

A5 Towcester Improvements Engagement Report 2022

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A5 Towcester Improvements Engagement Report 2022

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Executive summary

This report presents the findings of a public consultation on proposals to improve the A5 through Towcester. The consultation ran from 15 August 2022 to 11 September 2022. The consultation received 185 responses from individuals, stakeholders, and local landowners. Responses were received from a range of people including those living locally to the A5 and those living further afield (see section 3.3).

The A5 in Towcester has longstanding issues with the high levels of traffic particularly heavy goods vehicles passing through the town centre, causing environmental, safety and accessibility concerns to residents and businesses. The proposed scheme aims to encourage through traffic, and in particular goods vehicles, to use the new link road and the A43 as an alternative to the A5. This will alleviate some of the more disruptive traffic from the town centre, improving accessibility and quality of life in Towcester. The main objectives of the scheme are to:

- improve safety for all
- reduce the impact of air and noise pollution on surrounding environments and habitats
- increase the number of trips made in Towcester by walking and cycling
- help boost the local economy through increased trade and footfall
- make Towcester's High Street an attractive place to visit
- improve accessibility to Towcester town centre for everyone
- preserve Towcester's rich history and identity

Prior to the designing of the options, we ran three workshops with key stakeholders from Town and Parish Councils, West Northamptonshire Council and the police. The workshops allowed us to identify key themes to achieving the scheme objectives (see section 1.2 for the list of key themes). The themes were as follows:

- Road safety
- Parking
- Improvements to public areas
- Congestion & HGV issues
- The A5/A43 link road

To achieve the scheme objectives, we produced various design solutions and shortlisted these down to three options: Option A, Option B and Option C. Public consultation materials provided information on the options (see section 1.3 for details) and included a questionnaire (see Appendix B), which included both quantitative 'closed' questions with fixed responses and qualitative 'open' questions inviting comments.

We held five public events, two of these were online presentations with a question and answers section at the end with a total of 23 attendees.

We also held three drop-in sessions, one held at the Sawpits Centre and the other two were carried out in our engagement van at the Waitrose and Aldi car parks. A total of around 900 visitors were recorded between the three events.

In total 185 responses were received. This includes 168 via online questionnaire, 11 by paper questionnaire, two via letter and four via email. Of these, 179 were questionnaires.

Key Findings

The respondents were asked to choose which option would be the most beneficial for Towcester town centre. Almost half of all the respondents (79) chose option A as the one that would benefit most. The second most popular response was option B with 44 respondents choosing this answer. Option C with B was chosen by the smallest number of respondents (12). 33 respondents did not answer that question.

More than a third of respondents stated that none of the options would make driving through Towcester and the town centre easier. Two fifths of the respondents stated that option A would encourage them to visit, shop and walk in the town centre. A similar proportion (42% respondents) said that none of the options would encourage them to cycle in the town centre, though a third of respondents choose option A as the most likely to encourage them to cycle.

There are some differences between results from respondents living in postcode sectors NN12 7 and NN12 8 (see figure 11 for postcode map). For just over half of the respondents from these groups, no option would encourage them to visit, shop, walk and cycle in the town centre. It is also noted that none of the respondents living in NN12 7 sector chose Option C with A, while respondents from NN12 8 sector rarely chose option C with B as their preferred one. Option C with B is, in fact, the least popular answer across these questions.

Two thirds of respondents thought there was enough accessible parking (115 respondents) and long stay parking in Towcester (118 respondents), but half said more short-stay parking is needed. 70% of the respondents said that the proposals would encourage them to shop in Towcester.

The qualitative findings show that whilst Option A is the preferred option overall, there are many with reservations to the proposal (37 respondents). Concerns include the proposal to narrow the racecourse roundabout to one lane, removing the kerb and separating foot traffic from vehicles through road texture and colour was viewed as unsafe, and concerns that local business would suffer if the town centre parking was removed. Option B received criticism for being short sighted. Option C was generally seen as inefficient due to the town being too small to support park and ride (34 respondents).

Respondents were very supportive of the 7.5 tonne weight restriction (33 respondents), however, they questioned how it would be enforced and where the HGVs would be diverted. Many respondents had experienced dangerous conditions relating to large HGVs on the A5 and were pleased to see the restriction proposed. Respondents were sceptical that the relief road will be able to accommodate the diverted HGVs and believe that nothing short of the de-trunking of the A5 would deter them.

The consultation has captured a range of views from local communities, organisations, and interest groups. The purpose of this report is to present a factual summary of the consultation process and responses received. The information will be used by the National Highways project team to inform the development of the project, alongside other considerations, to recommend a preferred option which will then be taken forward into more detailed development.

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Introduction

This report presents the findings of a public consultation about the improvement works we would like to carry out along the A5 in Towcester. The consultation ran from Monday 15 August 2022 to Sunday 11 September 2022.

We held five public events, two of these were online presentations with a question and answers section at the end with a total of 23 attendees.

We also held three drop-in sessions, one held at the Sawpits Centre and the other two were carried out in our engagement van at the Waitrose and Aldi car parks. A total of around 900 visitors were recorded between the three events.

In total 185 responses were received. This includes 168 via online questionnaire, 11 by paper questionnaire, two via letter and four via email. Of these, 179 were questionnaires.

Responses were received from a range of people including those living locally to Towcester and those travelling through the town from further afield.

1.1 Scheme background and objectives

The A5 in Towcester has longstanding issues with the high levels of traffic passing through its historic town centre, causing environmental, safety and accessibility concerns to residents and businesses. The proposed scheme aims to encourage through traffic, and in particular goods vehicles, to use the proposed new link road, being constructed by Persimmon Homes. The new link road will connect the A5 and the A43, as an alternative to continuing on the A5 through Towcester. This will alleviate some of the more disruptive traffic from the town centre, improving accessibility and quality of life in Towcester.

The objectives of the scheme are to:

- improve safety for all
- reduce the impact of air and noise pollution on surrounding environments and habitats
- increase the number of trips made in Towcester by walking and cycling
- help boost the local economy through increased trade and footfall
- make Towcester's High Street an attractive place to visit
- improve accessibility to Towcester town centre for everyone
- preserve Towcester's rich history and identity

1.2 Previous engagement

To design options that would benefit Towcester, we needed to better understand the issues that those who lived, worked or travelled through Towcester experience day to day. Therefore, the project team organised workshops with key stakeholders in the area.

We ran three workshops with the following stakeholders:

- Town and Parish Councils
- MP Representative
- West Northamptonshire Council
- Police

We provided these stakeholders with a map of the A5 through Towcester and asked them to highlight the issues and opportunities throughout the route. The workshops allowed us to identify themes which are important to stakeholders and key to achieving the scheme objectives. The key themes from the workshops are as follows:

- Road safety
- Parking
- Improvements to public areas
- Congestion & HGV issues
- The A5/A43 Link Road

The engagement workshops steered us to rule out several different options that wouldn't be suitable for the scheme.

The measures considered not appropriate are identified below:

- Traffic calming measures such as road humps and chicanes
- One-way systems
- Removal of traffic signals and replacement with a roundabout at Brackley Road/Northampton Road junction

1.3 Options

From the feedback we received during our engagement workshops, we identified four key areas that required improvements. These key areas are listed below and have been included in all the options:

- Improved signage
- Introduce speed and vehicle weight restrictions
- Improved active travel (walking and cycling)
- Public space improvements

As part of our design approach, we have split the route into zones. The zones can broadly be classified into urban and rural areas. Each zone represents a different character or change in the road environment where different types of interventions can be applied. Zones 1 and 4 are recognised as being more rural and less built up. Zones 2 and 3 represent a more urban, built-up area where residential, commercial and retail buildings are present.

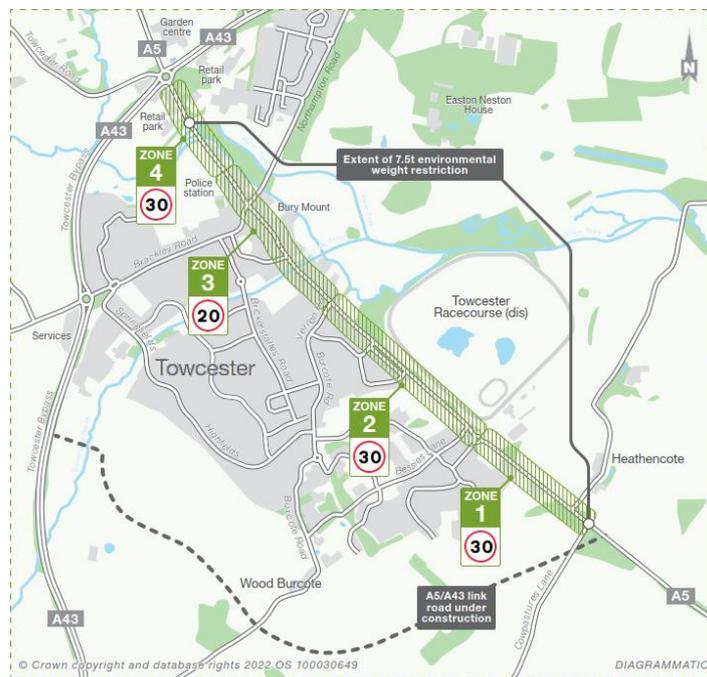


Figure 1. Zones division of the route

The three options have been shortlisted following a thorough option identification process. We've made sure the options are in line with the key themes raised during the stakeholder workshops and with the scheme objectives.

1.3.1. Included in all options

From the feedback we received during our engagement workshops, we identified three key areas that required improvements. These key areas are listed below and have been included in all the options discussed in this report.

Improved signage

- Improve signage into Towcester, directing traffic not requiring town centre access, via the new link road between the A5 and the A43 south of the town.
- Improve signage directing vehicles to public long and short stay carparks located within the town centre, to prevent drivers circling through the town to search for spaces.
- Introduction of speed and vehicle restrictions.
- Reduce speed from 40mph to 30mph along the A5 between the new roundabout at Cowpastures Lane and Marlow Road.
- Reduce speed from 30mph to 20mph along the A5 from Marlow Road through the town centre to Towcester Police Station.
- An environmental weight restriction on vehicles 7.5t or greater between the new roundabout at Cowpastures Lane through Towcester town centre to Old Tiffield Road. Continue to allow large vehicles to have access to the town centre for deliveries.

Improved active travel (walking and cycling)

- Improve pedestrian crossing point, located north of the A5/Heathencote junction.
- Install pedestrian/cycle crossing points on both sides of the A5 racecourse roundabout.
- Providing new coloured / alternative surface texture for cyclists using the A5 into and out of Towcester town centre.
- Create a footway/cycleway between Towcester Police Station and Old Tiffield Road.
- Install a new traffic signal crossing on the A5, north of Old Tiffield Road Junction.
- Install a new traffic signal or a zebra crossing point on Old Tiffield Road.
- Improvements to parking on the A5 between Vernon Road and The Lindens to create defined parking bays to allow vehicles to park partially on the A5 and partially on a widened footway whilst still allowing vehicles to travel in both directions.

Public space improvements

- Raise the A5 as it crosses the Silverstone Brook to allow improved public spaces to be created.
- Create public space between Chantry Lane and Towcester Police Station including new seating areas and planting features.

1.4 Comparison of Option A and B

Options A and B both offer the main walking and cycling improvements which provide combined footway/cycleways on both A5 approaches towards the town centre, more pedestrian and cycle crossing points, new and enhanced signal-controlled crossings, improved bus accessibility and public realm improvements. These are all in addition to a 7.5t environmental weight restriction and speed limit reductions to 20mph in the town centre and 30mph on the approaches.

The main differences between the two are that Option A removes the parking within the Town Square, to provide a public amenity area for activities such as markets, carol singing and other events. Disabled parking would be retained. Also, the Northampton Road/Brackley Road junction would be narrowed to provide improved pedestrian crossing facilities. Option B retains parking within the Town Square and has a much smaller public amenity area. The Northampton Road/Brackley Road junction would remain as is, with better definition of the crossing points by the use of different textures and colour.

For a more detailed look at the differences of the option A and B by zone, see sections 1.5 to 1.8.

