwood Heath Road and have asked for views on this in the consultation survey. Currently analysis does show an increase in traffic along Cromwell Lane, but it is expected that this will be reviewed, and further improvements made during the next stage of design.

30. How are you accounting for additional noise and air pollution in the residential areas around Westwood Heath and Burton Green?

The Westwood Heath link proposal would seem likely increase congestion and pollution (noise and air) on Cromwell Lane. Hard to see how that can be mitigated. Please explain how quality of life will not deteriorate for residents of Cromwell Lane.

It is expected that air pollution should be reduced in areas that currently suffer from congestion from redirection of traffic as a result of introducing the scheme. During the next stage of design, the effects of noise and air pollution will be looked at in greater detail, with the intention of minimising impact along the route. The overall scheme intends to provide additional sustainable transport improvements which are aimed at reducing the dependency on car journeys particularly where they can be avoided.

31. Will there be ways to easily cross the road on foot / by bike, for example if traveling from Kenilworth to UoW?

The intention is to have active travel links as accessible as possible; our aspirations are to have pedestrian and cycle facilities on both sides of the road with crossing points at appropriate locations.

32. What are the plans to push option 3 routes through to link with A452 at Balsall Common or linking to A45 through Burton Green?

Are there any ideas thoughts or plans to extend this project by for instance extending beyond Westwood Heath Road to link to the A45 or to run parallel to HS2 to link up with the A452 and the NEC area?

A possible future phase link has been set out in the Connecting Coventry strategic transport programme, approved by the City Council in 2017, and forms part of the Coventry South package. However, at this time, no works are being undertaken to develop this proposal further, and this position will be reviewed should the need arise in the future.

33. Surely the government desire for all car users to be electric cars will reduce pollution levels - not sure this has been considered in the sensitivity analysis?

Use of electric vehicles is not currently part of the standard analysis for highway schemes, although it is expected that this will be introduced by the Department for

Transport over time. Increasing use of electric vehicles would reduce the level of pollution on roads over time, which is why both Coventry and Warwickshire are progressively increasing the number of EV charge points across their respective areas.

34. Have you have considered:

a) Reducing demand by re-developing Westwood Business Park as residential accommodation? I believe one plot has already been converted to student accommodation.

The suggested change of use of Westwood Business Park is not something that has been considered, the Business Park is allocated as an employment site within the Local Plan.

b) Raising the efficiency of Stoneleigh Road / Gibbet Hill Road? One idea would be to move some of the university's car parking to the Stoneleigh Road / Dalehouse Lane junction and implement a frequent bus service from there to the University. A high-quality cycleway along Stoneleigh Road / Gibbet Hill Road would add flexibility. There are airports where the car parks are accessed by bus from the terminal buildings, why not adopt the same approach here?

Engagement with the University of Warwick, in order to understand any proposals for the operation and development of the campus, is an important part of the scheme development process. Many of the traffic movements in the area start or end within the campus and the surrounding employment areas, and changes to travel patterns impact on the existing and proposed road network. The future proposals for a transport interchange near the A429 Kenilworth Road could include park and ride as suggested.

35. Why do you not give more consideration to the current road infrastructure having added the roundabout at the Canley Fire Station helping direct traffic in/out of the University and may be a one-way system to leave the University via Gibbet Hill road and Stoneleigh Road?

Options have been considered which look at improving the existing highway infrastructure, and in recent years there has been significant expenditure on the A45 to improve junctions along the length of the route through Coventry. There are no further options to enhance capacity other than through grade separation of junctions, which would be expensive and would involve significant numbers of properties. The intention of this proposal is to provide improvements to existing junctions to improve capacity and direct traffic. This scheme is being brought forward as the most viable overall solution.

36. What are the plans to mitigate against the existing and future rat-run traffic through Burton Green via Hodgetts Lane, Red Lane, Cromwell Lane in the short, medium and long term? This option appears to increase the potential traffic through Burton Green significantly - which is already very bad at peak times? It will become even more of a rat run - how can this improve our environment?

