

Questions and Answers from 7th January 2021 Broadcast

- 1. From my understanding you are planning to construct the road over the existing Coventry/Leamington Spa railway line. This will involve millions of tons of suitable material to construct the embankments and also on the other side of the Kenilworth Road. How are you going to get the material and transport it to the work site? Could you not go under the railway line as HS2 are doing?**

The concept design currently proposes that the road will go underneath the railway line. During the next stages of design this proposal will be reviewed, and a decision made balancing the best option to fit within the site constraints such as topography, along with the budget. The movement of construction traffic, including the transportation of materials to and from the site will form an important part of the scheme development with a view to minimising disruption as a result of traffic movements.

- 2. How are you going to connect the cycle paths on the road onto NCN Route 52? You have not mentioned this in your plans and will Route 52 remain open during and after construction?**

National Cycle Route 52 runs from Kenilworth to Coventry mostly on what is currently agricultural land, crossing Cryfield Grange Road and running through the University. The overall intention is for active travel links to be as accessible as possible including pedestrian and cycle facilities on both sides of the road with crossing points at appropriate locations, along with connections with the existing cycle network including NCN 52. The exact details of these will be set out in the next phase of work.

- 3. Will you be installing road lighting on the road?**

The need for lighting on the Link Road has not yet been determined, and this will be developed as part of the next stage of design in accordance with highway design standards.

- 4. Will the new station be dependent on the railway line being increased to two tracks from Coventry to L/Spa?**

Feasibility studies are currently being undertaken to identify the need for a railway station including a review of whether the existing single-track line would need to be doubled throughout. The current single-track sections of line restrict the number of passenger and freight services that can operate between Leamington and Coventry and doubling the track would enable more services to be run as well as making it easier to accommodate a new station.

5. How will vehicles and cyclists access the station. From the Kenilworth Road?

A roundabout junction is proposed between the A429 Kenilworth Road and the Link Road, it is expected that an arm of this roundabout will provide access to a new station or transport interchange. This access would also incorporate provision for pedestrians and cyclists, with suitable connection to existing facilities on the A429 and the proposed footway and cycleway facilities along the route of the Link Road.

It will require traffic lights on A429 a roundabout will cause more congestion?

A roundabout junction is currently proposed between the A429 Kenilworth Road and the Link Road, and this layout would facilitate the access to the proposed railway station / interchange. However, the most appropriate form of junction will be reviewed as part of the next stage of the design process based on more detailed surveys and modelling work. At this stage, therefore, the form of the junction could be either a roundabout or signals.

6. Why is the road a dual carriageway? Wouldn't a normal road be sufficient? What are the expected traffic flows on this link in each direction? How tidal is the flow comparing AM and PM directions?

The standard of road (dual carriageway or single carriageway) will be dependent upon the traffic flows that are forecast to use the road. For the purposes of the consultation, it is currently proposed that the new Link Road would for the most part be a dual carriageway, as this option also takes into account an element of future proofing. The size and type of the road to be constructed will be designed based on the expected demand, and a decision about the type of road will be made as part of the next stage of design. The traffic flows vary depending on which option and sub option is in operation, these are outlined in the traffic model report in section 5.40 onwards.

7. One of the stated aims of the Link Road is to reduce rat running on Westwood Heath Road/Cromwell Lane and Tile Hill Lane, but the Traffic Modelling shows that the traffic flow along these roads will actually increase. Why does the consultation document show this aim as being met for Option 3?

One of the stated aims for the road is to reduce rat running on local roads. The traffic modelling undertaken to date shows that roads such as Crackley Lane and Cryfield Grange Road will see a reduction in traffic flows. There are also reductions in flow along Stoneleigh Road and Gibbet Hill Road. This modelling is also showing a general increase in network performance for the area of study. It is expected that there will be an increase in traffic along Westwood Heath Road and at the junctions along Cromwell Lane, resulting from the re-distribution of traffic currently using other routes to access the A45 directly. As part of the broader scheme we have set out mitigation measures to reduce the effect of this changes. Further work will be carried out to ensure the most suitable improvements are proposed.