1.5 Zone One – Option A and B comparison

1.5.1 Zone One Option A - Cowpastures Lane to racecourse roundabout

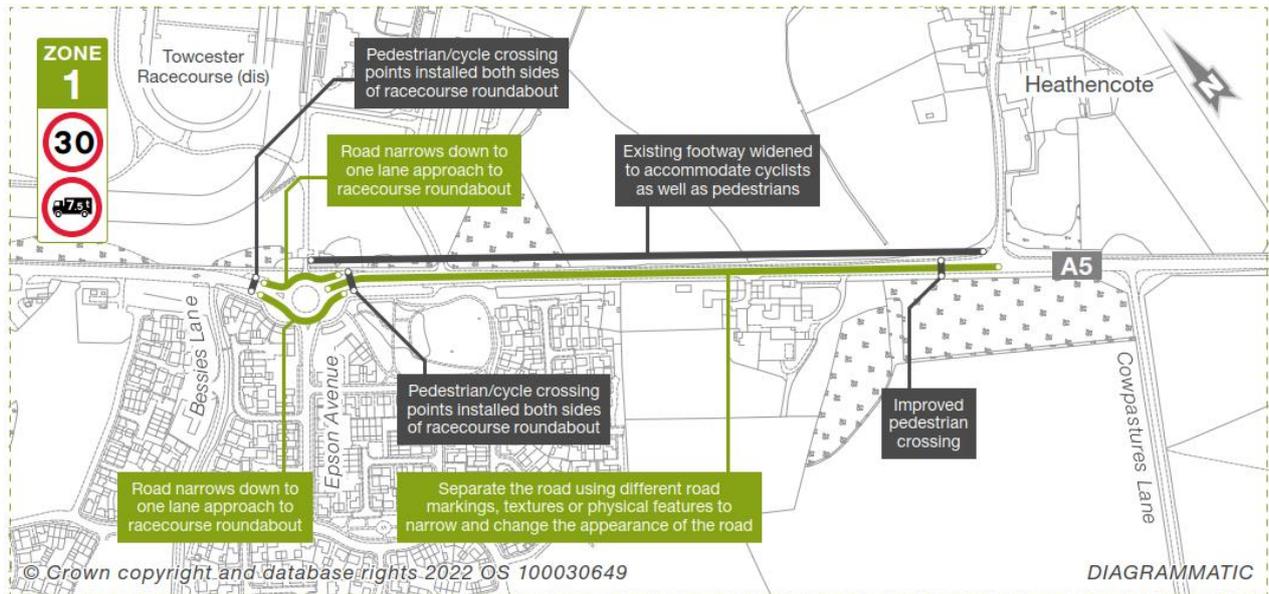


Figure 2. Proposed Option A for Zone One

1.5.2 Zone One Option B - Cowpastures Lane to racecourse roundabout

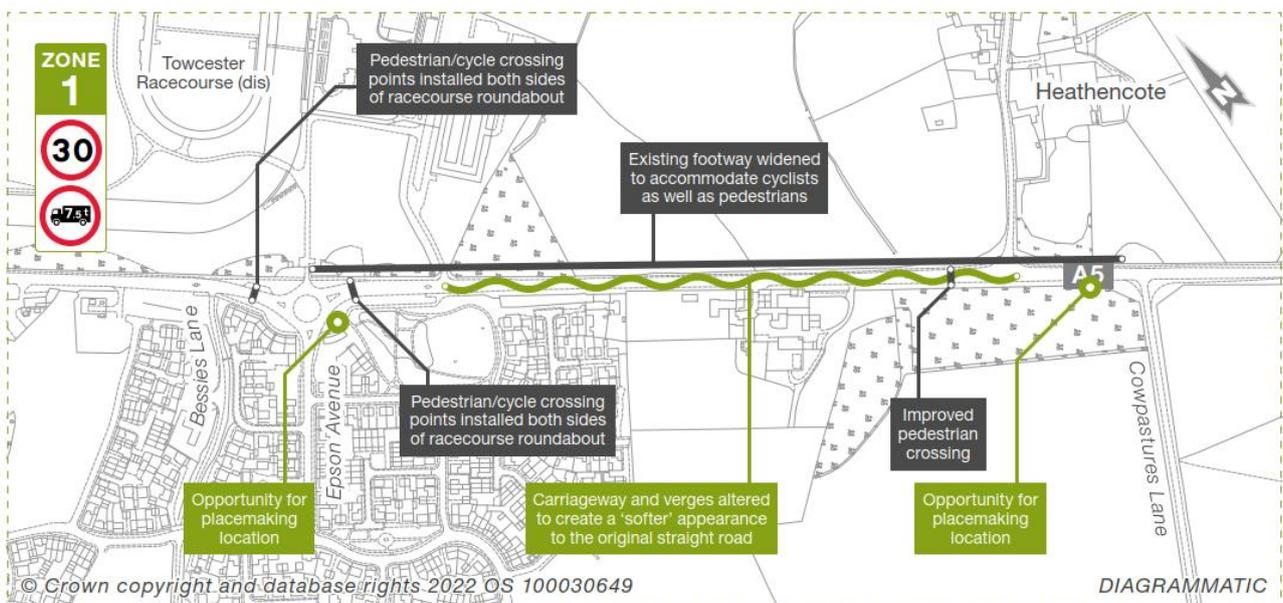


Figure 3. Proposed Option B for Zone One

1.6 Zone Two – Option A and B comparison

1.6.1 Zone Two - Option A – racecourse roundabout to Vernon Road

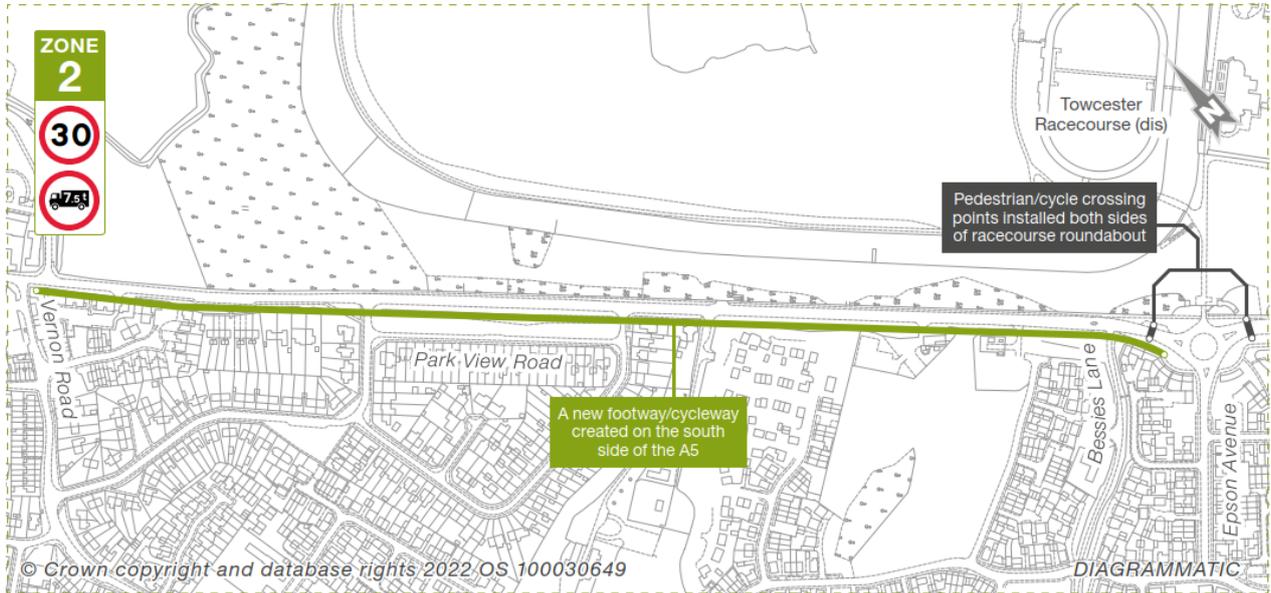


Figure 4. Proposed Option A for Zone Two

1.6.2 Zone Two - Option B - racecourse roundabout to Vernon Road

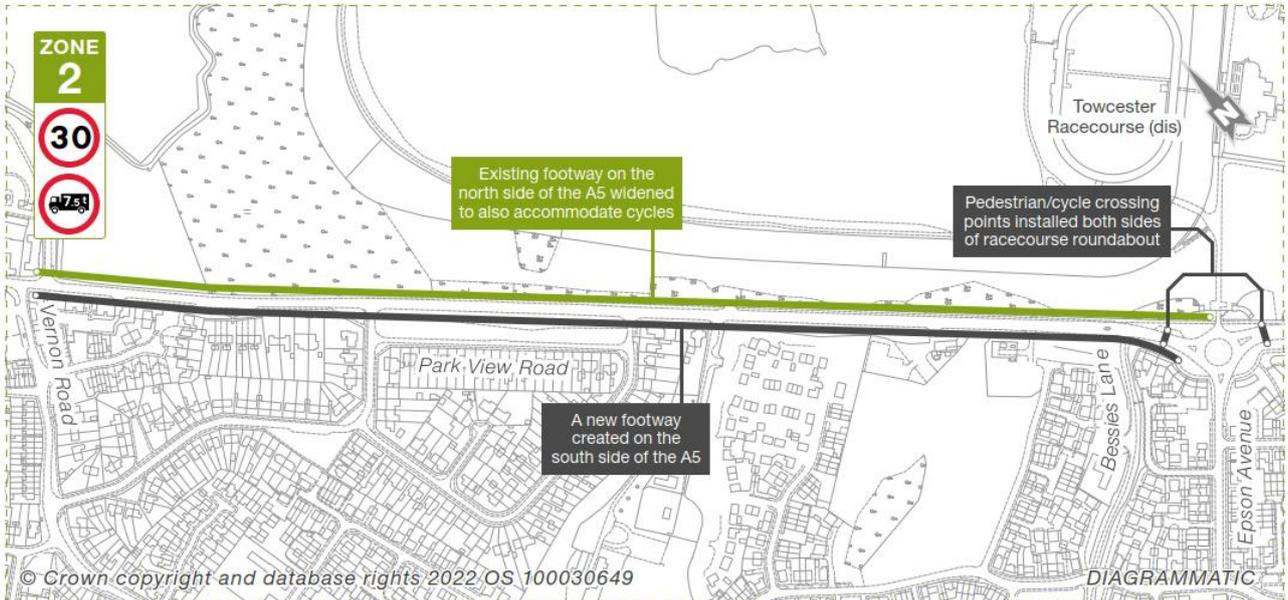


Figure 5. Proposed Option B for Zone Two

1.7 Zone Three – Option A and B comparison

1.7.1 Zone Three - Option A – Vernon Road to Police Station

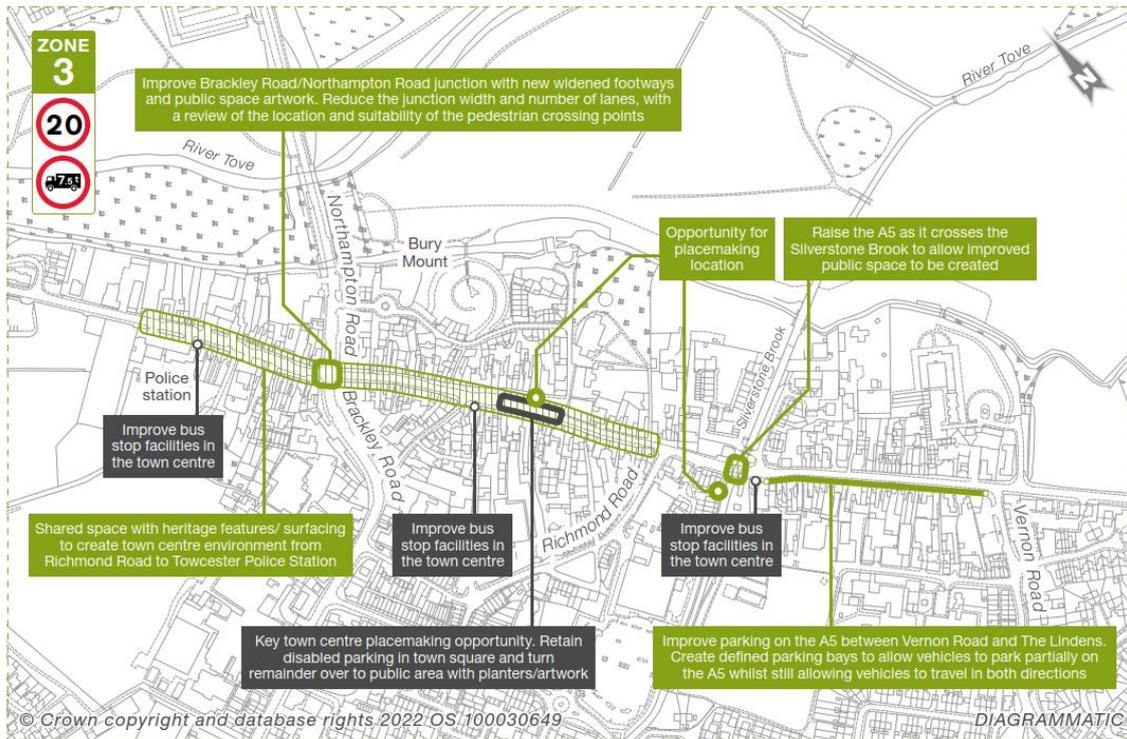


Figure 6. Proposed Option A for Zone Three

1.7.2 Zone Three - Option B – Vernon Road to Police Station

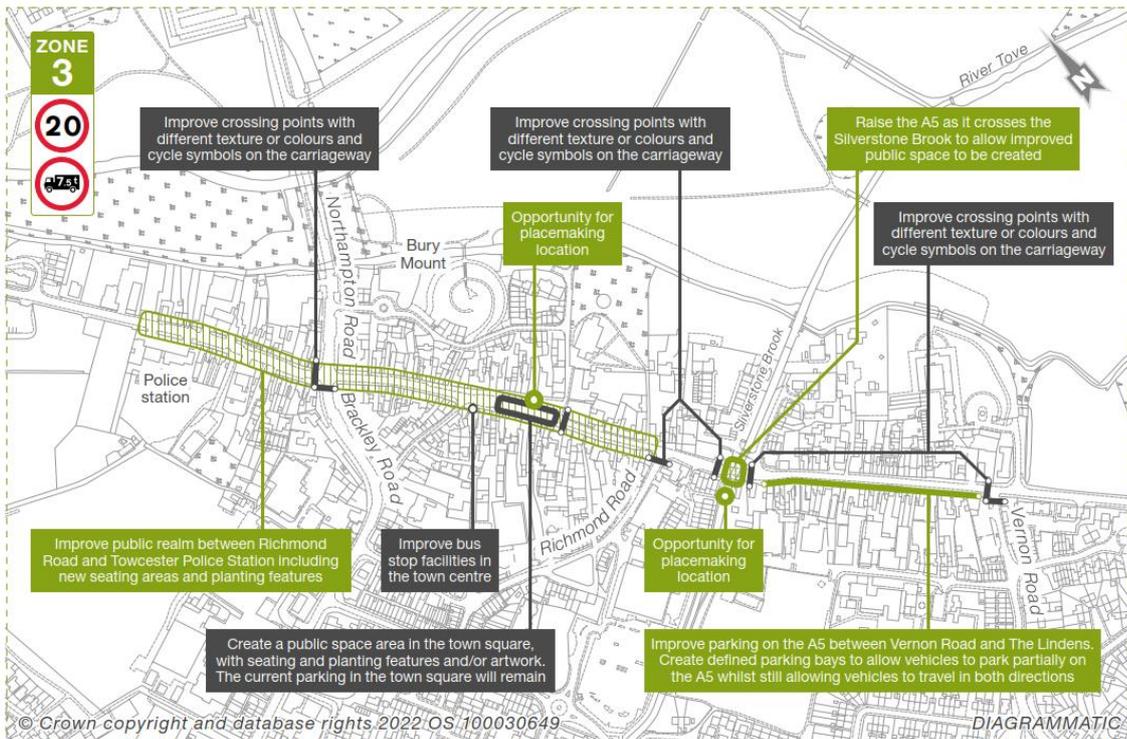


Figure 7. Proposed Option B for Zone Three

1.8 Zone Four - Option A and B

Zone Four is the same for both options, the proposed improvements are listed on the diagram below (see figure 8).

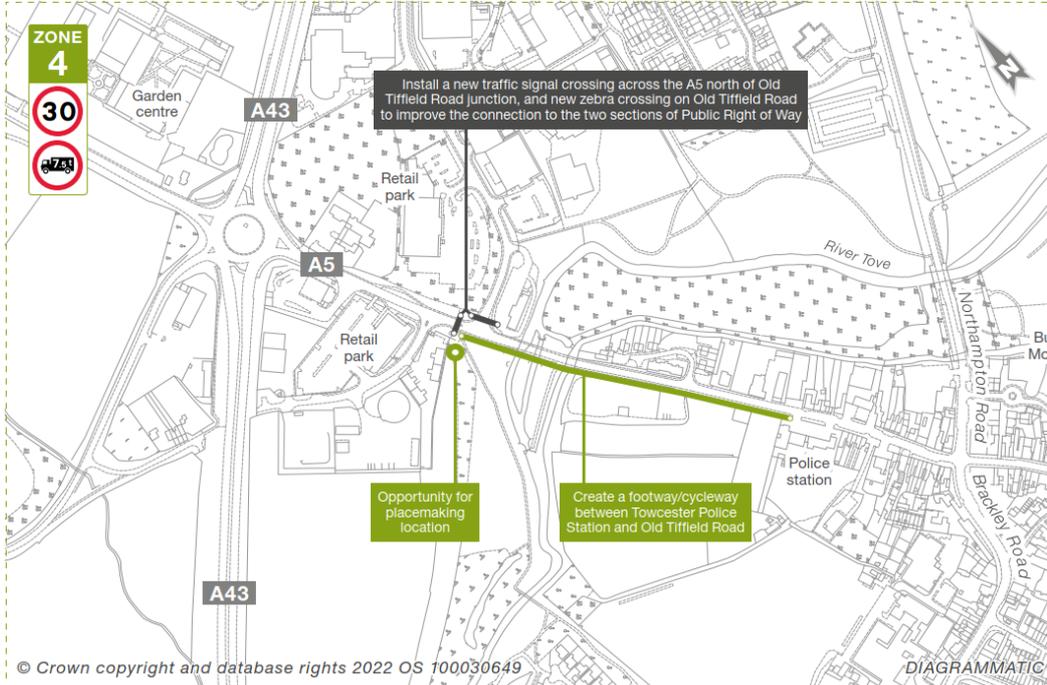


Figure 8. Proposed Options A and B for Zone Four

1.9 Option C

This proposal can be added to Option A or B and cannot be used as a separate proposal. It includes a creation of Park and Ride with minibuses, providing a shuttle service to Towcester town centre from out-of-town car parks. The first located near Cowpastures Lane. The second car park located off Towcester Roundabout on the opposite side of the A43, where the retail/industrial areas are situated.

Methodology

2.1 Approach of the consultation

2.1.1 Citizen Space and Webpage

We created a dedicated project page on the National Highways website and used the National Highways Citizen Space consultation and engagement portal. The Citizen Space page was created to share information about the A5 Towcester improvement proposals and to enable people to provide feedback on the proposals. The pages could be accessed via the following links:

- Citizen Space - <https://highwaysengland.citizenspace.com/he/a5-towcester-improvements/>
- National Highways webpage - <https://nationalhighways.co.uk/our-roads/east-midlands/towcester-improvements/>

The page went live on Monday 15 August 2022. For this stage of engagement, the page provided an overview of the scheme, details of the consultation, where to find information and planned events and a copy of the consultation brochure (See appendix A).

The Citizen Space page directed respondents to an online questionnaire (See Appendix B). This questionnaire was our main form of feedback.

2.1.2 Promotion

Ahead of the launch of Citizen Space updated page, we created postcards and posters to highlight the project drop-in and virtual events.

We sent out postcards to 8,564 local residents of Towcester, Shutlanger, Paulerspury and Potterspury in July 2022 to inform them of the upcoming engagement, where to find the information and where we would be holding engagement events.

