

**31/03/2016 - Highways England and SMBC Combined answers to RVF's questions submitted 25/02/2016**

Question	Answer	
<p>1. What will be done with Switch Island to accommodate the traffic increase should a road be built through Rimrose Valley?</p>	<p>The operation of Switch Island is being assessed as part of the overall assessment of both offline and online options. This assessment will help to determine what, if any, improvements may be required to accommodate changes in traffic flows at the junction.</p>	
<p>2. Following the survey work done by and on behalf of Highways England, what are the results/facts around the landfill and what is the realistic impact to constructing a road through Rimrose Valley, plus what are the plans and cost to manage and/or excavate the landfill?</p>	<p>The outline ground investigation has indicated that the tip largely consists of ash, clinker (waste from industrial processes), brick, concrete and domestic waste. We are currently examining a number of options for the construction methods through the tip.</p> <p>The assessment of options will also consider the likely costs involved. Costs are being evaluated, but there are no plans for any excavation of the landfill outside of the footprint of the road. Current thinking is to design any road so as to minimise the amount of excavation that is required. The GI report is now available and a copy of the report is being issued to Simon. Unfortunately due to the size of the electronic copy it will be unlikely that this report can be added to the Highways England web page.</p>	
<p>3. It's been previously stated that there's expected to be a tripling of HGVs coming out of the docks. What are the current expected figures and what does that mean to the overall % increase in traffic flow over the next 10, 20 and 30 years?</p>	<p>An updated traffic model is currently in development following the recent traffic surveys. Until this is complete, details of traffic growth will not be available.</p>	
<p>4. What would be the increase or decrease in average journey time for an HGV to use a road through Rimrose Valley to get to the docks from Switch Island versus the modified A5036 route?</p>	<p>Highways England undertook some high level traffic modelling work during the feasibility study including work on journey times using old traffic data (which is incidentally over 6 years old). The indications from that data was that there would be a time saving of approximately 5 minutes if a HGV used a new road through Rimrose Valley compared to using the existing route via Dunnings Bridge road to Switch Island.</p> <p>The traffic model is currently being updated following completion of traffic surveys undertaken in the autumn of 2015. Until this work is completed we will not be able to provide more up to date journey times for the Dunnings Bridge Road route or for the Rimrose Valley. The intention is to provide this information during the</p>	

	consultation events that Highways England plans to hold in Autumn 2016 when both the economic and environmental assessments have been undertaken	
5. What are the plans to make Brooms Cross Road suitable for linking Switch Island to a possible road through Rimrose Valley and what are the obstacles with Brooms Cross Road that must be overcome to achieve this?	The recently completed Broom's Cross Road is included in our traffic model which is being updated to incorporate the new traffic data collected in September last year. When this has been done, we will be able to determine in more detail what changes may be necessary to Broom's Cross Road to accommodate traffic flows on any offline option. However, early indications are that to accommodate the levels of forecast traffic, Broom's Cross Road would need to be changed from a single carriageway to a dual-carriageway. At this stage a detailed assessment of the engineering required to do that has not been completed.	
6. What are the plans to connect a possible road through Rimrose Valley with Princess Way and what are the CPO possibilities?	Our initial work has investigated providing a new traffic signalled controlled junction between the railway line and the recently improved Princess Way roundabout. The land take required for this option has not been identified as yet, but it is currently envisaged that no properties will be required; this will be confirmed at a later stage.	
7. What is the level of the water table in Rimrose Valley, and how would flooding be managed, as a road would have to divert the water that currently sits in the ground on and under Rimrose Valley?	The initial ground investigation has shown that ground water levels vary. Within the former tip depths of over 6m were observed, whereas in some locations outside the former tip the ground water was just below ground level. It is noted this will vary with the seasons. The drainage strategy will be developed at a later stage if this option is taken forward.	
8. Please explain how the road would fit with the Local Plan?	Sefton's Local Plan has recently completed its Examination in Public. The modifications to the Plan following the EiP will be consulted on in summer 2016, with the intention of adopting the new Plan early in 2017. The Plan includes a specific policy relating to the Port (Policy ED1) which identifies the need for improvements to access to support the expansion of the Port. This includes improved highway access, although the Plan acknowledges that different options are still being considered (Paragraphs 7.14 and 9.17 in the December 2015 version of the Local Plan). The outcome of the current route options assessment will be considered in the proposed immediate review of the Plan (Paragraph 4.43)	
9. We understand that, before it disbanded, the Regional Development Agency handed responsibility for moving freight out of the Port of Liverpool to SMBC. What is the current status of SMBC's responsibilities in this regard?	Moving freight out of the Port of Liverpool is not the responsibility of any statutory authority. It is a commercial activity carried out by private companies. It is possible that this question refers to the Port of Liverpool Access Study, which was originally commissioned by the Regional Assembly (4NW) as one of the Government funded Delivering a Sustainable Transport System (DaSTS) projects. When 4NW was	