8. Please can you give more details about flood mitigation measures for the scheme?

We are still in the early stages of the scheme with only feasibility design carried out. This has involved using desktop studies to inform the design. If we progress with the project, moving into next stages of design we will look at the specific issues such as watercourses and floodplains along with other environmental factors.

9. Part of the justification for this scheme, is to support the increase in housing requirements. However, the ONS data used by the councils to determine the need for additional housing has been discredited and is being investigated by the UK stats authority, so doesn't this investigation need to be completed first

A challenge, led by CPRE and involving a group of local politicians was made to the UK Statistics Authority on 13th November 2020 regarding population projections and mid-year population estimates for Coventry. On 3rd December 2020 a response was sent by the UK Statistics Authority confirming that they will be undertaking a review of the population projections and population estimates produced by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) and how they are used. The response does however confirm that it is not within the remit of the UK Statistics Authority to regulate operational decisions made by government or local authorities, nor to form a judgement on decisions about government policy. The response letter indicates that the UK Statistics Authority aim to update on their progress in early 2021.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) expects local authorities to follow the standard methodology for assessing local housing need, set out by the Ministry Housing Communities & Local Government (MHCLG). The standard method uses a formula to identify the minimum number of homes expected to be planned for, in a way which addresses projected household growth and historic under-supply. It identifies a minimum annual housing need figure.

On 16th December 2020 MHCLG set out a revised standard methodology for local authorities to follow including the specific use of the ONS 2014 population projections. Warwick District and Coventry will continue to use the standard method as published by MHCLG for the basis upon which to consider housing needs within our respective administrative areas.

10. To follow up from an offline question, it was stated that the detailed work on Air Quality (etc) has not yet been undertaken, however the consultation document for "Option 3" shows the objective of "Improving Air Quality" as being fully met by Option 3. How can this have been assessed?

The consultation information sets out the broad expectation that air quality will be improved as a result of the introduction of Option 3 because it is expected that air pollution would be reduced in areas that currently suffer from traffic congestion. 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 where these can be avoided.

11. There is no mention of climate change or carbon footprint in this scheme. Why is such a major problem being ignored? I thought this was a recognised emergency? What is the carbon cost of the projected increase in capacity, including phase 3? Both the construction and long-term carbon cost please?

This consultation aims to consider the principles and need for new transport infrastructure, with the results informing future design work. No work has yet been undertaken to calculate a carbon footprint for the proposal. Designs will be completed in accordance with the relevant legislation.

12. Will the VLR require two separate lanes to operate and how will it cross the Kenilworth Road at the proposed roundabout?

Information about VLR is available at: <https://www.coventry.gov.uk/verylightrail>
No detail has yet been developed on the precise routes upon which the VLR will run, although one of the core design principles is that the VLR will operate on two tracks where possible to ensure that vehicles can pass each other without having to wait to access a single track section. Similarly, no detail has yet been developed on how VLR would cross individual junctions, as the junctions involved will be dependent upon the route taken.

13. On the consultation survey it states that the access from the link road to Warwick university is optional. Does this mean that the link road could be built terminating on Westwood heath without ever building the access road to the university from the link road?

As part of the proposals for the overall Link Road, a link into the University has been shown as potential or optional. Any link into the University's road network would be a private connection and would require an agreement with the University. The agreement is not yet in place, and whilst it is unlikely that a scheme would be brought forward connecting into Westwood Heath Road without a link into the University it is not possible to show this as a definite connection prior to formal agreement.

14. The scheme talks about facilitating part of the supply chain to JLR, but if the proposed link is from the A46 to Westwood Heath, surely this will not take any HGVs off the A45 through Coventry, which are a major cause of pollution and congestion.

The scheme will bring performance and resilience benefits to the wider transport network on routes such as the A45, which plays a key role in linking JLR sites in Birmingham, Solihull and Coventry and its broader supply chain.