During the consultation period, postcards and brochures were hand delivered to local businesses along the A5 in Towcester. Brochures and postcards were available for residents at the following locations throughout the consultation period (15 August to 11 September):

- Towcester Library, The Forum, Moat Lane, Towcester, NN12 6AD; and
- Towcester Sports & Social Club, 5 Swinneyford Road, Towcester NN12 6HD

We also promoted the engagement on Facebook and Twitter, and a press release was issued.

2.2 Events

The following events took place during the consultation period (15 August to 11 September):

Date	Time	Location
Wednesday 17 August 2022	7:00pm - 8:30pm	Online through Teams Live
Wednesday 24 August 2022	7:00pm - 8:30pm	Online through Teams Live
Wednesday 31 August 2022	10am to 7pm	Sawpits Centre, Towcester, NN12 6FT
Monday 5 September 2022	Noon to 7pm	Waitrose car park, Richmond Road, Towcester NN12 6HZ
Tuesday 6 September 2022	9am to 2pm	Aldi car park, Old Greens Norton Road, Towcester NN12 8AX

Table 1. Information events organised during the consultation period

2.2.1 Other engagement

Before the public attended the Sawpits Centre event on 31 August 2022, Rt Hon Dame Andrea Leadsom MP and Town Cllr and Mayor Martin Johns were given a private viewing of the proposals with the project team.

2.2.2 Virtual events

Virtual event sessions were held using Microsoft Teams on 17 August 2022 and 24 August 2022 between 7pm and 8.30pm.

The virtual events consisted of a presentation on the scheme and proposals, followed by a question-and-answer session.

The virtual event on the 17th was attended by 11 and the 24th was attended by 12 people.

For the virtual event slides see Appendix C.

2.2.3 Sawpits Centre drop-in event

A drop-in event was held in at Sawpits Centre, Towcester, NN12 6FT on 31 August 2022.

The Sawpits Centre event was attended by around 300 people.

For the Sawpits event boards see Appendix D.

2.2.4 Engagement van drop-in events

The Engagement van is a mobile engagement space which enabled us to set up our consultation events in car parks. (See Figure 9)

The National Highways Engagement van visited the following car parks:

Waitrose car park, Richmond Road, Towcester NN12 6HZ on 5 September and was attended by around 350 people.

Aldi car park, Old Greens Norton Road, Towcester NN12 8AX on 6 September and was attended by around 280 people.



Figure 9. Engagement van drop-in event

For the engagement event boards see Appendix E.

2.2.5 Sponne School Workshop

We contacted Sponne school in Towcester to hold a workshop with their students, as the school is near the A5 in Towcester and the pupils would offer the team a better understanding of their commute to school, the challenges they have experienced and how they think we could mitigate them.

The school selected 15 students to attend the workshop from years 7 and 8 (11-13 years old). The students were specially selected as those who walk/cycle to school from the immediate area and travel down the A5.

The workshop was held on 11 November 2022. We opened the session with a discussion surrounding the A5 Towcester and what it is we are looking for from their input. We then brought out maps of the A5 on large paper and asked the students to annotate the maps with their thoughts and experiences using sticky notes. The themes from the workshop were consistent with the responses from the questionnaires. See Appendix G for the workshop summary.

2.3 Feedback options

During the consultation period the public were guided to the brochure and questionnaire on our scheme webpage (see section 2.1) or at our pick-up points at Towcester Library and Towcester Sports & Social Club.

The public were also given the option to write to us via freepost:

FREEPOST RTUK – RBL Y – XUBT, A5 Towcester Improvement, 5 First Street, Manchester, M15 4GU

or via email: a5towcester@jacobs.com

2.4 Analysis methodology

This section provides detail on the approach used to analyse and report on the public consultation responses.

National Highways and Jacobs Engineering worked together to process, analyse and report on the public consultation findings.

Quantitative data such as closed question responses (for example, multiple choice 'tick box' format) were totalled. The qualitative data such as the open question responses (which contained the free text comments) were each analysed to identify the themes emerging from the consultation, using a code frame agreed with National Highways. The code frame includes response categories for each of the open questions. A copy of the code frame is included as Appendix F.

The findings presented in the report have been analysed based on the total number of respondents (185). Not all of the respondents provided responses to all questions, this is a feature of responses received to questions containing free text comments.

We have highlighted incidences throughout the report where respondents have replied with significantly different views and where a theme has emerged.

2.5 Limits of the information

This report is based on the responses received to the consultation, and therefore does not constitute a technical assessment of the proposed improvements.

This report analyses the opinions stated by those who responded to the consultation and, as such, is a self-selecting sample. Therefore, the information in this report is not representative of all in the local community or stakeholders. The value of the consultation is in identifying the issues and views of those who have responded and their perceptions of the proposals. This important information will be included in future decision-making processes to inform which option is taken forward by National Highways.

Quantitative Findings

3.1 Introduction

This section sets out the quantitative findings of the public consultation. It is structured as follows:

- Responses received
- Who are the respondents?
- How do the respondents travel in Towcester and which activities they take up there?
- Respondents' views on parking in Towcester
- Respondents' views on proposed improvements
- Respondents' views on which option would benefit Towcester most
- Respondents' views on how each proposed option would impact the respondents' travel decisions and driving opportunities
- Respondent Feedback on the Consultation Process. In this section we show the number of responses received for closed questions due to the small number of responses.

3.2 Questionnaire responses received

In total 179 responses were received. This includes 168 via online questionnaire and 11 by paper questionnaire.

3.2.1 Respondents' demographics

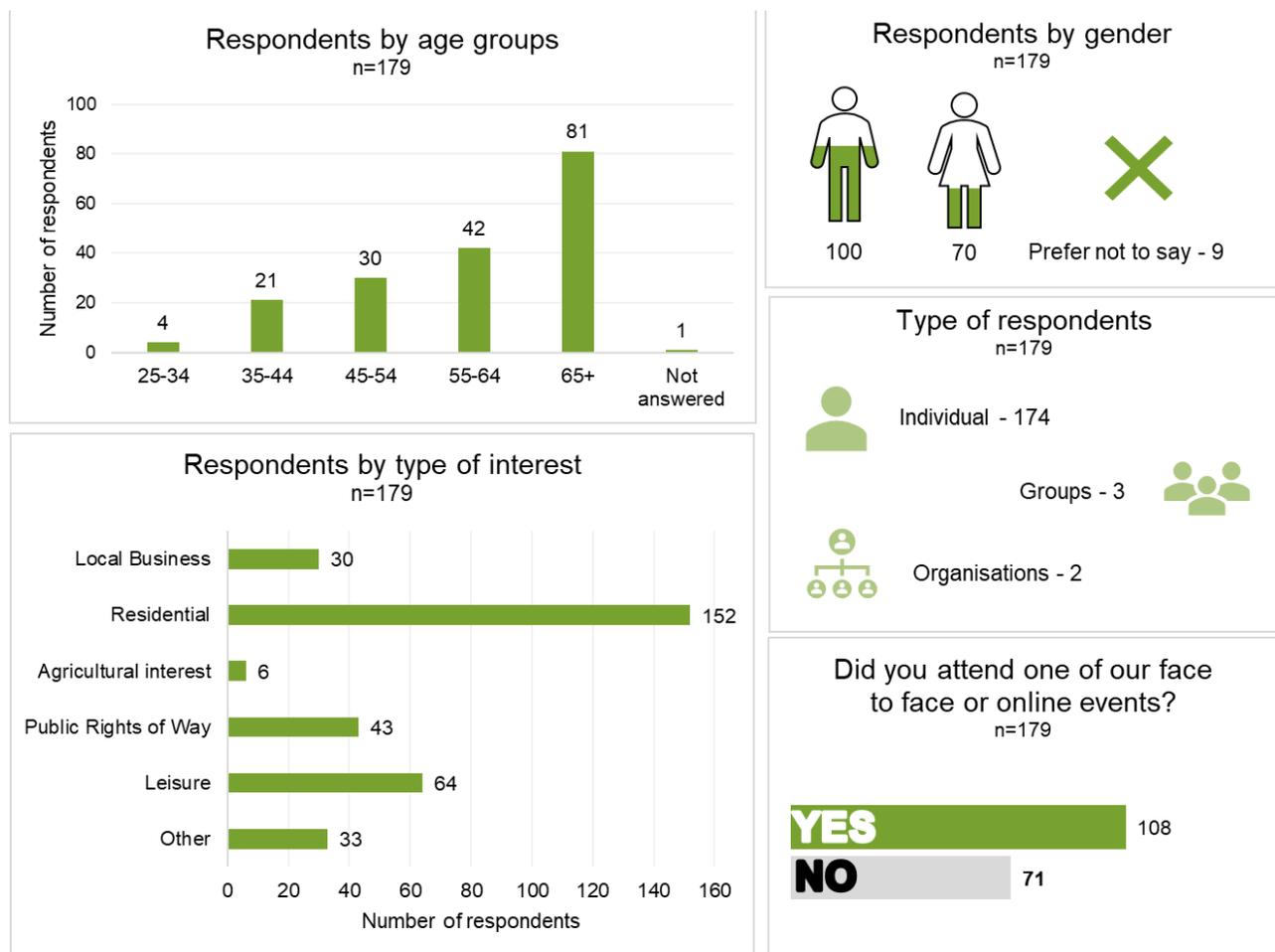


Figure 10. Respondents' demographics

Among all the respondents, 56% (100 respondents) described themselves as men, 39% (70 respondents) as women, and 5% (9 respondents) chose to not provide such information. The majority (45%, 81 respondents)

are over 65 years old, with the group of 55-64 years old as the second highest result (23%, 42 respondents). The smallest group of respondents were the youngest ones. There were four respondents (2%) aged 25-34 and no one under 24 years old.

The respondents could also identify their nature of interest in that project. Most of them (85%, 152 respondents) described themselves as residents, 36% (64 respondents) identified their interest as leisure, and 24% (43 respondents) chose public rights of way. Among responses provided as "other" were local authorities (inc. Councillors) and residents of the neighbouring areas. Several respondents used this open box comment to once more express their main concerns and needs related to transport in Towcester. Note: respondents could give multiple answers to this question, so the numbers total more than 179.

3.2.2 Respondents by event attendance

More than half of the respondents stated they had attended one of the public events, either face-to-face or online (60%, 108 respondents).

3.2.3 Respondents by location

All of the respondents provided information about their postcode. The majority of them live in postal sectors which have Towcester as post town, either NN12 6, NN12 7 or NN12 8 (167 respondents in total, 93%). Among them, most live in sector NN12 6 – 104 respondents (62%). The rest of the respondents are from surrounding areas such as Northampton, Daventry or Milton Keynes. The full list of locations is presented in the table below.

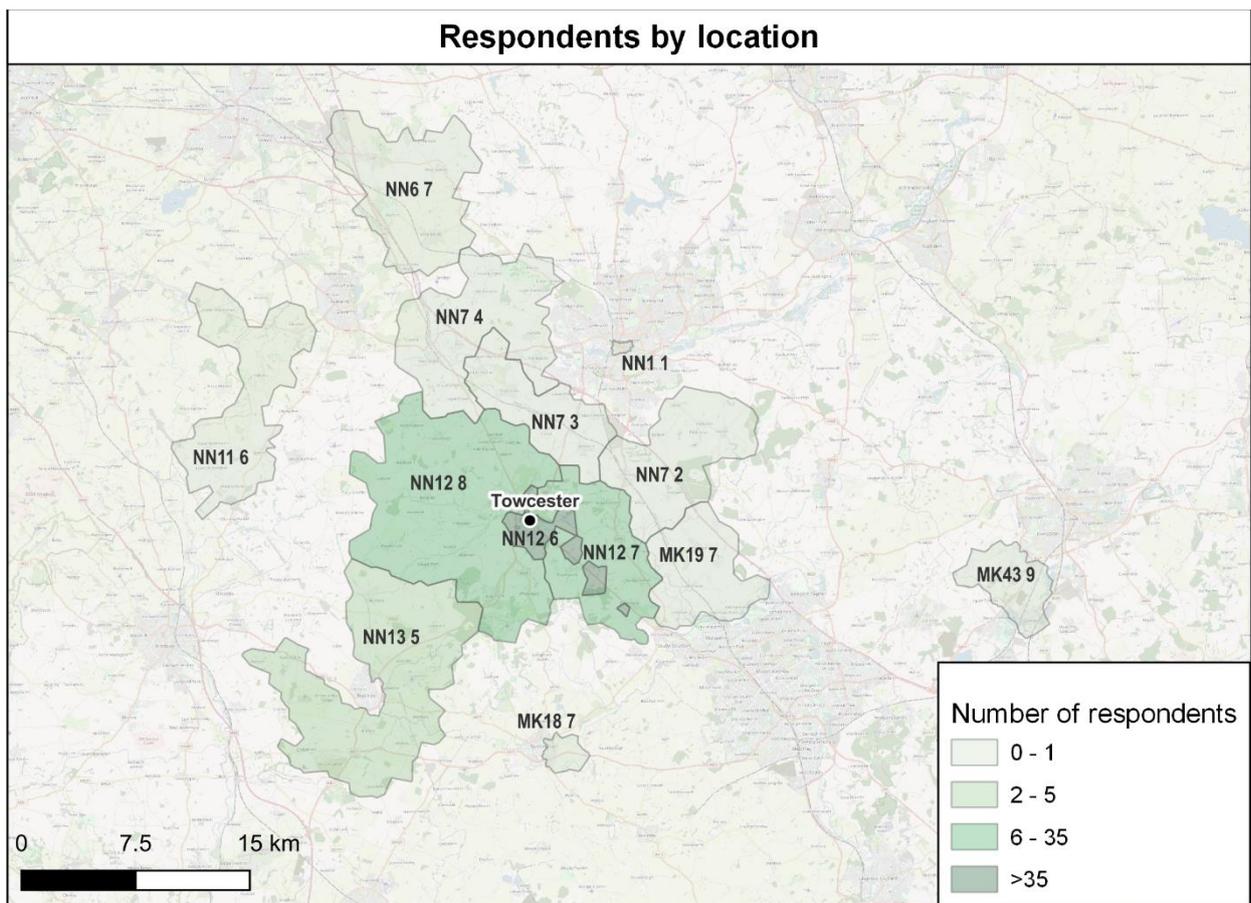


Figure 11. Respondents by their location (base source: OpenStreetMap).

Postcode sector	Post Towns	Number of respondents	Percentage of respondents
NN1 1	Northampton	1	0.6
NN6 7	Daventry, Northampton	1	0.6
NN7 2	Newport Pagnell, Northampton	1	0.6
NN7 3	Northampton	1	0.6
NN7 4	Northampton	1	0.6
NN11 6	Daventry	1	0.6
NN12 6	Towcester	104	58.1
NN12 7	Towcester	29	16.2
NN12 8	Banbury, Towcester	34	19.0
NN13 5	Brackley	3	1.7
MK18 7	Buckingham	1	0.6
MK19 7	Milton Keynes	1	0.6
MK43 9	Bedford	1	0.6
Total:		179	100

Table 2. Respondents by their location

3.3 How do the respondents travel in Towcester and which activities they take up there?

The respondents were asked about activities they take in Towcester to provide some additional background information that could be useful for the design of the final improvements.