As part of the impact analysis of delivering the link road, a review of the impacts on routes surrounding the northern end of the Link Road has been undertaken.

A further potential benefit that the Link Road is intended to deliver is to reduce the volume of traffic rat-running on rural routes between Kenilworth and the University. Given the coverage of the model it has not possible to review all rural routes, however it has been possible to review changes in link flows on Crackley Lane and Cryfield Grange Road, two routes where it has the potential to significantly reduce flows.

During the next phase of work the model area will be expanded as necessary to include the impacts on other identified parts of the network.

37. Highways England state that the proposed Link Road is on the Local Road Network, why is it described as "strategic"?

The Link Road is being described as strategic as it has strategic importance to the local authorities in terms of recognising the importance of the delivery of the local plans to the economic prosperity of the wider area, specifically in terms of housing and employment growth.

38. Please explain how Option 3 will provide relief to the A45? Does this assume that growth in traffic will use Cromwell Lane, Banner Lane and Westwood Heath Road?

Our analysis has shown a journey time saving in both the morning and evening peak periods along the A45. This analysis also suggests that east to west routes such as Tile Hill Lane, Torrington Avenue and Charter Avenue will not experience any notable changes in traffic flows with the link included. However, the analysis does highlight that a predicted increase in traffic to the north of the Link Road itself are Westwood Heath Road (to the west of the Link Road), Cromwell Lane, Station Avenue and Pickford Green Lane.

39. The proposed closure of Gibbet Hill Road under Option 3 Sub Option is likely to have a significant impact on the local highway network linking Kenilworth Road to Charter Avenue via Cannon Hill Road. Local commuter and shopper traffic between Gibbet Hill Road, Moreall Meadows, Cryfield Grange and Stoneleigh Road would be more likely to use the local network rather than diverting around the new link road. Any comments?

In our analysis the downgrading of Gibbet Hill Road has a significant impact on the network. Its closure along with the proposed link road is showing a reduction in journey times across the local network. The scheme does impact on particular junctions as set out in the consultation documentation, and junction improvement measures are proposed to reduce this impact.

40. I can see that it makes sense for a Link Road to 'link' to the A46 dual carriageway to the south. I cannot see how linking to narrow residential roads at the northern end can bring anything but extra traffic and congestion there. How will this be managed if all you are planning to do is improve existing junctions at Westwood Heath Road/Cromwell Lane? Where does the extra traffic dissipate to?

Overall analysis of the road network shows a general improvement in journey times and congestion levels. However, without the proposed junction improvement projects on the junctions along Cromwell Lane there are some localised impacts on queueing. It is expected that traffic is mostly either travelling from the Tile Hill area

and the A45, the University and the business parks or from the A46 and towns to the south.

41. A lot of the preamble related to the "A46 Corridor" (and continuance out to the East); how is this related to the short spur that is called a link road?

The A46 corridor is vitally important to the current and future growth of the Coventry and Warwickshire sub-region. It is a key corridor for growth and has been subject to a range of improvements in recent years including M40 Junction 15, the Stanks Island near Warwick, the Tollbar End and TGI Friday junctions near Coventry, and the junction improvements on the A46 at Stoneleigh and at Binley which have both just begun. The A46 corridor will form a key role in the economic recovery and future growth of this area.

The Link Road will provide an improved connection with the University, business parks and south Coventry area supporting the overall aims for the sub-region.

42. The consultation document talks about the scheme supporting growth driven by HS2. Please explain.

Our proposals will help the local road network performance, connectivity and resilience, which in turn support the delivery of housing and employment growth allocated within Local Plans as well as the aspirational growth of the University of Warwick.

The delivery of HS2 Phase 1 is expected to provide further opportunities for growth within the West Midlands, with plans to bring significant and diverse levels of employment to the areas surrounding Birmingham Airport, the NEC and the proposed HS2 Interchange station (generally referred to as 'UK Central').

43. If you don't do or consider Phase 3 how can it be a 'link' road?

These proposals provide an additional link between the A46 and the South of Coventry which would effectively replace the existing local roads which are unsuitable for the volume of traffic that they currently carry.

Ends.