15. Specifically, how does the A46 Link Road impact the development of the employment opportunities of the A46 Corridor?

The scheme supports the 'A46 corridor' which 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 (Longbridge), Stanks Island near Warwick, the Tollbar End junction near Coventry, and the junction improvements on the A46 at Stoneleigh and at Binley (TGI Friday) which have both just begun construction. The A46 corridor will form a key role in the post-COVID-19 economic recovery and future growth of this area, supporting improved access to the University and its business parks and wider South Coventry area.

16. Based on the current COVID-19 lockdown has any modelling for future traffic been taken into account? A large number of companies will move much more to home working after the current crisis eases.

The impact of COVID-19 on travel patterns across Coventry and Warwickshire is being monitored. 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. On-going local monitoring suggests that in some locations 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 undertaken in accordance with government guidance.

17. The Kenilworth Road spinney is a conservation area, so will this all be retained with this scheme and the development of a station?

The route of the scheme will be designed to minimise impact on trees and wildlife habitats, including the ancient woodland on Kenilworth Road and woodlands to the south of the University. 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.

18. There is much work being done on infrastructure. However, this appears more of a blind alley than a link, direct to Warwick University at the expense of the local area. Was the University involved in drafting this consultation process/documentation?

The University were not involved in developing this consultation process or preparing the associated documentation. The University were however given an opportunity to view and comment on the documents during their finalisation.

19. How will the works for this link road coordinate with the already significant amount of work for HS2? This is important for local residents not only the current prep works but for the main construction phase. Both schemes will 'squeeze' through the Crackly Gap and will create a major impact for local residents over several years.

During the development and construction of any project the Councils' aim to minimise disruption caused as a result of infrastructure works. It is expected that large parts of construction for this scheme would not be on the existing road network, and as such direct impacts of the road network during some parts of the construction would relate to access and provision of connections into the existing network. During the design and planning of any works we are, and will continue to, engaging 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.

20. Road building and junction widening is sized to take a peak load for a few hours a day. This takes more money and land than if the traffic was spread more evenly. Wouldn't it be more cost effective to reduce the peak load? Have you looked at doing this? For example, by congestion charging, encouraging more flexible working hours, home working and much cleverer shared transport?

21. Your plan is very much business as usual. This is what we've been doing since before the 1950s, each time with the claim that a new road would reduce congestion. This has never succeeded beyond the temporary and local. Traffic grows, the congestion gets shuffled to the next constriction, and each year sees more people driving further & sitting in cars for longer. This is a failed policy and a failed strategy. It makes traffic congestion and pollution worse and worse. We clearly need a new approach. When are you going to start? Why not scrap this plan and start now with positive and creative solutions? Please stop digging and lead us out of this mess.

As part of the modelling work undertaken for the initial work on this scheme, the potential to cater for future travel demand solely through sustainable measures such as cycle routes, pedestrian facilities and public transport services has been looked at. The provision of improved routes for pedestrians and cyclists is an important element of this scheme, and work is already underway to improve cycle routes connecting the Westwood Heath and University of Warwick areas with Coventry city centre through other investment. The Very Light Rail project being developed by the City Council is also aimed at providing a public transport system that would support sustainable access to locations such as the University.

It is also worth noting that the University of Warwick has a strong commitment to promoting sustainable travel to the campus, and the Councils recognise this. Car share schemes, car clubs and bike share schemes all operate, or are about to be introduced, within the area, alongside bus services. It is also recognised that home working and flexible working all have a role to play in reducing peak period travel.

Notwithstanding these initiatives, significant traffic congestion has been routinely experienced on the local road network (in pre-COVID-19 conditions), and even with

travel planning initiatives the University's current masterplan was estimated at resulting in an additional 16% of traffic on the local road network.

In summary, whilst the measures such as flexible working, home working and car share will help, the assessments undertaken to date do not indicate that they will reduce peak period travel demand to the extent needed to eliminate the need for further investment in the transport network.