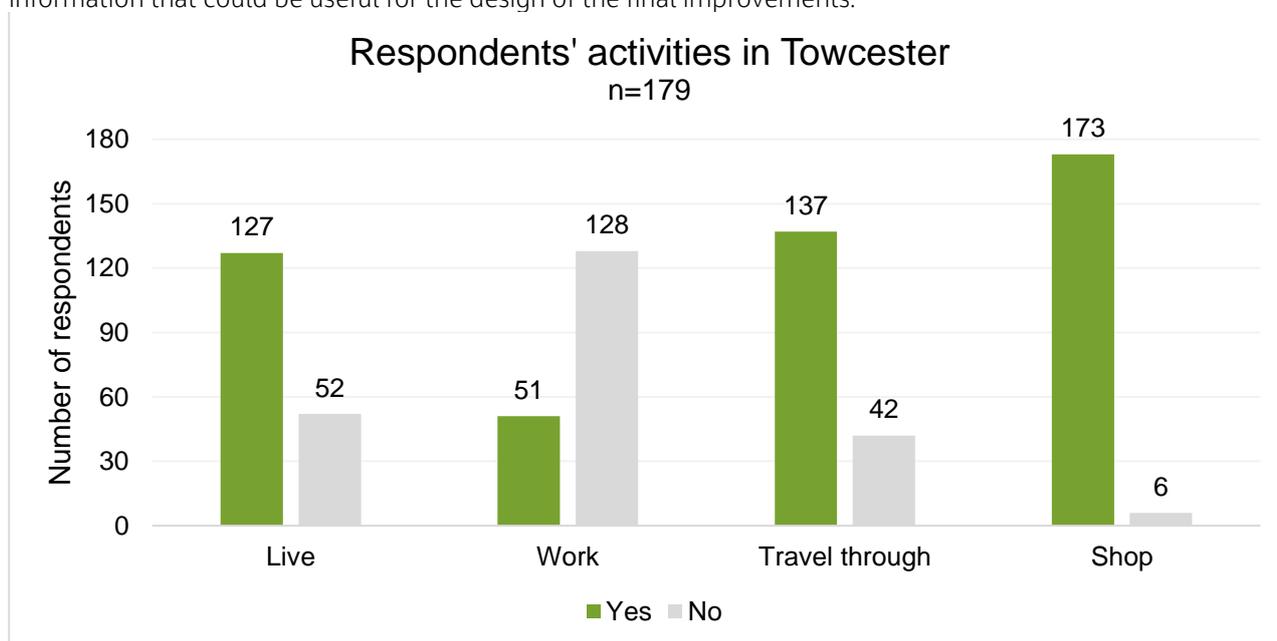


Figure 12. Respondents' activities in Towcester

71% (127 respondents) stated that they live in Towcester, 77% (137 respondents) said they travel through, while 28% (51 respondents) work in Towcester. The most popular activity was shopping with 173 respondents choosing that option (97%). 40 respondents (31%) both live and work in Towcester, and 29% of those who shop in Towcester (50 respondents) live outside the town. Some respondents also provided additional information about their usual destination when they travel through Towcester. Most of them stated Milton

Keynes (36 respondents) and Northampton (27 respondents). Other towns that were mentioned included Silverstone, Daventry, Oxford or some smaller villages in the local area.

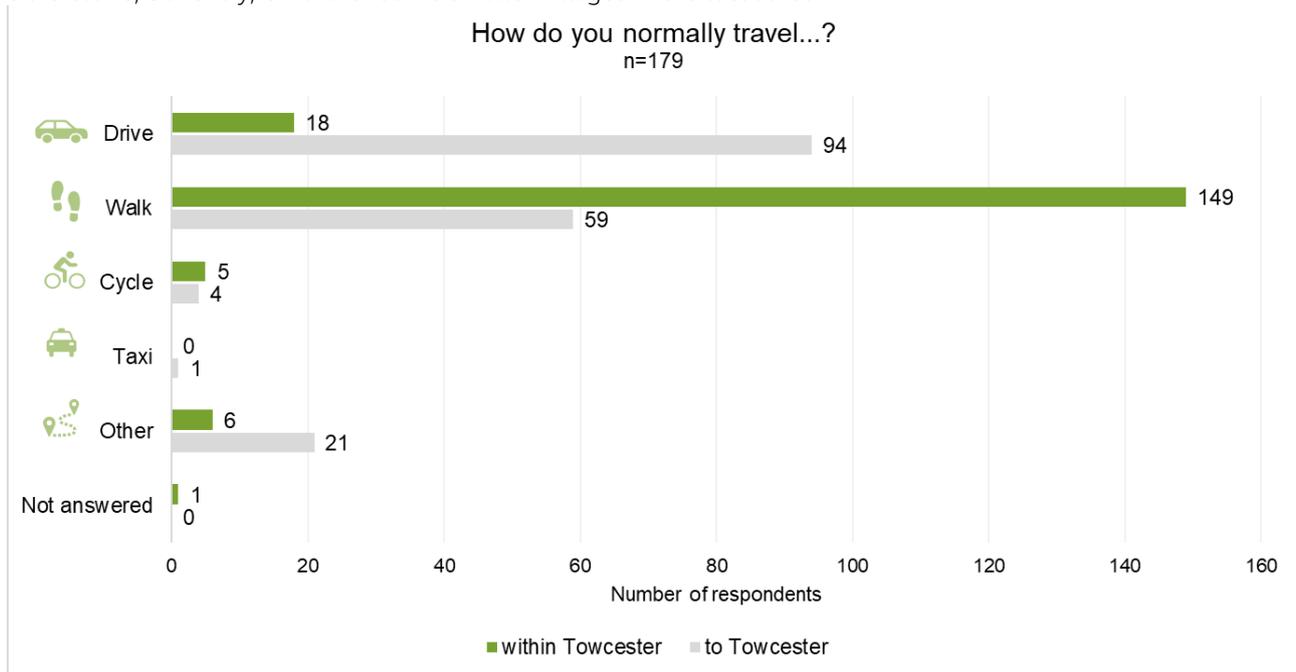


Figure 13. How the respondents travel to and within Towcester

To better understand the needs and the feedback on options, the respondents were asked how they usually travel to and within Towcester. More than half of them (53%, 94 respondents) stated they usually drive to reach Towcester and a further 33% usually walk (59 respondents, all of them live in Towcester). Walking is the most popular way of travelling within the town with 149 respondents (83%) choosing that answer, while 10% (18 respondents) travel by car. None of the respondents stated they use a bus to travel to or within Towcester, and less than 5% of them cycle or use a taxi on a regular basis. Most of the respondents who do not live in Towcester drive to the town (92%, 48 respondents), and change to walking once there (83%, 43 respondents).

A majority of the respondents who chose “other” option stated that they use different modes of transport to travel to or within Towcester depending, for example, on the purpose of their journey or weather conditions. Mostly they either drive or walk, some using other modes of transport such as bus, motorcycle or mobility scooter. Several respondents mentioned they live in the town and therefore don’t really travel to Towcester.

3.4 Respondents' views on parking in Towcester

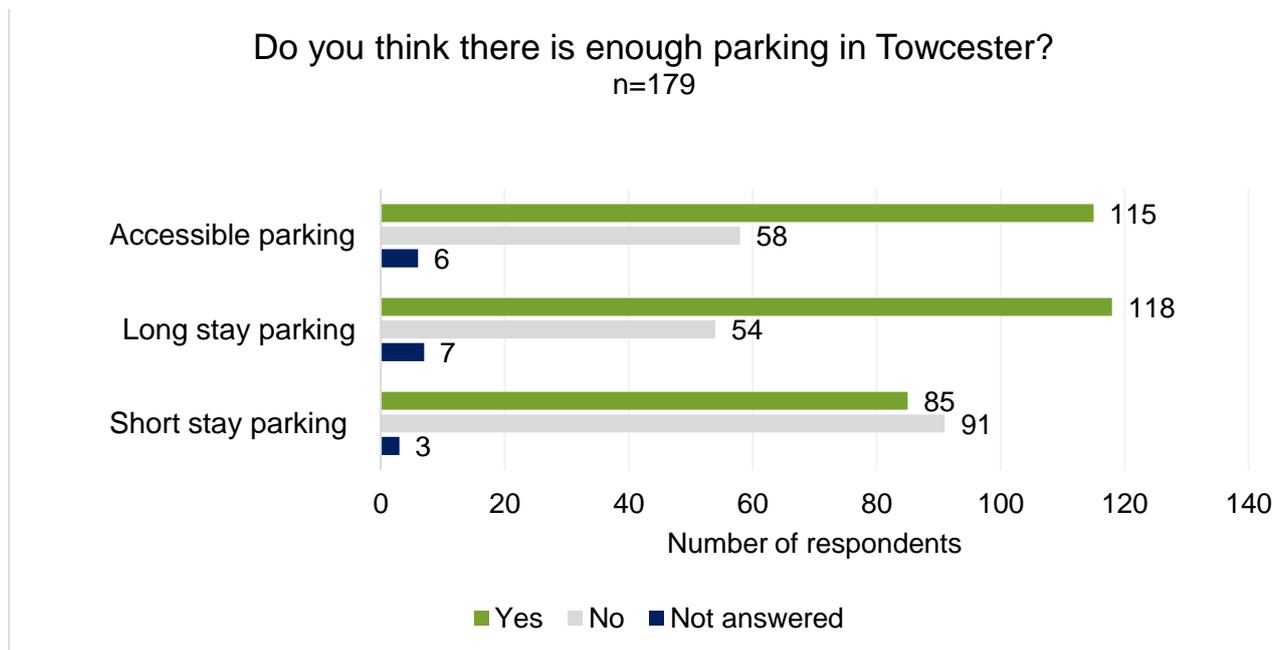


Figure 14. Respondents' views on parking in Towcester

As parking was identified as a key issue in Towcester during the workshops, it was important that we captured the residents' opinions on this issue. Most of the respondents (66%, 118 respondents) were satisfied with the amount of long-stay parking places, while 30% (54 respondents) stated the current parking is not enough. Similar results were obtained about accessible parking places. Slightly different opinions were received about short-stay parking: 91 respondents (51%) claimed there are not enough parking places, while 85 respondents (47%) were satisfied with the current situation. Less than 10% did not answer these questions.

Respondents could also share their ideas of locations of new parking spaces. In relation to short stay parking and accessible parking mostly, they proposed the town centre, or areas near to the town centre which provide easy access to local shops and services (library, post office, police station, church etc.). Some proposed that such parking should be monitored to control if it is used as a short stay parking. In case of long stay parking more comments mentioned that it could be located further from the town centre. In both cases some respondents suggested specific locations such as back of Sponne House/Arcade (Richmond Road), next to the Funeral Centre and old Co-op market area. Respondents stated that parking on Watling Street is particularly busy and causes difficulties for pedestrians and drivers.

3.5 Respondents' views on the improvement options

In this section the views and thoughts about proposed options are presented, and any additional comments provided by the respondents.

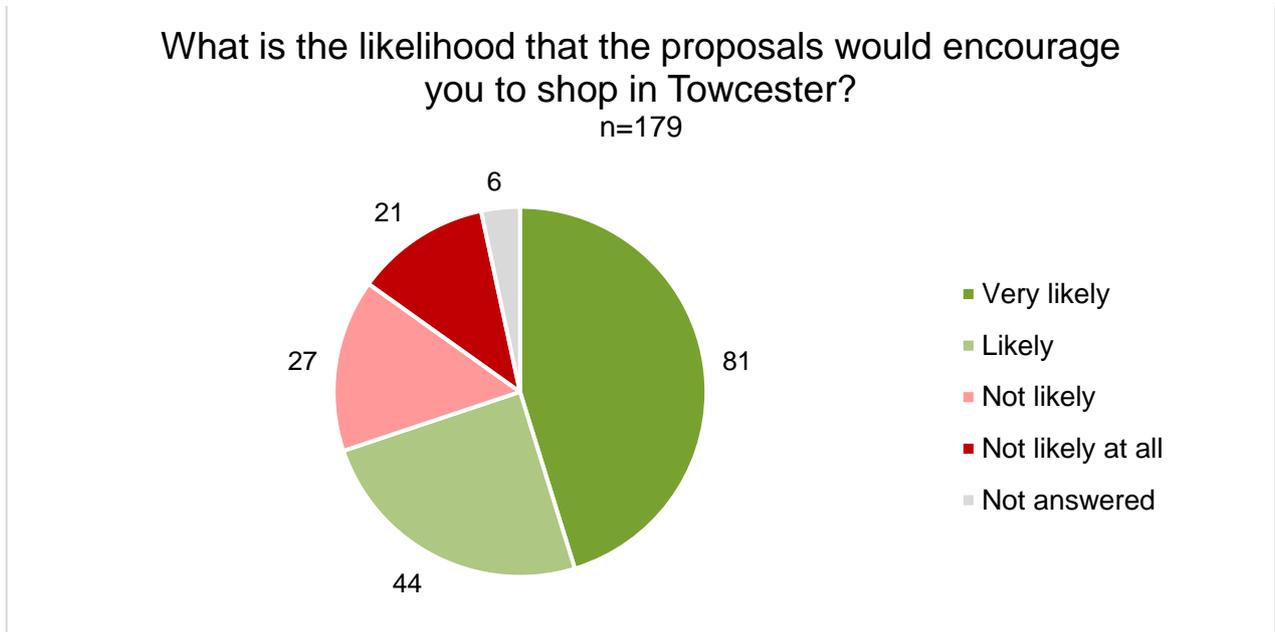


Figure 15. Respondents' views on the improvement options

Most respondents stated that the proposals will very likely or likely encourage them to shop in Towcester (70%, 125 respondents). A further 27% (48 respondents) said that the proposals would not encourage them to shop in Towcester, and the remaining 3% (6 respondents) decided to not provide an answer to that question.

3.6 Respondents' views on which option would benefit Towcester most

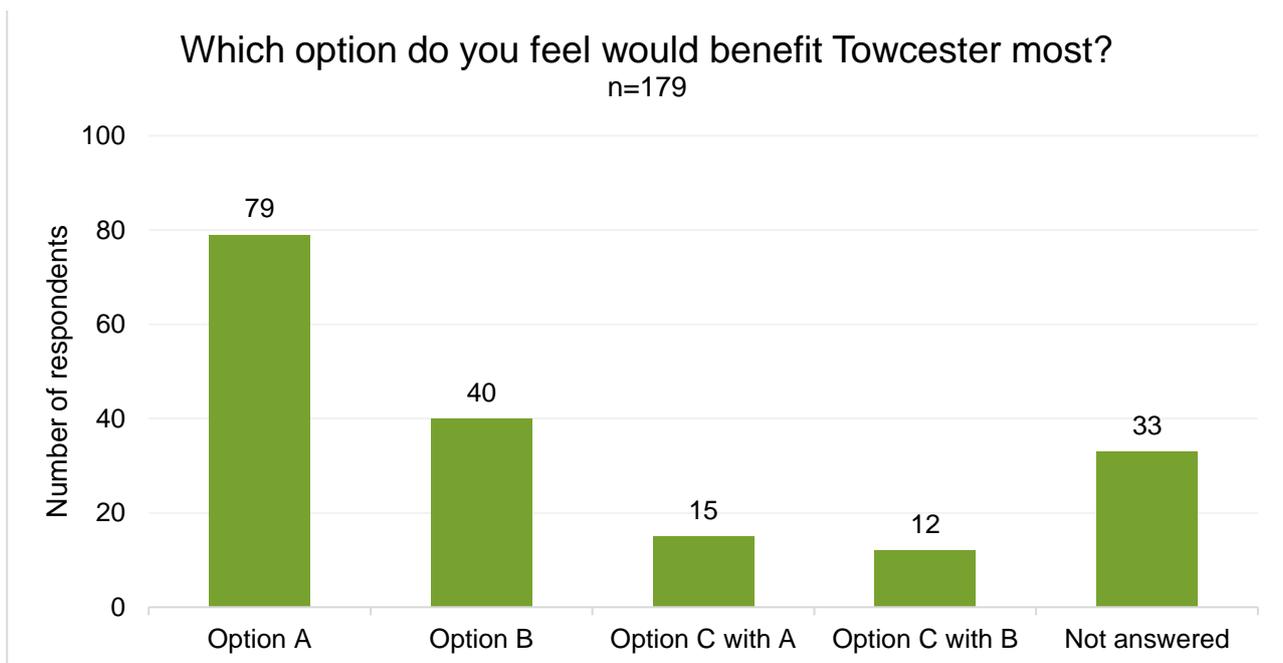


Figure 16. Respondents' views on which option would benefit Towcester most

As several improvement options were proposed, the respondents were asked to choose which one would be the most beneficial for Towcester town centre. Almost half of all the respondents (44%, 79 respondents) chose Option A as the one that would benefit most. The second most popular response was Option B with 40 respondents (22%) choosing this answer. Option C with B was chosen by the smallest number of respondents (7%, 12). 33 respondents (18%) did not answer that question.

Generally, the main trends for these results are similar when comparing different user groups based on their location or mode of transport. Although it can be worth mentioning that for respondents living in NN12 7 sector, Option B seems to be seen as the most beneficial, and the respondents from NN12 8 sector mostly skipped this question.

There are no significant differences between different modes of transport users as well. The only outstanding group are regular cyclists within Towcester, as it is the only group where all stated that Option A will benefit Towcester most.

3.7 Respondents' views on how each proposed option would impact their travel decisions and driving opportunities

The next question sought feedback on how each proposed option would impact the respondent's travel decisions and driving opportunities.

