

Press release: Highways England calling on public to help shape new M42 junction

Highways England plans to improve traffic flows at an important junction for the millions of people that travel to Birmingham International Airport every year and also surrounding venues such as the National Exhibition Centre.

The project, due to start in 2020, will see the creation of a new 2.4km dual carriageway link road – aligned to the west of Bickenhill – between the A45 Clock Interchange and a new junction on the M42 south of junction 6 located north of Solihull Road.

We are inviting everyone to have their say on the details at a public consultation running from 9 January 2018 until 19 February 2018 on the preferred route for M42 junction 6.

Highways England senior project manager, Jonathan Pizzey, said

We want to make sure that local people and other stakeholders have a say in the project.

We'll be taking all comments into consideration as we complete the design, prior to making a planning application later in 2018. All comments will be considered, and we will provide a report identifying how they have influenced the design.

As part of the scheme there are also plans to improve traffic flow at the M42 junction 6 roundabout – a well-known bottleneck – by providing dedicated left turn links between the M42 and A45 at the NEC and the north east side of the roundabout. This will benefit motorists by reducing congestion and improving journey times around the junction, as well as access to and from the motorway.

We will continue to work closely with all stakeholders through the detailed design and statutory process to ensure their views and ideas are incorporated into the design where appropriate.

Construction is expected to start in 2020 and completion is due in 2023; subject to DC0 approval in 2019.

Location	Date	Time
The Arden Hotel: Coventry Road, Bickenhill, B92 0EH	Tuesday 9 January 2018	1pm to 8pm
St Peter's Church Hall: Church Lane, Bickenhill, B92 0DN	Thursday 11 January 2018	12pm to 8pm

Location	Date	Time
Catherine de Barnes Village Hall: Hampton Lane, B91 2TJ	Saturday 13 January 2018	10am to 4pm
Marston Green Parish Hall: 38 Elmdon Road, Marston Green, B37 7BT	Wednesday 17 January 2018	12pm to 8pm
Fentham Hall: Marsh Lane, Hampton-in- Arden, B92 0AH	Friday 19 January 2018	12pm to 8pm
Warwickshire Gaelic Athletic Association: The Clubhouse, Catherine de Barnes Lane, Bickenhill, B92 0DB	Saturday 27 January 2018	10am to 4pm
The Core: Touchwood, Homer Road, Solihull, B91 3RG	Wednesday 31 January 2018	10am to 5:45pm (A selection of presentation boards will remain at The Core until 19 February 2018)

For a copy of the preferred route announcement leaflet and more information about the scheme, visit the [M42 junction 6 Improvement](#) website.

Members of the public can also contact the project team by emailing m42junction6@highwaysengland.co.uk or by calling Highways England Customer Contact Centre on 0300 123 5000.

[News story: First contract awarded through LINC platform](#)

LINC was launched in autumn 2017 and is already opening the door to work at Sellafield.

B2B and React Engineering used the new platform to submit a proposal for work at the site, and came out on top within four days.

LINC is a new platform developed to help small businesses to win work to support the site's clean-up mission.

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Emma-Jayne Gooch, Head of Supply Chain Development & Innovation said:

The first opportunity published in the LINC scheme was a call for proposals on how Sellafield Ltd could achieve accreditation to ISO 44001, 'collaborative business relationship management systems'.

Through the LINC scheme we asked SMEs to get their heads together and propose how we could identify any gaps against the standard, how the standard could initially be piloted and then ultimately rolled out across the whole business.

We received 5 impressive submissions on 2nd December, a panel assessed the proposals on Monday 6th December and we announced the successful SMEs on Wednesday 8th

That is a speed of turnaround never experienced before by Sellafield Ltd.

The successful proposal was a collaborative offering led by B2B and supported by React Engineering.

John Doyle from B2B said: "We are used to complex and time consuming tendering processes.

"The LINC process, although robust, was very easy and simple to use to register.

"It provided a relatively low cost and simple route to market our services, whilst providing great opportunities to network with other SMEs who would not usually be in our network."

"There were many SMEs in the LINC list of companies that would have been great partners, but we did our own due diligence for matching up with a good partner and React Engineering came top."

LINC has been designed to provide Sellafield Ltd with direct access to SMEs in addition to supporting Sellafield Ltd's contribution to the UK SME agenda.

All SMEs must be pre-registered with LINC before submitting a proposal. Details of registered SMEs will be published periodically to support and encourage further collaboration.

Non-SMEs are free to register with LINC but their participation will be limited to a supporting role only.

[Find out how to LINC with Sellafield](#)

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News story: Arrangement for exchanging information during the UK-US Trade and Investment Working Group

The UK and US have set up the Trade and Investment Working Group with an aim to deepen our bilateral trade and investment relationship. The group has been discussing:

- how to provide commercial continuity for US and UK businesses when the UK leaves the EU
- what both sides can do in the short term to facilitate bilateral trade and investment

We cannot complete a free trade agreement (FTA) before leaving the EU but the UK and US will work together to prepare the ground for a future FTA once the UK has left.

An opportunity for growth

The US is our largest trading partner outside the EU, accounting for a fifth of all exports, and trade between the 2 countries is worth over £160 billion a year. It’s also the single biggest source of inward investment into the UK, standing at £252 billion at the end of 2015. Our economic prosperity is enhanced by the depth of our trade, financial, cultural and investment links with the United States.

Exchanging information

To have successful discussions, the working group needs to exchange

information. The UK and US have exchanged letters setting out our joint commitment to treat this information as confidential, unless both sides agree otherwise. As discussions involve exchanging information on how we can deepen our trade and investment ties, it's important for both sides to trust that this can be exchanged in confidence.

The agreement we have reached:

- does not supplant the government's duty to consider requests under the Freedom of Information Act
- is compatible with the [Cabinet Office guidance](#) on how the government should exchange classified or sensitive information internationally, with other government or organisations

Sharing information outside of government and the working group

Government has the discretion and autonomy to share information with bodies, groups or individuals. Under these arrangements, we have made the commitment to do so in a way that maintains the confidentiality of the information, unless the UK and US governments agree it can be treated otherwise. The same applies to the US government's treatment of information relating to the Trade and Investment Working group shared by the UK.

UK government information regarding the Trade and Investment Working Group that is not shared with the US is not subject to these arrangements and will be treated as all other government information of the same nature.

Read the UK and US governments' letters on the treatment of information exchanged during the the UK-US Trade and Investment Working Group.

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