22. I read all the info prior to responding to the survey. I could not find ANY info relating to the impacts anticipated for KENILWORTH, even though the new proposed junction for the new link road & the A429 Kenilworth Road is much closer to the town than the current roundabout at Gibbet Hill, so is likely to have tail-backs into Kenilworth or otherwise impact the town with increased noise, traffic pollution etc. Why is there no consideration of impacts on Kenilworth; and What does the modelling suggest that those impacts might be?

23. Why haven't you mentioned Kenilworth?

A key aim of the development of the Link Road proposal is to improve the traffic flows on the A45 through Coventry, there are also benefits to be gained by the residents and businesses within Kenilworth through the provision of an alternative route to the A46 and to and from the south of Coventry. The traffic models have focussed on impact of a new road on areas of Coventry where there are known traffic impacts. As the project develops the traffic model will be broadened and other locations considered.

Some routes coming out of Kenilworth have been included in the modelling such as Coventry Road, where it is showing a benefit in queue length particularly at the junction with the A45. Those additional areas that have been raised as a concern during the consultation will be reviewed.

24. Believe me - if you live here you know that there is plenty going on. How does this increase capacity when it goes to residential roads?

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.

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.

25. If the University is going to be a major beneficiary of any road, will they be making a financial contribution to construction and ongoing maintenance costs?

The University, amongst other potential developers in the area, are likely to be expected to make a contribution towards the scheme as part of planning processes linked to planning applications.

You keep referring to this as a Link Road, where is it actually linking to? Isn't it actually a blind alley?

The new road will link the A46 with the South of Coventry. 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.

26. Commuters travelling between Kenilworth and Coventry already experience long delays due to the volume of traffic coming off the A46 and travelling towards the University. All the options proposed will only make the congestion worse if you have a roundabout on the A429-what is needed is smart traffic lights which can monitor and facilitate the flow of traffic between Kenilworth and Coventry.

Our modelling work to date has simulated a roundabout at the Kenilworth Road Junction. This is not showing an increase in congestion at this junction or along the A429. Following the consultation options will be reviewed and the most appropriate junction design will be brought forward.

27. I understand Kenilworth Road is to rise up to go across the HS2 line once built, will a dual carriageway be at ground level as it is now, or is it proposed to dig down and make the new road lower, so the Kenilworth Road still travels over any dual carriageway as well as the HS2 line?

Our proposals are to create a connection with Kenilworth Road as part of the scheme. The proposed new road would match the new levels of Kenilworth Road.

28. The objectives of the scheme seem to contradict the transport and mobility aspirations of the University of Warwick's Development Masterplan. Why is this?

This scheme is being brought forward by all three local authorities, it is aimed at addressing current congestion issues and help bring forward the local plans. While the University is a beneficiary of the scheme, the proposals are not aimed solely at supporting their plans. The University will be a key stakeholder in the development of any proposal, and we will work with them to ensure that these proposals and their future growth aspirations present a consistent plan particularly around sustainable transport links.

29. Is there a list of the key dates?

Outline Business Case and Feasibility Design Winter 2020/ Spring 2021		Full Business Case and Detailed Design Summer 2021 – Summer 2024			Construction Complete Late 2024 - 2026/27		
2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collate consultation feedback • Refine package of measures to be brought forward • Outline Business Case application • Detailed feasibility design • Early environmental surveys • Report to Cabinet 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Detailed design (including mitigation) and costing of preferred scheme • Further consultation on preferred scheme • Preparation of legal agreements (CPO, agreements with Statutory Bodies) • Preparation of planning application and other statutory process/orders • Preparation of procurement package • Preparation of Full Business Case application for funding bodies 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Award main works contract • Construction 		

These timescales are dependent on the successful completion of each previous stage and the recognition that progress is reliant on the processes and approvals of DfT and key stakeholders, as well as the delivery of other key construction projects in the area. The programme will be kept under review as the project progresses for construction.

30. What is the justification for even greater expansion of the University? Over recent years we have seen a massive expansion of the university footprint eating into greenbelt and local amenity and environment.

