

National Highways (NH) update for SW STB board meetings Feb/March 2023

RIS3 Update

NH and DfT officials await the imminent Ministerial clearance for NH to publish a suite of key documents informing the Government's Road Investment Strategy (RIS3). These documents are:

- **Connecting the Country: our long-term strategic plan to 2050.** This document sets out our understanding of the long-term trends that will affect our network over the next 30 years. It also expresses our vision for the SRN network we want to work towards in that time - how we want our network to look and feel, and the benefits for our customers, the environment, and society. It will provide a long-term backdrop to the development of successive Road Investment Strategies, ensuring we focus not just on the here and now but that we build solid foundations for the future. Following publication, there will be opportunities to feedback on the plan which will be updated for publication alongside the RIS3 Strategic Business Plan and Delivery Plan by the end of the Road Period in 2025.
- **SRN Initial Report.** This is our headline recommendation to Government for the shape of RIS3. The initial report is strategic and thematic, setting out a high-level assessment of the current state of the network and user needs from it, potential maintenance and enhancement priorities, and future development needs and opportunities. It is informed by our long-term strategic plan and Route Strategies, and it recommends the next steps to be pursued during RIS3 towards our long-term vision for the SRN.
- **Route Strategies.** Between them, the 17 Route Strategies (20 reports) take a route-based detailed look at the whole of the SRN network, one section at a time. They are underpinned by a comprehensive evidence-base including extensive stakeholder engagement. Each Route Strategy looks at the current and future role and function of the route to identify a set of route objectives. The current state and performance of each route is explored and future demands and opportunities are explored e.g. growth. They also look at the role of the SRN in the wider transport network and the opportunities for greater integration with other modes and for collaboration with other transport providers. The Route Strategies identify opportunities along the route where, once current planned interventions are delivered, future intervention would be likely to bring benefits and help achieve the route objectives. The Route Strategies will be published in draft form alongside the SRN Initial Report, and their final publication will follow later in the RIS period.

Once National Highways has published these documents, DfT will launch an 8 week consultation on the SRN Initial Report, this consultation will inform their development of the RIS. There will also be an opportunity for stakeholders to provide feedback to NH on our draft long-term plan and the draft Route Strategies.

DfT anticipates publishing RIS3 late in 2024, followed by National Highways' Strategic Business Plan and Delivery Plan setting out how we will deliver RIS3.

We are thankful to all the STBs for their continued engagement and support in a lot of this work and look forward to your feedback on the documents we publish.

Scheme updates

A30 Chiverton to Carland Cross

Work is progressing well on this scheme. A new bridge was installed over the A30 in double-quick time over the weekend of 17 -20 February.

The Tolgroggan access bridge has spanned the A30 near Zelah for 32 years and needed to be replaced to accommodate the new dual carriageway and the existing road between the Chiverton and Carland roundabouts.

To enable the bridge lift operation the A30 was closed between the Boxheater junction and Chiverton Cross roundabout, with drivers using diversion routes.

Despite mist and mizzle, weather conditions and wind speeds remained suitable for the lifting operation and the new 137ft (42-metre) twin-beam overbridge was lifted into place by a 650-tonne crawler crane. And after Engineers undertook tying-in work on the bridge, dismantling and transporting of the crane and extensive site and traffic management clearance, the A30 was reopened to motorists 16 hours ahead of schedule.



The new bridge weighs 275 tonnes, the equivalent weight of 23 double decker buses or 887,097 standard Cornish pasties and will eventually span the existing A30 road and four lanes of the new carriageway. Now in position, work will concentrate on construction of the new road, with the existing bridge to be demolished later this year.

A303 Sparkford to Ilchester engagement events

We continue to make good progress on the A303 Sparkford to Ilchester scheme. Our engagement van will be visiting the Sparkford to Ilchester scheme at the end of March to give local communities and the travelling public the chance to find out more about the upcoming phases of the dualling scheme. National Highways, Galliford Try and HW Martin, the traffic management company, will be on hand to answer any

questions. We're finalising times and locations and will update [our website](#) with this information shortly.

A358 Taunton to Southfields

With the support of government, National Highways has taken the decision to pause the Development Consent Order application while we support a review into the appropriateness of the environmental mitigations proposed for the project. This will move the submission date into 2023.

We remain confident that our proposed scheme presents the best solution to the ongoing issues along the A358 and as part of the wider A303/A358 corridor. We will continue to work closely with the government to ensure a decision on submission of the DCO application is fully informed. We will continue to keep our stakeholders and local people informed of the project's progress whilst this work is carried out.

A38 Trerulefoot to Carkeel safety package

Public consultation in 2022 on this RIS Pipeline scheme showed strong public support. Our recommendation regarding proposed safety interventions is with Ministers. As this is currently a pipeline scheme, continuation beyond that point will be subject to the Ministerial decisions on RIS3 in 2024.

Road Safety Communications Campaign

With safety our number one priority, we aim to at least halve the number of people killed or seriously injured on our roads by the end of 2025, with a longer-term goal of achieving a zero-harm network.

To support this vision and help road users to stay - and feel - safe on our road network, we have developed a new road safety campaign that demonstrates to drivers how to drive safely around heavy goods vehicles (HGVs).

Large vehicles, such as trucks and HGVs are often considerably longer, heavier, and more powerful than standard vehicles and need more consideration. Drivers often underestimate the size and position of HGVs, the areas of limited visibility, as well as the stopping distance required. Because of the significant differences in weight, crashes with lorries are more likely to cause severe injury or death.

Our message to drivers is 'be seen'. When approaching HGVs, move quickly and safely when overtaking and don't linger.

The campaign will launch on the 27 February and run through to the 31 March 2023. It is designed to increase awareness and knowledge among road users of the limited visibility areas and vehicle limitations of HGVs.