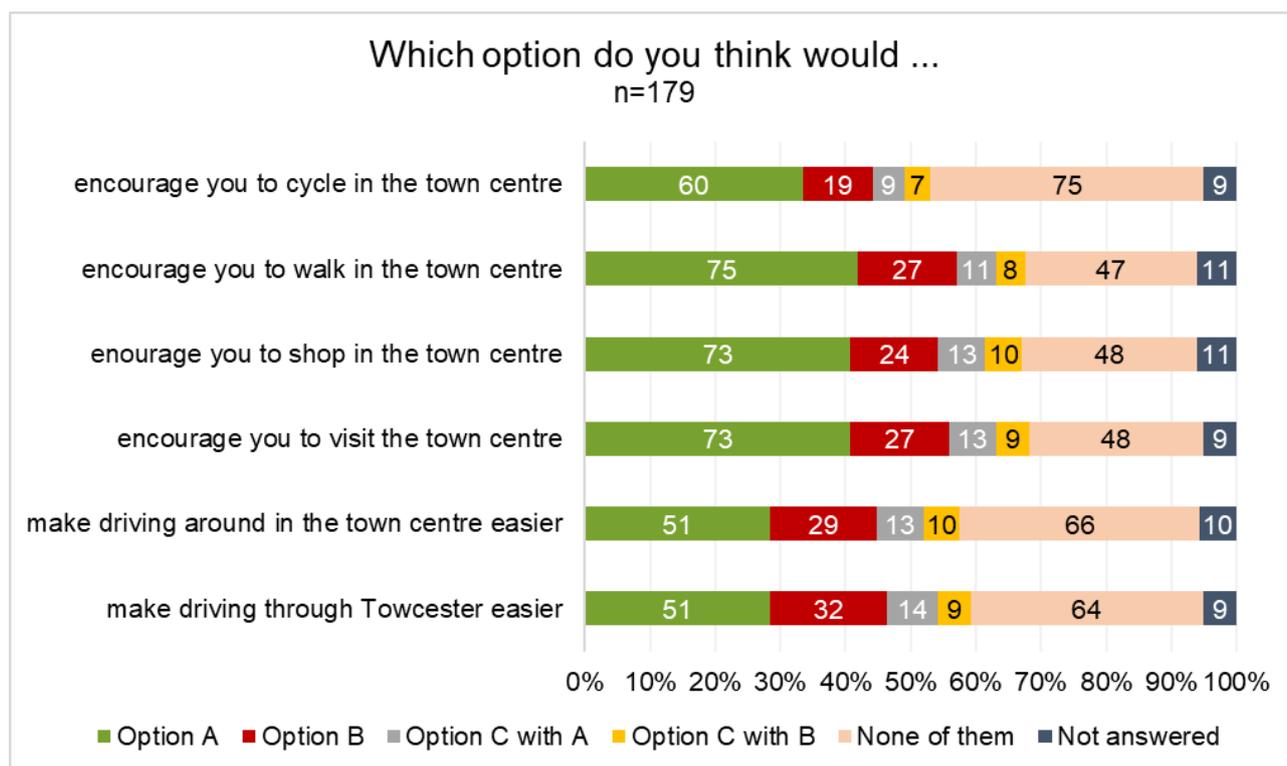


Figure 17. Respondents' views on impact of the proposed options on their travel decisions

More than a third of respondents stated that none of the options would make driving through Towcester and the town centre easier (36-37%, 64-66 respondents). In both cases, if they chose an option that would make driving easier, it was most commonly option A (28%, 51 respondents).

Between 73 and 75 respondents (41-42%) stated that Option A would most probably encourage them to visit, shop and walk in the town centre. A similar number (42%, 75 respondents) said that none of the options would encourage them to cycle in the town centre, with a third of respondents choosing Option A as the option most likely to encourage them to cycle (34%, 60 respondents).

Once again, there are some differences between results from respondents living in sector NN12 8. For just over half the respondents from this area, no option would encourage them to visit, shop, walk and cycle in the town centre (54%, 70 respondents). It is also noted that none of the respondents living in NN12 7 sector chose Option C with A, while respondents from NN12 8 sector rarely chose Option C with B as their preferable one. Option C with B is, in fact, the least popular answer across these questions.

Qualitative findings

4.1 Introduction

This section sets out the qualitative findings of the public consultation. The qualitative findings were collected from question 17 of the questionnaire, this was an open-ended question asking if there was anything else the respondents thought we should know.

This gave the respondents the opportunity to share their additional comments related to the project, and several key categories were identified, which are listed below:

- Proposed options – respondents' views on each option
- Detail design – respondents' views on specific design aspects of the options
- Respondents' experience – respondents' experiences on the A5 through Towcester so far
- Other – things the respondents mentioned that weren't directly involved with our scheme but still have an impact

This section will highlight the key themes within the above categories and explore the top themes in further detail.

The approach is different for the proposed options category, where the report highlights the key comments raised for each option.

4.2 Proposed options

The respondents provided additional comments expressing either support or opposition to the three proposed options. Some responses have comments referring to multiple options, these comments then feature in multiple options.

Topic	Number of responses
Option A: Negative	37
Parking: Suggestion	36
Option C: Negative	34
Option B: Negative	22
Option A: Positive	11
Required more information to decide	11
Option B: Positive	9
Weight restriction: Positive	8
Option C: Positive	4
Crossings: Negative	2
Total	174

Table 3. Topics identified within Proposed options theme

4.2.1 Option A

There were 37 responses which included negative feedback on the Option A, and 11 expressing positive views on that option.

Most of the negative thoughts were related to specific elements of the design such as narrowing the lanes on the Northampton Road/Brackley Road junction and different user shared areas.

- *"I am concerned about the provision of mixed-use areas (pedestrians and traffic) in Option A."*
- *"...asking for accidents to happen by removing kerb and only separating foot traffic from vehicles through road texture & colour."*
- *"Absolutely do not change the lane structure at the Saracen's Head junction on the Northampton Road/Brackley Road as this has just been done. (...). Why would you narrow the lanes at this junction"*

again when it has such an adverse outcome for the local residents that would be queued back all the way up Northampton Road?"

- *"With over 3,000 new houses built on the south side of so far, what is the point of making traffic more congested by narrowing the road"*
- *"The local shops depend on easy parking."*
- *"Replacing parking with planters and making driving a nightmare will simply displace trade and this will in no way be replaced by any marginal increase in cycle or walking traffic."*
- *"I would like to add that I think the improvements made to the A5 A43 traffic lights at the Saracens head a few years ago should stay as they are."*

Several positive comments on Option A provided some explanations for choosing this option, and the rest included general support.

- *"Please go for Option A, it adds so much more benefit than Option B, which is short sighted and doesn't go far enough to resolve the big problems with the town at the moment."*
- *"The priority should be to make the town centre more attractive and usable by pedestrians by removing as many cars as possible - hence my preference for Option A, leaving only disabled parking in the centre."*
- *"All interesting proposals and one hopes they take place. "*

4.2.2 Option B

Option B gathered more negative comments (22 compared to 9 positive ones). The respondents mentioned traffic calming features or carriageway changes as examples of the disagreed elements. Several responses, similar to Option A, included general disapproval of all options.

- *"Option B: wiggling the carriageway to 'soften' the verges - why, what's the point? The A5 is an historic Roman road - it is meant to be straight. It won't help traffic flow or make Towcester any 'prettier', there are much better ways to spend taxpayers' money."*
- *"Don't like the artificial use of traffic calming on the A5 approach to town by the Racecourse shown in Option B."*

Positive comments mostly referred to parking solution included in that option, stating that they would like to keep free and short-term parking in the town centre and that this option provides this.

- *"Keep the free parking, restrict HGVs, introduce more bicycle paths and public spaces. But don't make driving in to and parking in Towcester for local people harder. Option B strikes the right balance."*
- *"My main reason for choosing Option B over Option A is that I strongly support the need to retain the current parking in the Town Square. The ability to park very conveniently to the Post Office and local shops for quick errands is invaluable."*

4.2.3 Option C

Most of the comments related to Option C contained negative views on providing Park & Ride in Towcester (34 responses). Mainly the respondents stated that such facility is not needed at all, or were concerned about high cost of investment, that wouldn't be efficient.

- *"Option C is completely unnecessary for the size of town. I visit Towcester for the ease of parking in the centre."*
- *"I don't see the point of any of the options. Surely, we don't need park and ride (Option C) there is a lot of parking already and Towcester is fairly small to walk round."*
- *"Park and ride/Shuttle buses for Towcester is a joke, surely would cost too much."*
- *"No to Park and Ride - waste of money"*

Only 4 respondents expressed their support for the Option C, but they were also concern about its viability.

- *"The additional Option C is a nice addition, which provides park and ride facilities for visitors."*
- *"The idea of park and ride sounds good, but will it be viable and how much use will it have?"*

A few comments related to minibus/shuttle services, with either disapproval or providing some suggestions on that idea.

- *"A (medium sized) electric (preferably) bus service circulating around the housing estates and connecting with the town centre and the medical centre would be preferable to a park and ride service."*
- *"Option C - the minibus - will be a huge, costly white elephant which no-one will use. It will not "wash it's face" cost wise."*

4.2.4 Multiple options

Several comments expressed general disagreement with multiple options, often mentioning that they are not solving the biggest transport problems in Towcester.

- *"None of these options address Towcester's fundamental traffic problems."*
- *"The various options are all 'pie in the sky' in the absence of a real 'relief road'/ bypass."*
- *"Raising the A5 across Silverstone Brook - included in both A and B Options - doesn't seem beneficial."*
- *"In the perfect world both Option A & B would re-create Towcester as a Market Town it once was but until such time as the A5 is de-trunked and through traffic legally restricted to local traffic only, none of the options will work."*

Several comments expressed general agreement with multiple options:

- *"I think either Scheme A or B would be an improvement on the existing situation in zones 1,2 and 4."*

4.2.5 Parking suggestions

Besides the specific option comments, 36 comments were gathered about various parking suggestions in Towcester. They include either parking related ideas within proposed options or new proposals that could improve parking situation in the town. Examples of such comments are below:

- *"For safety/security there should be provision for motorcycle parking with the facilities to secure parked motorcycles via tethering to posts. Dedicated parking areas should be in full view of the public. This will promote security. Motorcycle thefts often take place where machines are parked out of the general public's view."*
- *"I am concerned about the disused large building in the Sponne Shopping area - opposite the RSPCA charity shop. This could be used for extra parking if it is thought that that is needed in Towcester."*
- *"Wider car parking spaces are needed in the car parks even if that reduces the number of spaces by a few (the ones right in the centre are fine)."*
- *"Concern that the changes proposed for the parking from Vernon Road to Lyndon may well enable traffic to speed along. The current parking naturally slows all traffic, a point the police have commented favourable at a previous proposed change."*
- *"As a disabled person I find there is rarely anywhere for me to park as the few disabled spaces on the market square are usually taken by nondisabled people. This needs to be enforced as I need to park close to the shops and hence when there are no parking spaces available, I cannot shop in Towcester."*

4.3 Detailed design

The respondents provided comments on more detailed design elements of proposed options or shared their own ideas for changes in Towcester to improve transport through the town and regenerate the town centre. The three themes with the biggest number of responses were "suggestion", "enforcement: weight" and

"walking/pedestrian". All identified topics with number of comments mentioning them is presented in the table below.

Topic	Number of responses
Suggestion	34
Enforcement: Weight	33
Walking/Pedestrian	28
Cycling	20
Local Businesses	19
Shopping	15
Public Spaces	9
Deliveries	9
Signage	6
Aesthetics	4
Enforcement: Speed	4
Free Parking	4
Short Stay	3
Speed limit: Negative	2
Total	190

Table 4. Topics identified within Detailed Design theme

4.3.1 Suggestions

Several different suggestions were provided. Some of them could be found across the other themes as they referred to specific element of design, option or transport issue. Below is the list of examples of various additional suggestions raised by the respondents:

- *"We need an environmentally friendly and affordable public transport system to help take away the focus away from cars."*
- *"Zebra crossings would likely improve pedestrian experience as well as reducing traffic build up due to red lights at pelican crossings."*
- *"I also think that dedicated lanes should be used on the A5 approaches to the racecourse roundabout in Zone 1."*
- *"Why is the link round not being named A5 and the Town centre A5 renamed Watling Street?"*
- *"Keep it "as is" please and stop wasting taxpayers' money."*

4.3.2 Enforcing the environmental weight restriction of 7.5t

33 respondents relate to the proposition of enforcing the environmental weight restriction in the town centre. Majority of these responses expressed support and need for such regulations. Several respondents raised their concerns about respecting such laws by the drivers and impact on the traffic or proposed more strict restrictions.

- *"Any ban on 7.5 tonne vehicles must be extended to Northampton Road. This is a traffic calmed residential road which has become a rat-run for HGVs."*
- *"This scheme is just fiddling at the edges. The weight restriction in town is good, but if it is enforced the relief road will be insufficient for the volume of traffic from the day it is opened."*
- *"The removal of HGVs by imposing a weight limit would have the largest impact on the centre of Towcester, so anything that achieves this would be a major improvement."*
- *"Although this proposal to enforce a weight restriction of 7.5 tonnes will remove some of the HGV traffic through Towcester, the best solution from a Towcester resident perspective is to de-trunk the A5 through Towcester. Failing that at a minimum the weight restriction should be 3.5 tonnes."*

4.3.3 Walking/Pedestrians

Issues related to walking/pedestrian safety and improvements were raised by 28 respondents. Mostly, they were needs to provide safer walking facilities, although a few stated that the current walking options are enough.

- *"Pleased to see a path being created from the new Racecourse roundabout into town. Those walking to and from The Folly will be pleased."*
- *"Cycling, walking and parking options are already well developed, a light touch with a degree of insight is needed."*
- *Concern for "safety of pedestrians when kerbs removed."*
- *"An additional crossing of Watling Street by the Town Hall would be appreciated by many people. Pedestrians have met with accidents at this spot."*
- *"I walk everywhere and would appreciate safer passage through town."*

4.4 Respondents' experience

Within these themes the respondents' experiences with some transport issues were identified. Mainly they share their negative situations and concerns over features that should be improved.

Topic	Number of responses
HGVs	19
Road Closure	13
Air quality: bad	12
Parking: Bad	11
Bus: Negative	11
Walking/pedestrian	3
Road Marking	2
Total	68

Table 5. Topics identified within Respondents' experience theme

4.4.1 HGVs

Most of the experiences mentioned by the respondents (19) were related to HGVs travelling through the town. They were either highlighting the volume of HGVs or their dangerous driving habits.

- *"The major concern is the number of HGV's as it is unsafe. I am terrified pushing a buggy down the high street and it is so loud. They drive and park inconsiderately."*
- *"I live on the high street and the main problems are HGVs speeding late at night through the town, 40/50mph."*
- *"Reducing the number of large vehicles travelling through Towcester will make walking on the pavements feel much safer, as a taller person I sometimes feel I am ducking under HGV wing mirrors."*

4.4.2 Road closures

The second most popular response was about road closures. 13 respondents raised the problems that occur in Towcester when one of the main roads is temporary closed and how it impacts the local traffic.

- *"The A43/A5 roundabout is a nightmare not only at peak times but also when the M1 is closed anywhere between Junction 14 and 16."*
- *"Something needs to be done about the traffic going down Watling Street at night when the a43 is shut."*
- *"The major traffic problem is that when there is any hold-up on the M1, the town centre becomes gridlocked, and none of the options will prevent this."*

4.4.3 Air pollution

12 respondents voiced concerns over air pollution levels in Towcester. They either expressed their dissatisfaction, concern over their health or the need for implementing activities that would address that problem.

- *"We need something to reduce the air pollution which this should do."*
- *"The pollution due to the increased traffic is unbearable. I feel dirty and my eyes gritty after I have walked along the high street."*
- *"Currently, parts of the town centre, breach EU regulations and, presumably, UK regulations on air quality."*
- *"It is the queuing traffic due to constant jams which causes air quality issues."*

4.5 Other

The last group included any other notable themes. In total there were 6 themes listed in the table below.