The University plays an important role in the sub-regional and local economy. The University is preparing its plans for the future and information is available on the University website:

https://warwick.ac.uk/services/estates/developments/our_future_campus/

31. Without Phase 3 this isn't 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.

32. We understand that "Phase 3" is not being considered at the moment, can you advise us of the reasons for this. Surely Phase 3 is an integral requirement for deciding a route for Phase 2

33. Could we be reminded please where Phase 3 is expected to terminate, as this could have a significant impact also on the amount of traffic that uses the road if this was to go ahead?

34. There was an aspiration to connect this road further, possibly to the A452 at Balsall Common, or the A45. Has this been ruled out now?

35. I'm sure Warwick University will welcome this proposal as they may be able to achieve a long term aim? To close Gibbet Hill Road. Surely what is needed, is a new road from the A46 through to Hallmeadow Road (Balsall Common) not this proposal? A new 'Coventry South relief road' perhaps?

The Coventry South Transport Package that was approved by the City Council in 2017 does include proposals for a phase 3 for the link road, connecting to either the A45 or the A452 to the west of the city. No work has yet been carried out to develop the phase 3 scheme, as this would lie predominantly within the Solihull area, and would need to be developed in partnership with Solihull. The potential impact of future development in the areas of Coventry, Solihull and Warwick District to the south and west of Coventry on travel demand is recognised, and it is likely that the Councils will, in partnership with Solihull, need to review how this travel demand is to be managed. Such a review is likely to include the need, or otherwise, for new transport infrastructure to the south west of the city.

36. What is the Committed Employment Development site to the east of the A46/Stoneleigh Junction?

This is the proposal for a new Rugby Farmers Market for Stoneleigh Park which has planning permission.

37. How will the A429 cycle way into Coventry be improved? It is currently not user friendly.

There are no current plans to improve this route as part of the Link Road scheme. If a need is identified as part of the consultation this position will be reviewed.

38. Will the various public transport options be integrated with respect to their timetabling? If someone commutes via public transport their onward connection if any, should be convenient to encourage use of public transport

The various public transport schemes proposed in the consultation document are on differing timeframes for delivery, however the principle of facilitating an active travel approach which may include a number of different types of transport is something that the three Authorities are keen to develop. However, once in place the aim will be to ensure that all forms of public transport are integrated as far as possible.

39. I understand there is mention of a dual carriageway with light rail and possibly even separate bus lanes, so how many lanes could this road actually end up being?

The proposed layout for the link road is a dual carriageway with segregated pedestrian and cycle routes, other options will need to be considered during the next stages of design to take into account the potential for bus and VLR routes. The development of these options will consider the effectiveness of additional facilities against land take and construction cost, taking into account consultation feedback.

40. All I am hearing is your aspirations. How can we comment without any info!!!

The aim of this consultation is to gather views on the strategic case and the need for new infrastructure, we will use the feedback to inform any proposals that are taken forward. We will undertake more specific consultation with residents and businesses in the area, and discussing the details of the proposals, if they are taken forward.

41. Will HGV's be directed up Kenilworth Road to access this new roundabout and road, as this will have a significant impact on residents?

The new road is expected to form part of the principal road network, so this would form part of the roads that HGVs may use in the same way as the A429 Kenilworth Road does now.

42. Surely there would need to be a roundabout or improvement on Westwood Heath Road if it joined near Crackley Lane?

Both a roundabout and traffic lights are being considered as a potential connection between the Link Road and Westwood Heath Road.

43. The link road only seems - even with Option 3 - to benefit the Westwood Business Park, the safeguarded land and an area of already permitted housing, and unless the connection between Gibbet Hill Road and Kenilworth Road is severed, it will not benefit the University or adjoining communities.

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. The downgrading of Gibbet Hill Road has a significant impact on this.

44. Will there be a written transcript of this presentation, to assist hearing impaired residents?

Yes, please send an email to us at a46linkroad@warwickshire.gov.uk. A copy of the script will also be posted on the project website.

45. How do the dates fit in with the UoW aim to have a stadium open in 2025?

We are not aware of any specific dates for the stadium plans. We know as much information regarding the football stadium proposal as has been made public by the University and the football club. Should more information become available on the stadium, this will be assessed against the proposals.

