

Report to the Economy, Environment & Place Scrutiny Committee

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SMART Motorway M6 J13-15



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Introduction

Members will be aware that Highways England undertook a local publicity and consultation process earlier this year with regard to the above project which impacts upon the borough. Some Members remain concerned and/or uncertain about the intentions with regard to both the planned minor improvements to J15 and the extent of any works between J15 and J16. Some of the concern relates to the potential economic and environmental impacts upon the borough.

Background

An extract from the Highways England website with regard to the above programme states the following:

“Why we need this scheme

This route experiences heavy congestion at peak time.

The scheme in detail

We are upgrading the busy 28km stretch of the M6 between junction 13 at Stafford and Junction 15 near Newcastle under Lyme and Stoke on Trent to make it a smart motorway. We are expecting to start the main construction work in March 2018 and plan to complete the scheme by March 2022. The scheme will involve:

- *permanent conversion of the hard shoulder to create a fourth lane and changing the junctions to accommodate this*
- *new CCTV cameras and electronic information signs and signals on gantries - these will show variable mandatory speed limits and manage traffic flow and incidents*
- *emergency refuge areas throughout the length of the scheme*

- *the hardening of the central reserve and installation of a reinforced barrier to improve safety*
- *nearly 2km of new noise barriers in built up areas*
- *a replacement footbridge at Burton Bank*
- *upgrades to Dunston and Norton railway bridges*
- *widening of Creswell Viaduct*
- *demolition of the redundant Creswell Home Farm bridge*
- *minor improvements to Junction 15*

We're improving a number of stretches along the M6 motorway by upgrading them to a smart motorway:

- *View information about the [M6 junctions 2-4 smart motorway scheme](#)*
- *View information about the [M6 junctions 16-19 smart motorway scheme](#)*

Aims

The smart motorways technology will:

- *reduce congestion and smooth the flow of traffic*
- *improve journey time reliability*
- *support economic development in the region*
- *minimise environmental impacts*
- *continue to deliver a high level of safety performance on the network"*

Questions to be Addressed

To be confirmed at the next stage.

It is recommended that this item be considered at the next meeting when the representatives of the relevant organisations can be invited to come along to explain the proposals and receive questions from Members.

Outcomes

The Scrutiny Committee will need to clarify the desired outcomes at the next stage.

Supporting Information

Please refer to the following web link: <https://highwaysengland.co.uk/projects/m6-junction-13-to-junction-15-smart-motorway/>.

Invited Partners/Stakeholders/Residents

Representatives of Highways England and / or Staffordshire County Council.

Constraints

None known.

Conclusions

Classification: NULBC **UNCLASSIFIED**

Not known at this stage.

Relevant Portfolio Holder(s)

Planning and Growth

Classification: NULBC **UNCLASSIFIED**