	disbanded, responsibility for completing the study was transferred to Sefton Council. The study was completed and published in December 2011.	
10. What are the forecasted air and noise pollution readings in and around Rimrose Valley and in and around the A5036 corridor now and over the next 10, 20 and 30 years if a) no road is constructed b) a road is constructed through Rimrose Valley or c) enhancements are made to the A5036 corridor?	The Air Quality and Noise modelling require the traffic model to be completed, so consequently, this cannot be provided at this time. Results will be made available towards the end of the year when public consultation is carried out.	
11. Please provide the results and synopses of analysis that has been done to date, to identify the social, environmental, emissions, air and noise pollution and impact on flora/fauna should a road through Rimrose Valley be built.	These subjects are considered as part of the environmental assessment for the scheme, which is ongoing. The effective assessment requires the completion of the traffic model and the resultant development of the scheme designs. Results will be made available towards the end of the year when public consultation is carried out.	
12. Will the existing flora that plays a part in cleansing the environment be reduced if a road is constructed through Rimrose Valley? If so, to what extent and what mitigation will be proposed to counter that?	Whilst we will look to minimise impacts, where any construction of a new carriageway impacts on the existing flora along the route, suitable mitigation will be identified for these impacts. Compensation/enhanced wetland areas will be established to replace lost habitat, part of the aim of which is to manage physical drainage and pollutant runoff from an offline routeing	
13. Will the results take account of all survey samples taken by and on behalf of Highways England, or will any be excluded? If any will be excluded, why?	The assessment of both options will take into account all of the historic and new data collected as part of the assessment of both possible online and offline options.	
14. What has been and what will be done to involve the community and local experts in establishing the environmental impact and getting a transfer of the local in-depth knowledge that exists, that will help a full understanding of the	Highways England has developed a stakeholder strategy for the scheme which has included Rimrose Valley Friends. This will ensure that all stakeholders, both statutory and non-statutory, will be consulted and have the opportunity to comment and input at a number of stages.	

<p>impact of a road through Rimrose Valley to be achieved?</p>		
<p>15. If a road is built through Rimrose Valley, what will be done to mitigate against the reduction in the public's access and exposure to the richness of the open, green and natural environment presently available to them?</p>	<p>Rimrose Valley Park is designated as Public Open Space and therefore there would be a requirement to replace any land taken by the scheme with equivalent land in terms of quality and function. If a road was constructed, suitable mitigation measures will be designed to minimise its impact, and where possible, positive enhancements will also be included to effectively compensate for loss of amenity.</p>	
<p>16. Thornton has been identified as having pockets of deprived areas with a lack of green spaces. What has been done to measure the impact on these areas by diminishing Rimrose Valley with a road, and what mitigation is being put forward to address that?</p>	<p>A full assessment of the impact on the environment and communities, including specific reference to 'People and Communities', is being carried out as part of the assessment specified by Highways England for both online and offline options. Mitigation measures will be proposed to minimise as much as possible the impact of any option on the local environment, people and communities.</p>	
<p>17. What safeguards are there to protect the rest of Rimrose Valley against further development should a road be built?</p>	<p>In the new Local Plan, there is no land allocated for other development in the Rimrose Valley. The Plan provides the basis for permitting or restricting future development. Policies in the Local Plan restrict development except in those areas specifically identified for development (either housing or employment uses). Specific policies that would protect Rimrose Valley are Policy MN7 (Sefton's Green Belt), NH2 (Protection and enhancement of natural sites, priority habitats and species) and NH5 (Protection of open space and Countryside Recreation Areas).</p>	
<p>18. People who presently use Rimrose Valley as a green transit route (eg people cycling to/from work and children walking to/from school) are concerned that they will no longer have a clean route to travel if a road is constructed through Rimrose Valley, and they may choose to use other forms of transport. What research has been done, and what are the results of that research, into the air and noise pollution and socio-economic impact of reducing the use of Rimrose Valley as a green transport route?</p>	<p>The assessment of possible environmental effects is ongoing, including impacts on pedestrians and cyclists, noise and vibration, air quality, visual amenity and community effects, in line with the formal Highways England requirements. Once these assessments have been completed, appropriate mitigation and possible enhancement will be identified to minimise impacts to local communities/residents.</p>	