46. The sub options (of Option 3) of closing and/or downgrading Gibbet Hill Road and Stoneleigh Road would have a significant impact on access to the residents of Gibbet Hill and Stoneleigh Road. What is the justification for these sub options given the traffic relief improvements purported by the main relief road?

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. The downgrading of Gibbet Hill Road has a significant impact on this. Residents of Gibbet Hill Road and Stoneleigh Road would also, of course, benefit from significantly reduced traffic flows on their residential streets.

47. Further, there's considerable investment being proposed now, which would have offered excellent connections for the Kings Hill housing (both already permitted and allocated) to the A46. Why was this route not brought forward as the primary access for the Kings Hill development, rather than connecting that via local Coventry roads?

The King's Hill development has come forward as a separate planning application based on the existing highway network within Coventry and Warwickshire. Future phases of the site could benefit from the delivery of the Link Road and the strategic connections it brings, particularly to the A46.

48. The basic idea of a south west loop around Coventry would seem to have some merit. But this proposal essentially just takes traffic from the A46 and dumps into the quiet residential area of Westwood Heath, and Tile Hill, which seems completely wrong. I understand that there has always been a full western loop, through to A45 west of Coventry in the plan; why is this not being completed first?

A future phase forms part of Coventry City Council's strategic transport programme as part of the Coventry South package, and would be expected to link to either the A45 or A452. This larger project is not being developed as it is not currently part of the Solihull Local Plan and therefore has no remit for further investigation. The proposals being brought forward in the A46 SLR scheme, do show a wider benefit for the local road network. 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 manage different traffic flows.

49. Won't the road be rather behind the build of the first part of the Kings Hill Estate, surely that won't solve the earlier congestion problems of a new estate.

Construction of the proposed road will follow the early stages of development at King's Hill, based on an assumed build out rate. These early stages would not be expected to generate sufficient traffic to require additional highway capacity.

50. The presenter has just admitted that the traffic modelling will increase the traffic on Westwood Heath Road. this is completely unacceptable.

51. Ref John Seddon's response on rat running: Option 3 includes the mitigations that he mentioned, and the traffic flows still increase to problem levels, GEH>5, rather than solving them

Traffic modelling does show an increase in traffic along Westwood Heath Road and at the junction with Cromwell Lane. We are proposing mitigation measure to reduce this impact. As part of the consultation we value your input and strongly recommend completing the survey to have your say.

52. After the pandemic it is projected that 57% of employees will continue to work majority from home - given your consultancy and projections are based pre-Covid it feels like this project is moving forward more for the sake of it and to be seen to building a more 'efficient' network rather than the actual need for it. Has any statistical modelling been done post pandemic and if so, please publicly share this?

53. How are you going to do traffic studies in the current Covid 19 world?

Traffic may never be what it was, unless the stadium is built.

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 government guidance.

54. How will you cross Finham Brook?

A new bridge will be constructed at Finham Brook as part of the A46 Stoneleigh junction improvement works which are now under construction.

55. Why are the 3 sub-options for the link to Westwood Heath Road all broadly the same?

There is limited scope for differing these connections, given the proposed route of the road, the topography and existing constraints.

56. Would there be any measures taken on the dual carriageway to mitigate noise for nearby residents?

In the development of new highway infrastructure full consideration would be made of the impact of the construction and operation on the local environment, this relates to noise and other potential impacts such as air quality and visual impact. In order to develop the scheme a noise model will be prepared to compare the current and future noise levels. The design of the infrastructure will include noise mitigation measures where this is necessary.

As part of the detailed design work all environmental impacts including noise will be considered. Either through the design of the road, or mitigation measures the impact from noise will be reduced as much as practical.

57. Pollution and traffic levels on Gibbet Hill Road are very high. One scheme appears to increase this load.

Our modelling is not showing an increase in demand on Gibbet Hill Road as a result of the scheme. This traffic is being diverted to the proposed link road. Option 2, by not providing a link through to Westwood Heath Road, would require Gibbet Hill

Road to remain open, which would mean that less traffic would be removed from it when compared to Option 3.