Topic	Number of responses
Relief Road/ Bypass	32
De-trunk	11
Rat running	10
Other	8
Warehouse Proposals	7
Culture/History	7
Total	75

Table 6. Topics identified within "other" themes

4.5.1 Relief Road/Bypass

Most of the responses mentioned relief road usage and proposition to build a bypass. Some comments related to removal of large vehicles from town centre in general, or voiced concerns over impact on other parts of Towcester.

- *"Towcester needs a bypass for the A5 and a flyover at the A43 A5 junction."*
- *"Stop HGV vehicles from driving through Towcester."*
- *"The Relief Road may provide benefit for the centre of Towcester from HGVs but what about all the vans and cars going north? Why would they use the Relief Road, only to sit in a 10-minute traffic jam between the Abthorpe and Tove roundabouts (both of which have already received pinch point funding)?"*

4.5.2 De-trunk the A5

11 respondents suggested that the A5 should be de-trunked in order to improve traffic in this area.

- *"Unless the A5 through Towcester is de-trunked, Towcester will always be used as a direct route to the north, south and east."*
- *"Get the A5 de-trunked."*
- *"Ultimately I would like to see the A5 through Towcester de-trunked, and this should continue to be a medium-term objective."*

4.5.3 Rat running

The third most popular topic within other themes was rat running mentioned by 10 respondents. Mostly they raised that such problems exist in the neighbourhood or were concerned with the impact of suggested improvements.

- *"As a resident of Duncote, I fear the increase in the rat running from the McDonalds roundabout through Greens Norton and Duncote to the A5 heading north."*

- *"Traffic levels have increased substantially due to works on M1, with many using our village as a rat run."*
- *"I am concerned with the knock-on impact on the surrounding roads, especially in view of the planning applications already in progress."*

4.5.4 Warehouse proposals

7 respondents were concerned about a local warehouse proposal in Towcester. They believed that the improvements would not work if the warehouse was built.

- *"However MORE traffic is being brought into the area by new housing and warehouse developments."*
- *"As to the good intention of greening up the atmosphere, warehouses and increased HGV traffic is creating an entirely opposite situation."*
- *"Traffic will also increase as a result of land earmarked for development in Towcester, warehousing around the Stony Stratford roundabout, additional housing being built, warehousing/Logistics companies at Junction 15A, Silverstone Business Park"*

4.5.5 Culture/ history

7 respondents were concerned about keeping the local culture and history of Towcester.

- *"I feel passionate about this wonderfully historic Roman market town, Lactodorum, that is being ruined/destroyed by National Highways not understanding the local highway issues."*
- *"Making a Roman Road less straight is ridiculous."*
- *"Towcester is historic town it does not need turning into a cheap copy of a Milton Keynes cycle park."*
- *"There is nothing about ensuring that heritage features that have been carefully maintained in the town centre such as the stone pavoirs and kerbs plus heritage signage and street furniture are used for any new work."*
- *"The Town Centre Conservation Area covers approximately 50% of the proposed schemes and the History Society is concerned that some of the proposals will affect the character of parts of the area and also the setting of listed buildings by removing kerbs and putting down new surfaces."*

4.6 Letters

2 letters were received through our freepost address. These have been summarised below.

4.7 Letter from resident

The letter expressing concern for the loss of the town centre Co-op, adding that the elderly and vulnerable would struggle if only Waitrose remained in Towcester due to its distance and prices.

They are concerned that if workers passing through Towcester don't have a convenient place to park in the town centre there would be a loss of trade.

The letter states that there is no need for artwork, but lighting in the streets would be welcomed as people need to feel safer on the streets and taxis are expensive. They add that "those without transport would be isolated if the scheme was to go ahead", adding that street drains are often blocked resulting in plumbing risks.

They state that no one would use Option C (park and ride) as time is valuable and nobody wants to sit in a car park waiting for a bus to arrive adding that Towcester Racecourse is an independent business and have ample land for parking.

They state that the bike paths suggested in the scheme are unsafe for cyclists.

4.8 Letter from resident

The letter states that the resident prefers Option A and believes that it is the most likely to improve Towcester's town centre. They suggest that alternative parking should be provided at the old Co-op site.

They added that they attended the Sawpits Centre engagement and heard from other people there that the information given on the online consultation was different.

The letter stated that there needs to be 7.5t signs at Brackley Rd Leaving the Abthorpe Roundabout Junction and at Northampton Road from the Hulcote Junction adding that it may be worthwhile having advanced warning signs advising of this restriction on the A43 approaching these junctions.

Responses from Elected Members

5.1 Dame Andrea Leadsom MP

Dame Andrea Leadsom MP provided a written response to the consultation which she has published in full on her website and can be found at the following link: <https://www.andrealeadsom.com/news/10922/a5-national-highways-consultation-response>.

Dame Andrea's response highlights the "longstanding issues for residents" along the A5 through the town and confirms that the issues the project has identified and is seeking to address are consistent with the feedback she has received from constituents.

In her response Dame Andrea expands on these issues and the following summarises the key points raised:

- Air quality is currently poor and requests clarity on how the proposals will affect this
- Supports environmental weight restrictions but requests further detail on the extents of restrictions
- Roadworks add to congestion and all parties carrying out works on roads in the surrounding area need to coordinate to minimise impacts
- Expressed a view that reducing the lanes at the A5 Brackley Road crossroads (as proposed in Option A) would cause more congestion
- Supports the proposed reductions in speed limits
- Highlights the need for the proposals to "respect and enhance the local environment, particularly the historic nature of Towcester"
- Supports the principle of improvements for walking and cycling including new or upgraded crossing points
- Parking in the town centre is a key issue and urges National Highways to carefully consider the responses around changes to parking
- Raises concerns over the viability of a park and ride and suggests further consideration of small electric minibus service within the town and neighbouring villages
- Suggests considering scope for providing e-bike rental
- Requests urgency in progressing this project to deliver as early as possible

5.2 Towcester Town Council – Cllr Cox

We received an email from Cllr Cox as a representative of Towcester Town Council. The email confirmed that the National Highways A5 Towcester Improvements Public Consultation was discussed at a meeting of the Full Council held on 26th September.

The Town Council voted overwhelmingly to support Option A of the National Highways proposals, with the following additional points being agreed:

"The proposals are currently in outline form and, in progressing these, the heritage aspects of Towcester's town centre must be considered and protected.

"An element of disabled parking and means of loading/unloading for businesses closest to the Market Square, along with improved signage to the town's car parks (Real Time Information signs) be incorporated when developing the Option A proposals.

"The proposed Park and Ride Scheme provided by Option C be replaced with a frequent electric shuttlebus to serve the town's estates, and possibly villages nearest to Towcester.

"The email closes stating that the Town Council is seeking meaningful representation in all future discussions relating to the delivery of the A5 Towcester Improvements."

5.3 Cllr McCord

We received an email from Cllr McCord stating that they firmly support Option A. They add that Zone 1 and 50% of Zone 2 lie in the Deanshanger Ward and as a ward member of the area they are fully supportive of option A.

They stated that National Highways had previously modelled and approved the traffic plan for the Towcester South (Persimmon / Bloor) extension which had a 20mph speed limit in Towcester and a 7.5 tonne weight limit. It resulted in 95% reduction in the HGV through traffic and taking it on the Towcester Relief Road. In their former role as Leader of South Northants Council they argued that this needed to be replicated on the ground. They added that this proposal does do that. They urged us to implement this to coincide with the opening of the Towcester Relief Road.

They noted that Towcester Town Council councillors both past and present are supportive, and that there is support that reaches across the political divide.

5.4 Cllr Clubley

Cllr Clubley responded to this consultation as a local Councillor and provided support for Option A, stating that it is also the preferred option of Towcester Town Council and of which they whole heartedly agree.

5.5 Cllr Fowler

Cllr Fowler responded to state that as Ward Cllr, they fully support Towcester Town Council's recommendations and support Option A with a variation of Option C of National Highways proposals for the A5.

Consultation process feedback

6.1 How residents found out about the consultation

The table below shows how the respondents came to hear about the consultation. Note: respondents could give multiple answers to this question, so the numbers total more than 179.

How residents found out about the consultation	Number of responses
Leaflet	61
Social Media	59
Word of mouth	19
Local group	14
Town Council	11
Other	34

Table 7. How residents found out about the consultation

6.2 Events and consultation management

Respondents were asked whether they had any comments on the events and the management of the consultation.

We received 30 positive comments with suggestions on the events and the management of the consultation.

- *"It was all very engaging, and staff were helpful."*
- *"These are a great set of proposals that will improve Towcester town centre immeasurably."*
- *"Very well organised and the communication has been good"*
- *"Good to have online and face to face plus all docs available online. Hope the improvements happen as soon as possible."*
- *"Plenty of opportunities for people to attend one of the consultations."*

We received 23 comments with suggestions on how we can improve going forward. Some examples include:

- Lack of information about the supposed link of the 'relief road' to the A43
- Running out of leaflets
- Overcrowded vehicle in the carpark
- Hard to attend due to school holidays
- Needed more National Highways presence at the events
- Info should have included details on the relief road

Conclusion

The analysis of responses shows there is wide support for the need to improve the A5 to resolve existing issues of safety, noise and air pollution, disruption to residents and businesses and congestion. Option A received stronger support than Option B and C.

The quantitative data shows that Option A received stronger support than Option B and C. Option A was regarded as the option that would most positively impact Towcester, receiving more than double the votes in comparison to the other options. Most respondents thought there was enough accessible parking and long stay parking in Towcester, but more short stay parking was needed. Most respondents also said that the proposals would encourage them to shop in Towcester.

The qualitative findings show that whilst Option A is the preferred option overall, there are many with reservations to the proposal. Concerns include the proposal to narrow the racecourse roundabout to one lane, removing the kerb and separating foot traffic from vehicles through road texture and colour, which was viewed as unsafe, and that local business would suffer if the town centre parking was removed. Option B received criticism for being short sighted. Option C was generally seen as unsuitable due to the size of the town.

Respondents were very supportive of the 7.5t environmental weight restriction, however, they questioned how it would be enforced and where the HGVs would be diverted. Many respondents had experienced dangerous conditions relating to large HGVs on the A5 and were pleased to see the restriction proposed. Respondents were sceptical that the relief road would be able to accommodate the diverted HGV's and believe that nothing short of the de-trunking of the A5 would deter them.

The consultation has captured a range of views from local communities, organisations, and interest groups. The purpose of this report is to present a factual summary of the consultation process and responses received. The information will be used by the National Highways project team to inform the development of the project, alongside other considerations, and recommend a preferred option which will then be taken forward into more detailed development.

Appendix A. Consultation Brochure

A5

Towcester improvements
Public consultation



August 2022

Introduction

Investing in your roads

At National Highways we strive to improve our major roads and motorways - engineering the future to keep people moving today and moving better tomorrow. We want to make sure all our major roads are dependable, durable and, most importantly, safe.

We're investigating options to improve Towcester town centre, following on from the construction of the new link road south of the town between the A5 and A43. The primary objective of this scheme is to enhance the A5 through Towcester to improve the lives of those who live, work and visit here.



In this brochure we'll explain our proposed improvements for Towcester town centre and how you can give us your feedback.

All responses must be sent to National Highways by **11:59pm on 11 September 2022**.

Responses received after this date may not be considered.

If you require paper copies or alternative formats of the material, please contact us using the details at the back of this brochure.



Our consultation

We're holding a public consultation on our options to improve Towcester town centre. We'd like to hear your views and for you to share your local knowledge with us. The consultation will run for four weeks from **15 August to 11 September 2022**.

Your views are important to help us better understand the local area and any potential impacts our scheme may have on you and the community. We'll consider everyone's feedback before we select a preferred option.

How to respond

You can respond to the consultation using the following methods:

- Complete the consultation response form online at:

<https://nationalhighways.co.uk/our-roads/east-midlands/towcester-improvements/>

- Complete a paper copy of the consultation response form and return it using the freepost address:

**FREEPOST RTUK – RBLY – XUBT
A5 Towcester Improvement
5 First Street, Manchester
M15 4GU**

Place the completed response form in an envelope with the freepost address written on the front and put it in your local post box. Alternatively, you can leave your completed response form with us at the consultation events.

The need for the scheme

Towcester has longstanding issues with the high levels of traffic passing through its historic town centre, causing environmental, safety and accessibility concerns to residents and businesses. Due to the new link road being built between the A5 and A43 (south of the town), National Highways is now able to investigate options for improving Towcester town centre.

This proposed scheme aims to encourage through traffic, particularly goods vehicles, to use the new link road and the A43 as an alternative to the A5. This will alleviate some of the more disruptive traffic from the town centre, improving accessibility and quality of life in Towcester.

What we have done so far

We held engagement workshops with key stakeholders to seek their views on traffic through Towcester town centre, including how active travel and accessibility in the area can be improved. We engaged with the following stakeholders:

- **Town and Parish Councils**
- **West Northamptonshire Council**
- **Police**

The workshops allowed us to identify themes which are important to stakeholders and key to achieving the scheme objectives.

The objectives of the scheme are to:

- Improve safety for all.
- Reduce the impact of air and noise pollution on surrounding environments and habitats.
- Increase the number of trips made in Towcester by walking and cycling.
- Help boost the local economy through increased trade and footfall.
- Make Towcester's High Street an attractive place to visit.
- Improve accessibility to Towcester town centre for everyone.
- Preserve Towcester's rich history and identity.

Workshop outputs

The engagement workshops steered us to rule out several different options that wouldn't be suitable for the scheme.

The measures considered not appropriate are identified below.

- Traffic calming measures such as road humps and chicanes – these types of features would contribute to poor air quality and noise levels due to frequent stopping and starting of vehicles.
- One-way systems – the provision of one-way traffic routes would promote greater vehicle speeds and increased use of local residential roads.
- Removal of traffic signals and introduction of a roundabout at Brackley Road/Northampton Road junction - this option would remove the existing crossing facilities and could increase vehicle speeds through the junction.

Your feedback



Road safety

- You said you want us to improve road crossings for pedestrians and cyclists as well as create wider footpaths.

Parking

- You said you want more enforcement around disabled spaces and for short/long stay parking provisions to be improved. Additionally, you want us to look at providing alternative transportation into the town centre to ease parking.

Improvements to public areas

- You said you want the town centre to have a focal point and 'sense a place' for both visitors and residents of Towcester. You also want us to create a wider shared space for cyclists and pedestrians.

Congestion/HGV issues

- You said you want us to find an alternative route for HGVs so there's less congestion in the town centre. You want us to help improve air and noise quality. You also said it would be beneficial to have loading bays for local deliveries to help traffic flow through the town centre.

The A5/A43 link road

- You said you want us to improve signage for the link road to reduce traffic on the A5 as well as help accommodate future developments, both residential and commercial.

What we considered

From the feedback we received during our engagement workshops, we identified **four key areas** that required improvements. These key areas are listed below and have been **included in all the options** discussed in this brochure.

Improved signage

- Improve signage into Towcester, directing traffic not requiring town centre access via the new link road between the A5 and the A43 south of the town.
- Improve signage directing vehicles to public long and short stay car parks located within the town centre, to prevent drivers circling around the town to search for spaces.

Introduce speed and vehicle restrictions

- Reduce speed from 40mph to 30mph along the A5 between the new roundabout at Cowpastures Lane and Marlow Road.
- Reduce speed from 30mph to 20mph along the A5 from Marlow Road through the town centre to Towcester Police Station.
- Enforce an environmental weight restriction on 7.5t vehicles between the new roundabout at Cowpastures Lane through Towcester town centre to Old Tiffield Road. Continue to allow large vehicles to have access to Old Tiffield Road and the retail park beyond.

Improved active travel (walking and cycling)

- Improve pedestrian crossing point, located north of the A5/Heathencote junction.
- Install pedestrian/cycle crossing points on both sides of the A5 racecourse roundabout.
- Improve surface texture for cyclists using the A5 into and out of Towcester.
- Create a footway/cycleway between Towcester Police Station and Old Tiffield Road.
- Install a new traffic signal crossing on the A5, north of Old Tiffield Road junction.
- Install a new traffic signal or a zebra crossing point on Old Tiffield Road.
- Improve parking on the A5 between Vernon Road and The Lindens by creating parking bays to allow vehicles to park partially on the A5, while still allowing vehicles to travel in both directions.