<p>19. What has been done to specifically measure the pedestrian and cycle use by school children through Rimrose Valley going to and from school? Which school routes have been measured and during which times of year?</p>	<p>Initial pedestrian surveys have been completed. At this stage specific surveys relating to the use by school children have not been undertaken. However further pedestrian surveys are being planned, dates to be confirmed, and these will take into account the use of Rimrose Valley by school children.</p>	
<p>20. What are your plans to consult with local schools and parents to determine the negative impact on children whilst in transit to/from school of constructing a road through Rimrose Valley?</p>	<p>These will be included with the consultation programme / exercise later in the year.</p>	
<p>21. What's going to be done to ensure communities on either side of Rimrose Valley remain connected?</p>	<p>Suitable crossing facilities will be identified to minimise severance caused by any new road.</p>	
<p>22. Please detail the route and width a road through Rimrose Valley would take, and please detail the area that will be reserved on either side of that route.</p>	<p>The exact alignment of a route through Rimrose Valley to the required highway standards has yet to be established, as it needs to consider all of the potential environmental constraints through the area and the potential impacts. We are considering two options, namely a wide single carriageway and a dual carriageway. A wide single carriageway would have a cross-section of 12m whilst a dual-carriageway would be 21m. The overall width of land required would depend on whether the road was in a cutting or on an embankment, and also on how much landscaping would be provided along the route.</p>	
<p>23. To avoid road options, are there any further non-road options which have been identified as possible but ruled out? If so, please state what they are, why they've been ruled out and how we can know all options have been considered. If anything has been ruled out on the basis of cost, please summarise what those costs would be (approximately).</p>	<p>The road improvements are part of a wider programme of works including rail improvements and improvements relating to inland shipping. The programme aims to transfer as much freight as possible to non-road options (i.e. shipping and rail) but even if the potential for these other options is achieved, there will still be a significant requirement for road based transport. The Feasibility Study concluded that there are no non-road options which would totally solve the problem of congestion on the A5036. Highways England has been asked to investigate road based improvements to improve the access to the Port of Liverpool. These road improvements are part of a</p>	

	<p>wider programme of works being investigated and led by the City Region Port Access Steering Group (CRPASG). Further details of these can be found on <a href="https://www.liverpoollep.org/core-sectors/superport/access-to-the-port-of-liverpool">https://www.liverpoollep.org/core-sectors/superport/access-to-the-port-of-liverpool</a></p>	
<p>24. What would be the costs for a tunnel to be put forward as an option?</p>	<p>The option of providing a tunnel was considered during the feasibility study undertaken in 2014. Two options were assessed: A cut and cover tunnel and a bored tunnel. The indicative cost for a 3.5km tunnel ranged from £280m to £570m and was only the cost for the construction of a tunnel. These costs did not include the costs for the acquisition of any land required, any design costs, costs of moving any utility company apparatus, any costs required to maintain the tunnel once it was operational, any costs for tie-ins to the existing road network and costs for providing ventilations shafts.</p>	
<p>25. What analysis has taken place to determine the intangible costs of a road through Rimrose Valley, including but not limited to the economic burden to SMBC and the State caused by the reduction to mental and physical health and wellbeing, both in terms of healthcare and benefits costs. What figures have been arrived at and over what time period?</p>	<p>We are assessing the intangible impacts using qualitative and quantitative information. In relation to these intangible impacts connected to health, we are assessing changes related to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Noise</li> <li>• Air quality</li> <li>• People's sense of place and ability</li> </ul> <p>This information will be provided during the public consultation later in the year.</p>	
<p>26. What is the current expected average lifespan in and around the Rimrose Valley communities, and what would the expected average lifespan be in and around Rimrose Valley 10, 20 and 30 years after the construction of a road through it?</p>	<p>We have assessed the current health profile of the local community including average life expectancy, this will be considered when assessing the impacts on the local communities.</p>	
<p>27. What would be the net gain or loss to the revenue achieved by SMBC for both road options?</p>	<p>The maintenance and management of either option would remain the responsibility of Highways England and would therefore not have revenue implications for Sefton Council.</p>	