58. What sort of landscaping would there be to reduce the impact on the area?

We are currently in the early stages of this scheme, and only desktop study work has been carried out on the environmental aspects. If we move forward with the scheme, the next stage will be detailed design, where environmental and ecological surveys will be carried out and used to inform the design work, both from a highways and landscaping point of view.

59. Based on John's comments if traffic is coming to access the link road rather than the A45 wouldn't it make sense for the Link Road to go into the Kirby Corner Road junction?

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

60. The additional traffic and junction widening schemes make the existing road network more hostile to people walking or cycling. What are you going to do, as part of this scheme, to make cycling easier, quicker & safer on the affected roads? Will there be segregated space for cycling on the affected roads and junctions?

Where existing facilities for cycling and pedestrian are in place these will be maintained as part of any junction improvements. If no facilities are in place, they will be considered as part of the junction design to ensure they are safe for all users. There will be segregated facilities for pedestrians and cyclists along the link road, and separate proposals are being brought forward for improved cycle routes in the Westwood Heath and University area of the city.

61. Would traffic be able to get on and off the carriageway at this junction in both directions?

There are a number of junctions proposed along the Strategic Link Road, travelling from the A46 Stoneleigh Junction:

- Dalehouse Lane – this is currently a roundabout and is expected to remain as such.
- King's Hill Lane – this junction is expected to be amended to a left in, left out junction, using the Kenilworth Road and Dalehouse Lane roundabouts for u-turning movements.
- A429 Coventry Road – this junction is expected to be a roundabout
- University Link Road – this junction is expected to be a roundabout

Detailed proposals for these junctions will be developed as part of the feasibility design in response to further development of the traffic models and in response to the outcome of the public consultation, as such there may be some changes to the final junction types.

62. Are the proposed routes for the VLR available for people to view?

Please follow this link to see the available information on VLR.

<https://www.coventry.gov.uk/verylightrail> Currently, the routes for the VLR network have not been developed in any detail.

63. Will the HS2/ Cov-Leamington bridge have provision for the latter to be two track?

It is our understanding that construction of HS2 Phase 1 in this area will allow for the future widening of the Coventry to Leamington rail line.

64. What are the further phases currently on hold??

The Phase 3 which is currently on hold refers to an extension to the Strategic Link Road which would connect with either the A45 or the A452. This project is not being developed as it is not currently part of the Solihull Local Plan and therefore has no remit for further investigation.

65. The Traffic Modelling report doesn't state which way the flows are at the Peak Hours AM and PM. Please can this information be provided?

The modelling work to date only takes into account overall flows so this additional data would not be available at this time.

66. We moved here because it was semi-rural - are there plans to protect any of the green spaces?

Any development in the area to the south of Coventry (both within Coventry and Warwick District) will be brought forward through the statutory planning process. This process considers all issues relating to a new development in balance with each other including retention of green space. Any new highway infrastructure would be developed to be sympathetic to the existing landscape and would be required to include mitigation for any loss of green space.

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 review of the local plans, these would be subject to public consultation and scrutiny by an Independent Inspector.

67. New land for employment has been mentioned. Where are WCC looking at developing on land in the area covered by the Link Road?

The areas for development are set out within both the Coventry and Warwick District local plans, as identified on the maps in the consultation documents.

WCC are considering plans to develop land adjacent to the junction of the Link Road with the A429 Kenilworth Road in order to bring forward a new transport interchange and rail station in the future. There are no further proposals being developed beyond the indicative allocations for land use as set out in the Warwick District Local Plan, an element of employment land is anticipated as part of the King's Hill development,

as part of the UoW interim masterplan, and as part of the safeguarded land should that come forward in the next local plan.

68. The leaflet refers to "a substantial reduction in journey times across the local network". Can you say more about what this would be? Who would benefit from this and by how much? And who will lose, and by how much? And how long before traffic growth puts travel times back to the current state?