Public space improvements

- Raise the A5 as it crosses the Silverstone Brook to allow improved public spaces to be created.
- Create a public space between Chantry Lane and Towcester Police Station including new seating areas and planting features.



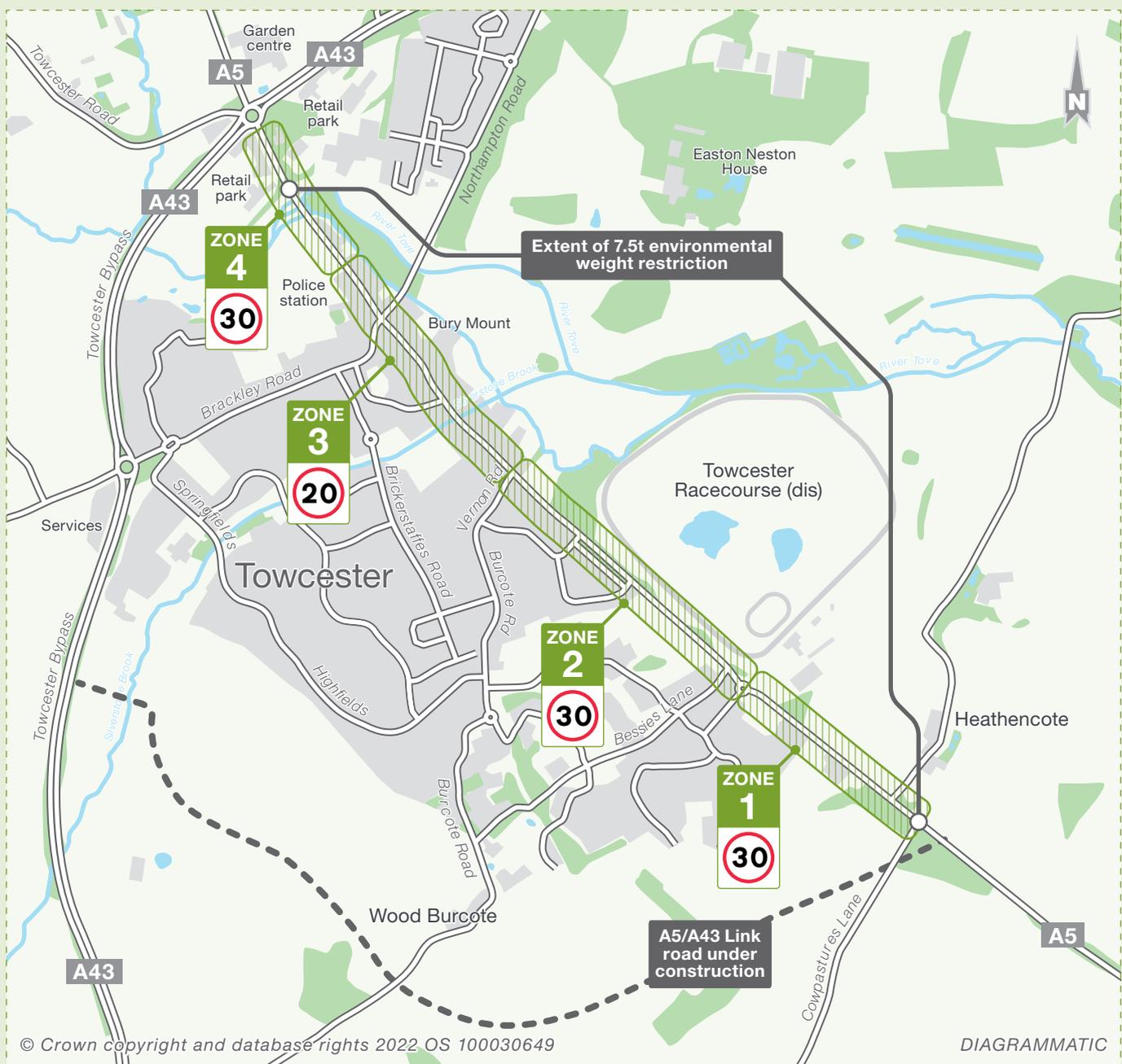
Design approach

Zones

As part of our design approach to providing improvement measures along the A5 into and through the town of Towcester, we have split the route into zones.

The zones can broadly be classified into urban and rural areas. Each zone represents a different character or change in the road environment where different types of interventions can be applied. Zones 1 and 4 are recognised as being more rural and less built up. Zones 2 and 3 represent a more urban, built-up area where residential, commercial and retail buildings are present.

Scheme extent and scheme area zones



The options

The three options outlined in this brochure have been shortlisted following a thorough option identification process and are in addition to the four key areas identified on page 5. We've made sure the options are in line with the key themes raised during the stakeholder workshops and with the scheme objectives. Our proposals for the area are described below.

Option A

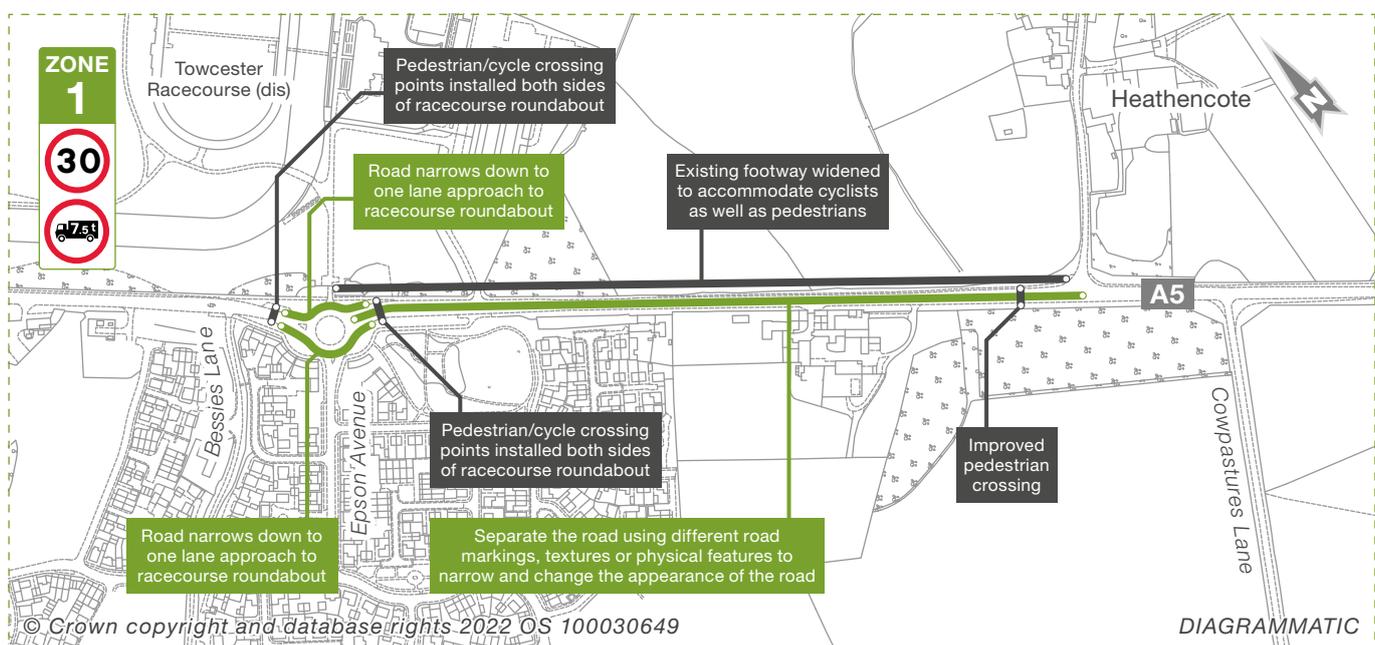
Improved active travel (walking and cycling)

- Widen the current footway between the A5/Heathencote junction and the racecourse roundabout to allow a combined footway/cycleway to be created.
- Separate the road using different road markings, textures and/or physical features to narrow and change the appearance of the road.
- Narrow the racecourse roundabout down to one traffic lane on all approaches by altering the kerbs and/or road markings.
- Create a new footway/cycleway on the south side of the A5 between the exit of the racecourse roundabout and Vernon Road. The current footway on the north side will remain.

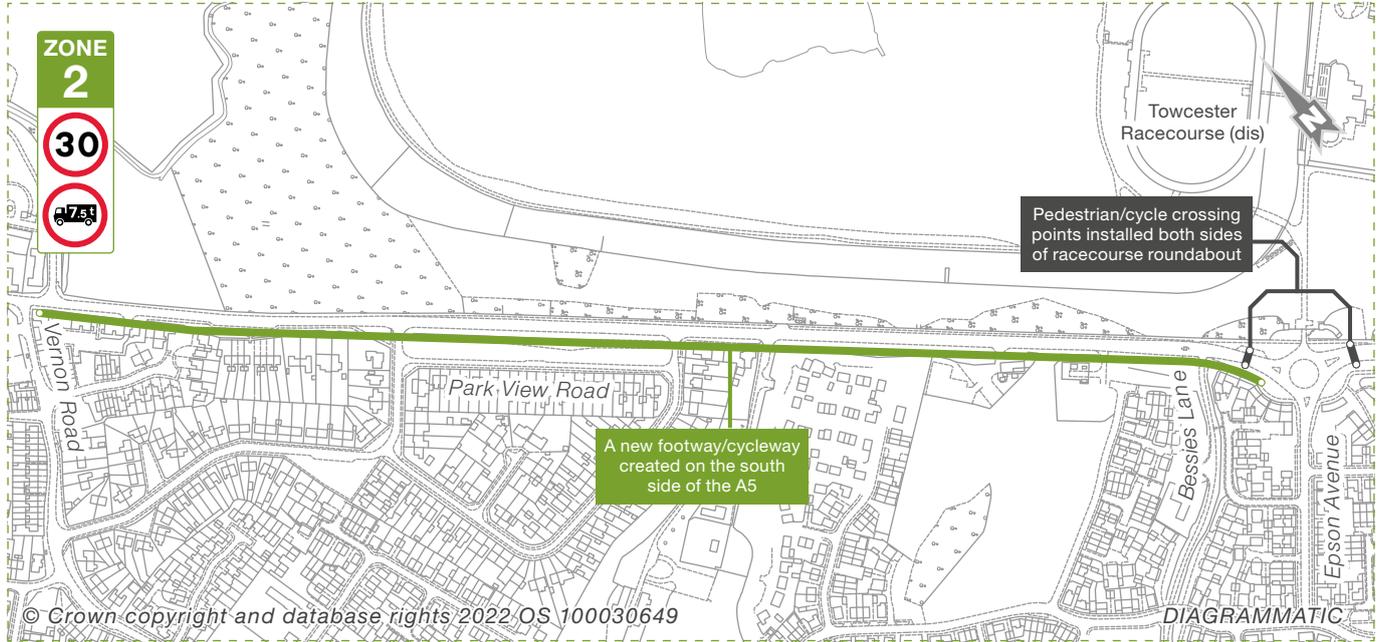
Public space improvement

- Create a public space area in the current town square, with seating and planting features and/or artwork. Remove existing parking provisions except for disabled parking bays.
- Improve bus stop facilities in the town centre.
- Make Richmond Road to Towcester Police Station a shared space for vehicles, pedestrians, and cyclists by removing kerbs and road surface markings.
- Improve Brackley Road/Northampton Road junction with new widened footways and public space artwork.
- Reduce the width and number of lanes at the Brackley Road/Northampton Road junction and review the location and suitability of the pedestrian crossing points.