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. 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 Road 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.

This modelling work has been conducted up till 2034, beyond this date we cannot accurately predict flows.

69. One of the options involves closing access through the main University for motorists. This may result in many residents from the Gibbet Hill area choosing to use Cannon Hill Road to access the Cannon Park shopping centre. Have you assessed this impact and consulted with residents in this area?

The option to close through access on Gibbet Hill Road, as part of the overall proposals, has been assessed through the traffic model and shows an overall improvement in the operation of the network. It would be the case that residents from the Gibbet Hill area would need to find an alternative route to destinations at Cannon Park, and this would be likely to be by Cannon Hill Road or via the A45. A separate scheme is already being designed by the City Council for traffic management measures to deter rat-running traffic on Cannon Hill Road and consultation is expected on this in the near future. The need for any further measures would then be identified as part of this scheme, and any such measures would then be developed and consulted upon as part of the next stage of design.

70. Can you show the local houses on your maps?

The images presented as part of the consultation show an indicative scheme which does not include local detail. As a feasibility alignment is developed, detail including houses will be added to the plans and further discussions will take place with affected land and property owners in the area.

71. Will there be any Bus or VLR link between Tile Hill Station and the proposed new station?

The project to develop a new station to the south of Coventry will also consider how the station is integrated with other facilities in the area, no detailed work has been undertaken on this as yet.

72. Have traffic studies been conducted to see if the expected traffic demands this scheme supposed address can be displaced to alternative means i.e. VLR, conventional rail, bus, cycling and walking. This will need improvement of the infrastructure of these means, but would it not be cheaper and less disruptive.

73. Have you investigated demand management options? If so, which, and with what result?

It is not envisaged that active travel and public transport can solely address the issues. To date modelling work has only been undertaken using traffic modelling, using current traffic and travel data along with predicted increases.

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 uses and this will be done in accordance with government guidance.

74. Much of the talk around road building assumes that more roads generate more economic activity. There is an implied link between employment and car traffic. Where is your evidence for this? Clearly if you build roads then that influences the choices people make on how, where and when they travel. That is also true for canals and railways and airports and, as the Netherlands proves, good cycle paths. There are other factors, of course, but employment and travel patterns will follow the spending. Growth in employment or educational activity does not depend on car traffic - it depends on good access and, increasingly, virtual access. Can you provide evidence that this road is the only possible solution?

There is a strong link between economic growth and the demand for travel by all modes, and this has been established for many decades. A stronger economy results in a higher level of travel demand. There is also a strong link between any land use development involving human activity, be it residential, employment or educational, and travel demand. Changes to economic activity, or changes in land use such as a new residential development, will always result in changes in travel demand patterns. Very few journeys are made for the sake of the journey (exceptions are, for example, a trip on a heritage railway). As per previous

responses (Q20 etc), other modes of travel are being considered as part of this scheme, and any business case will need to demonstrate the need for the scheme in whatever form it takes, including predictions of travel demand patterns by all modes. The business case to potential funders such as the Department for Transport will need to provide the evidence that the transport infrastructure for which funding is being sought will provide good value for money and will serve an identified need.

75. If you are trying to encourage people to use more active travel methods, why would cyclists/pedestrians want to use paths next to a dual carriageway? Wouldn't Stoneleigh Road and Gibbet Hill be better options for cyclists?

Cycle and pedestrian facilities are proposed adjacent to the Link Road in order to provide a corridor for a variety of modes of travel. There are also a number of other on- and off-road facilities in the area including Stoneleigh Road and Gibbet Hill Road, it is our intention to provide as many options as possible for cyclists and pedestrians in the area. There are numerous examples of new roads being built without provision for pedestrians or cyclists, only for pedestrians and cyclists then to adopt them as new transport corridors, requiring retrofit of suitable facilities at greater cost. It is also now Government policy that all new roads should provide suitable facilities for pedestrians and cyclists to promote walking and cycling, and all three Councils have similar policies to provide good walking and cycling routes as an integral part of any new transport scheme.