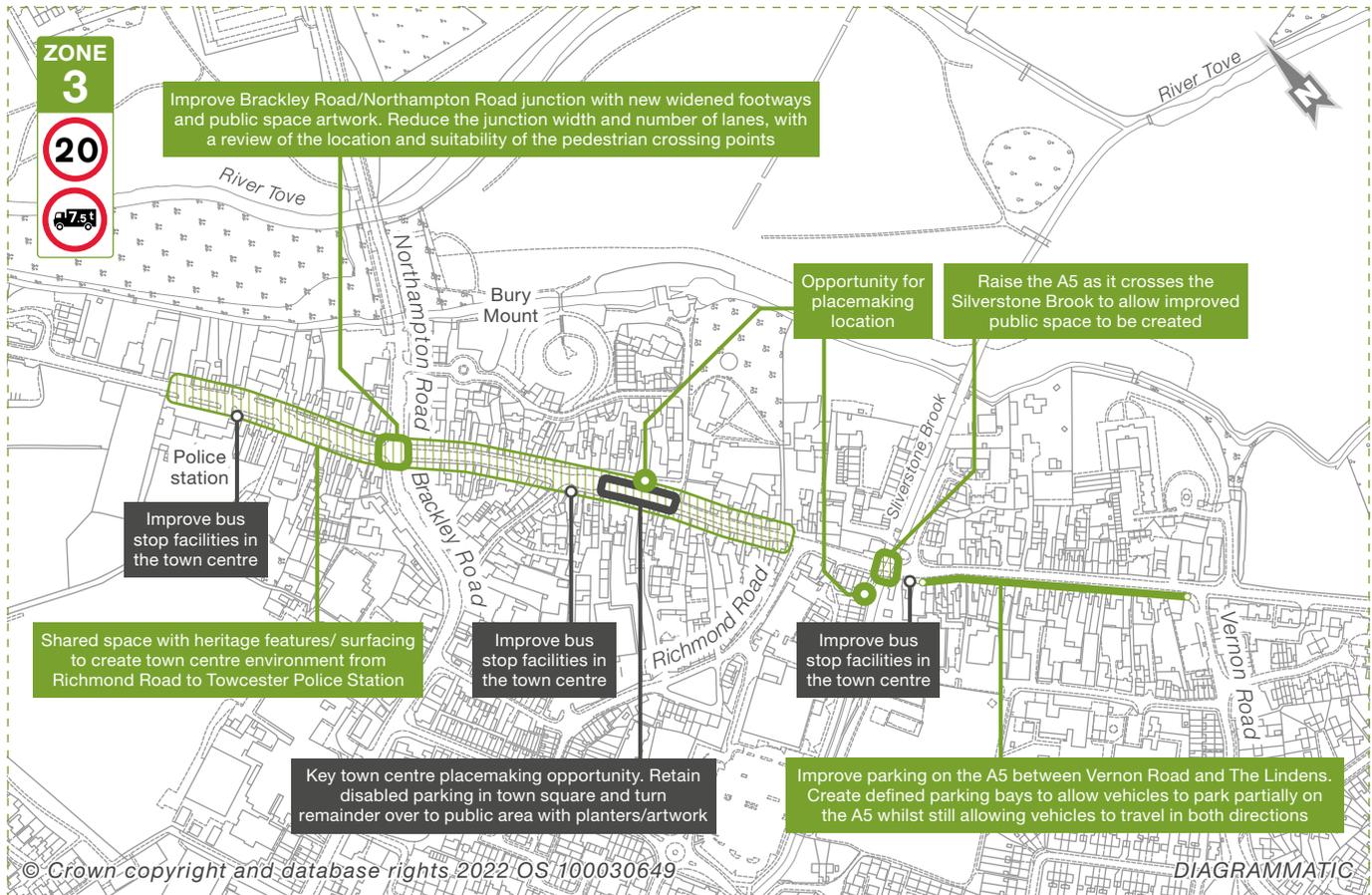
Zone 1 - Option A



Zone 2 - Option A

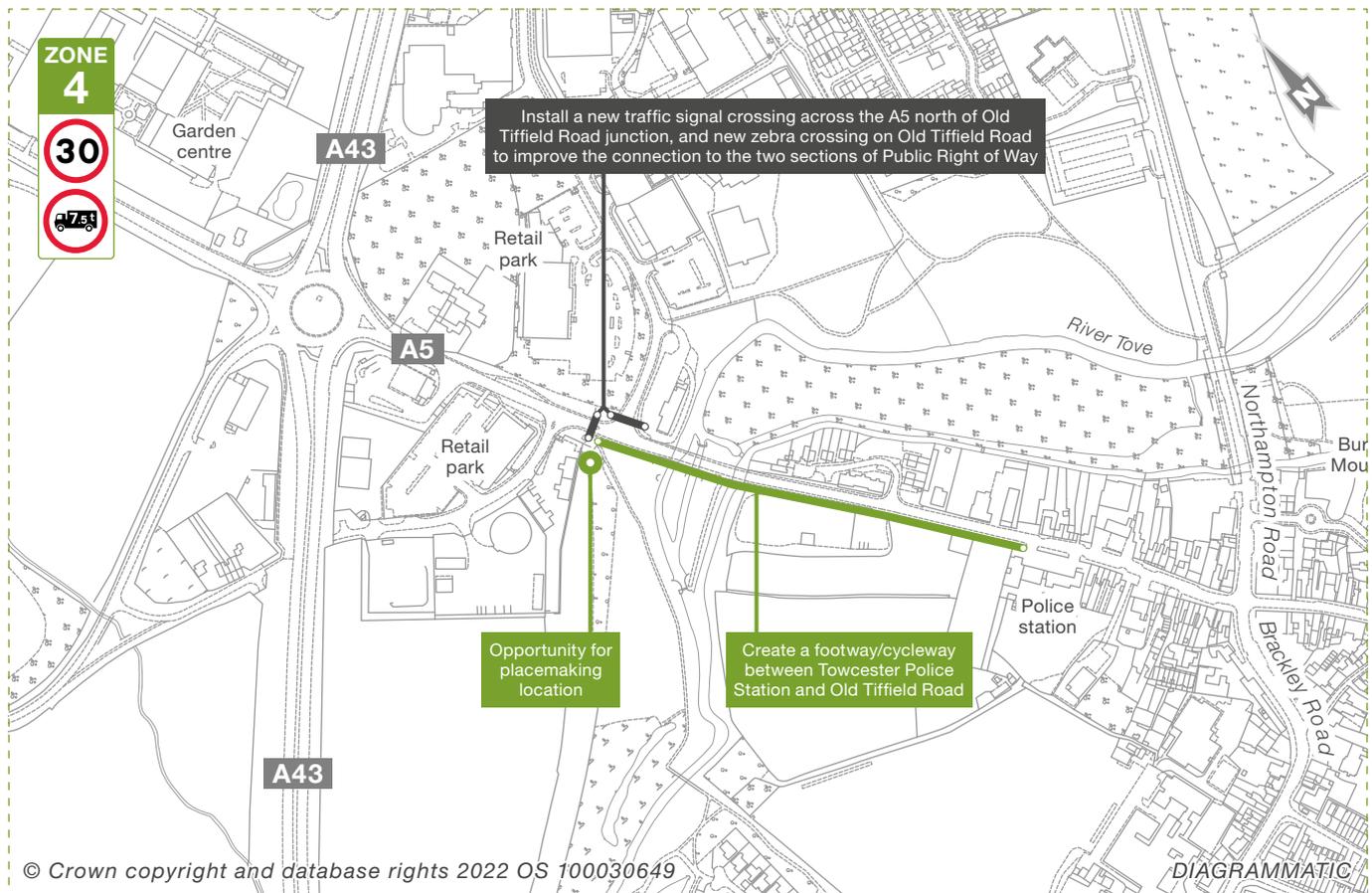


Zone 3 - Option A



Zone 4 - Option A

- Create a footway/cycleway between Towcester Police Station and Old Tiffield Road.
- Install a new traffic signal or a zebra crossing point on Old Tiffield Road.
- Install a new traffic signal crossing on the A5, north of Old Tiffield Road junction.
- Weight limit restriction to start after the Old Tiffield Road junction.



Option B

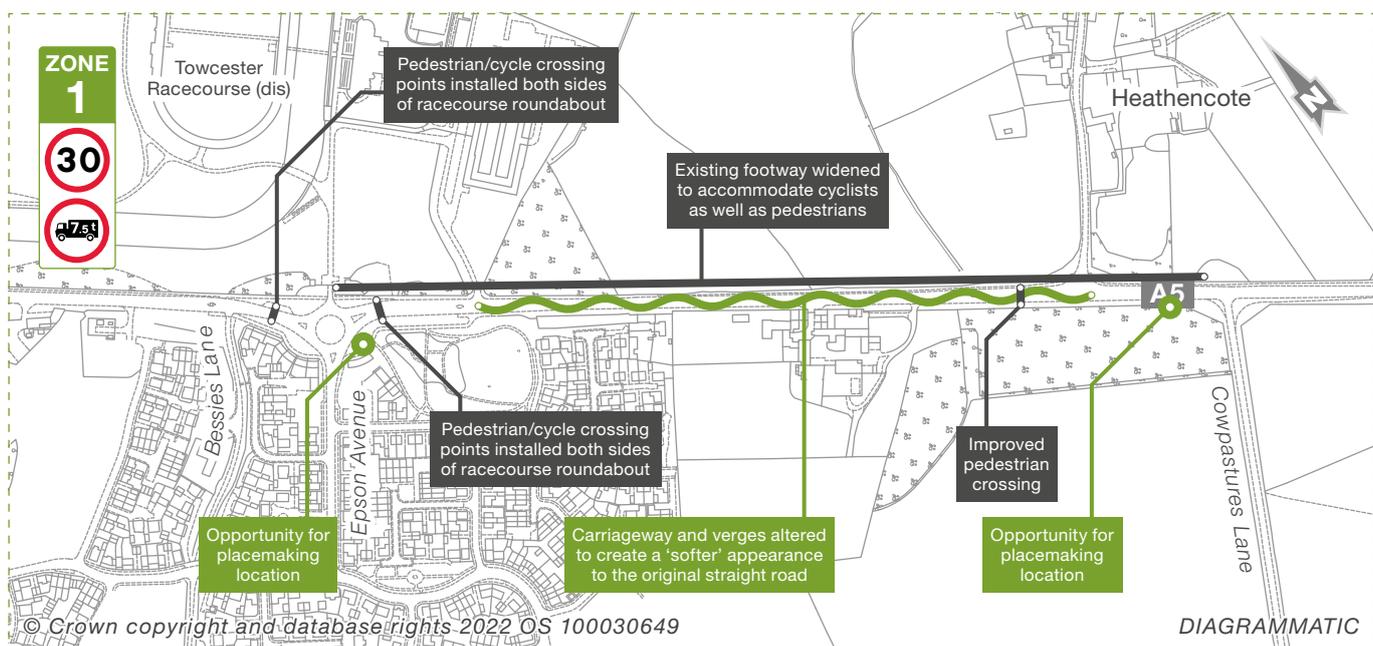
Improved Active Travel (walking and cycling)

- Widen the current footway between the A5/Heathencote junction and the racecourse roundabout to allow a combined footway/cycleway to be created off road.
- Alter carriageway and verges to create a 'softer' appearance to the original straight road.
- Create a new footway/cycleway on the north side of the A5 and a new footway on the south side, between the exit of the racecourse roundabout and Vernon Road.

Public space improvement

- Create a public space area in the town square, with seating and planting features and/or artwork. The current parking in the town square will remain.
- Improve crossing points with different textures, colours and cycle symbols on the carriageway.
- Improve the crossing point on the A5 between Richmond Road and Chantry Lane.

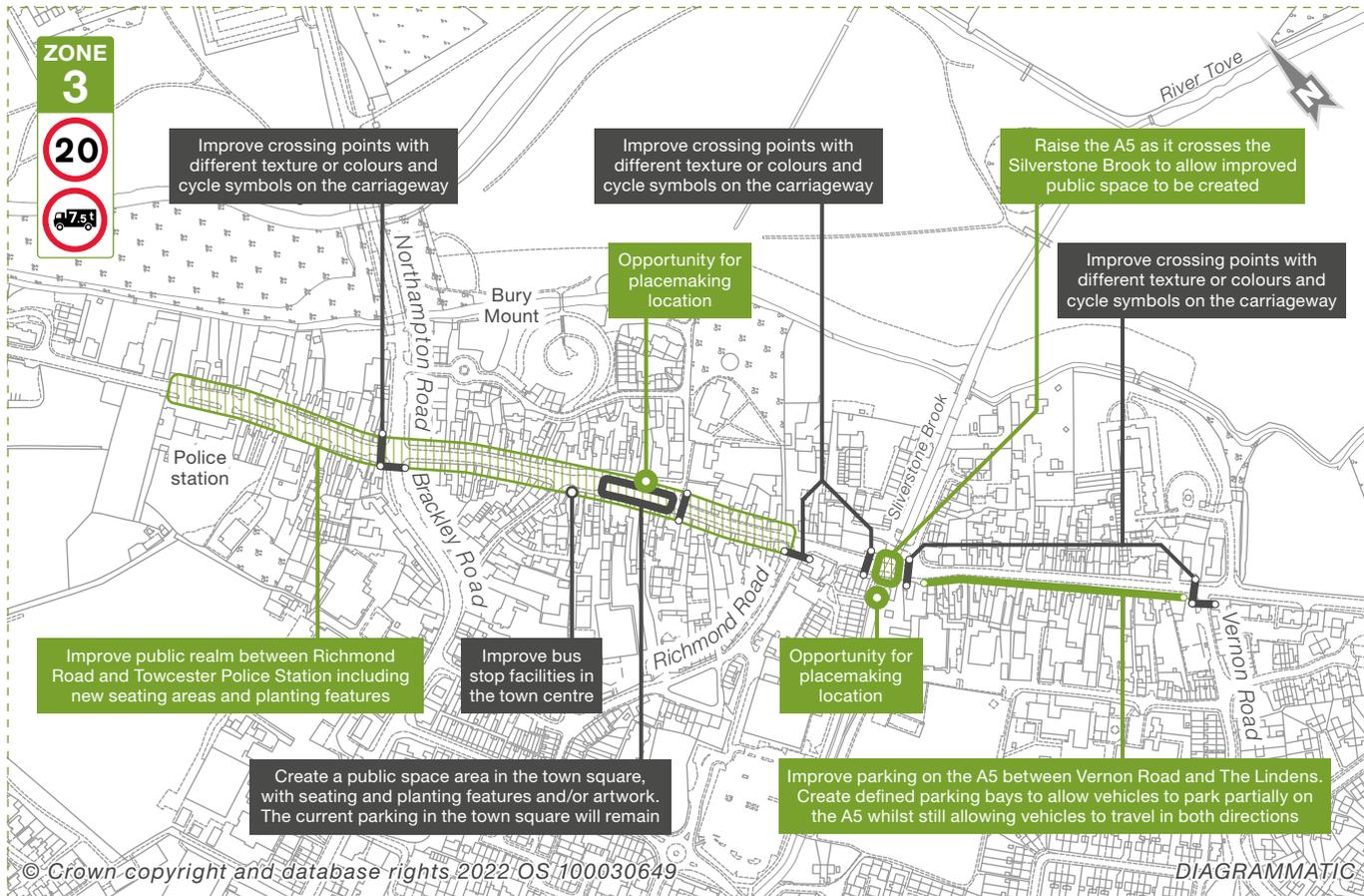
Zone 1 - Option B



Zone 2 - Option B

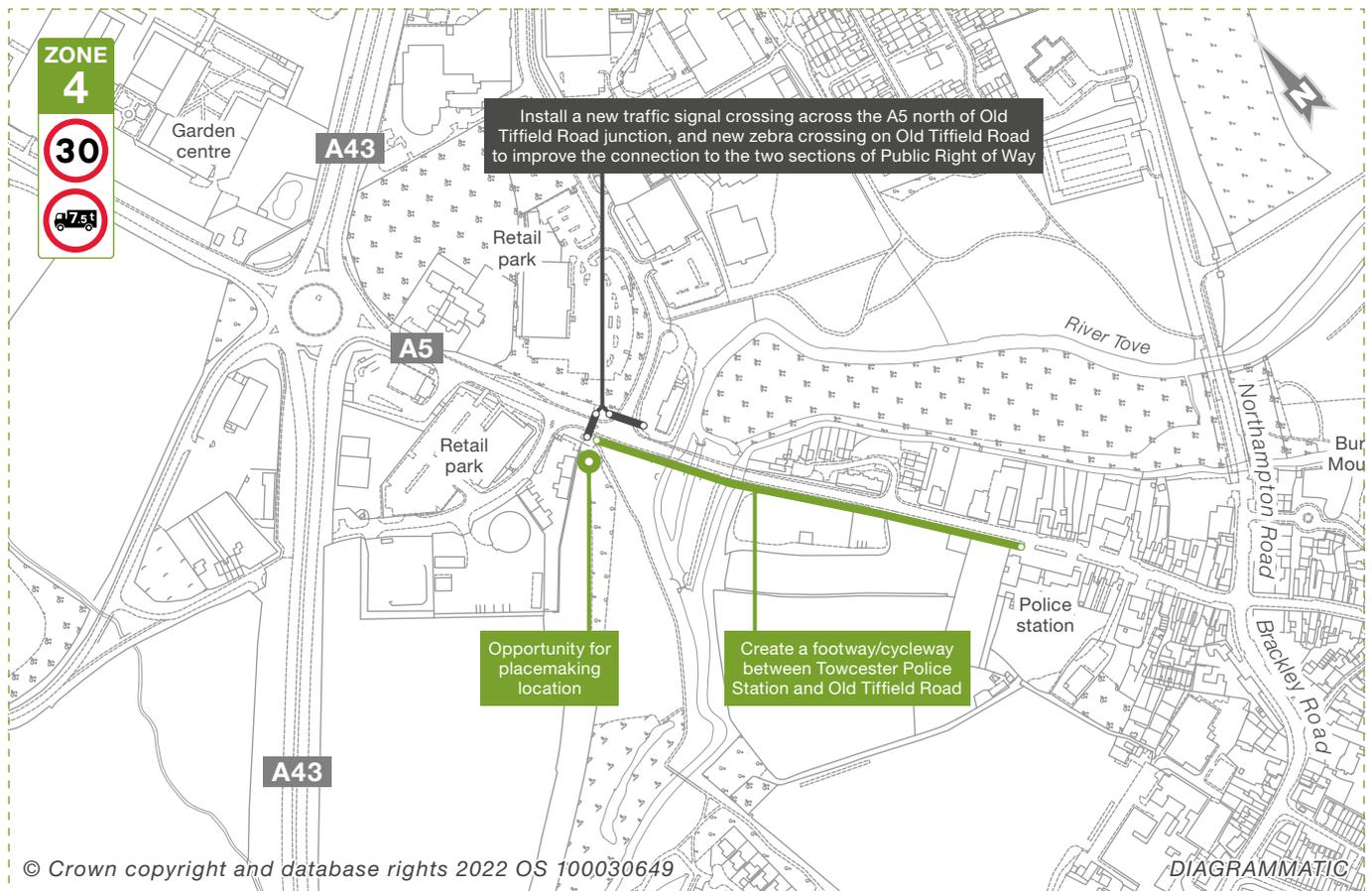


Zone 3 - Option B



Zone 4 - Option B

- Create a footway/cycleway between Towcester Police Station and Old Tiffield Road.
- Install a new traffic signal or a zebra crossing point on Old Tiffield Road.
- Install a new traffic signal crossing on the A5, north of Old Tiffield Road junction.
- Weight limit restriction to start after the Old Tiffield Road junction.



Option C

This option can be added to either Option A or B, but cannot be used alone. It includes the following:

- A Park and Ride created with minibuses, providing a shuttle service to Towcester town centre from out of town car parks. The first located near Cowpastures Lane. The second car park located off Towcester roundabout on the opposite side of the A43 where the retail/industrial areas are situated. **Please note locations are indicative at present.**

Zone 1 - Option C



Zone 4 - Option C



Next steps

Once the consultation closes on **11 September 2022**, we'll review your feedback and produce a consultation report which will summarise the findings, including how your feedback has informed any changes to the design of the scheme.

Once the preferred solution has been identified, we'll further develop the chosen option to create a business case for funding around Autumn 2023. The provisional target date for the start of construction is late 2024 to early 2025.

Where to get more information:

Everything you need to know about this consultation and our improvement proposals for the A5 through Towcester is available on our scheme webpage <https://nationalhighways.co.uk/our-roads/east-midlands/towcester-improvements/>. You can also come to one of our public consultation events:

Wednesday 31 August 2022
10am until 7pm

Sawpits Centre
Towcester
NN12 6FT

Monday 5 September 2022
12pm until 7pm

Waitrose car park
Richmond Road
Towcester, NN12 6HZ

Tuesday 6 September 2022
9am to 2pm

Aldi car park, Old Greens
Norton Road
Towcester NN12 8AX

Or join us at our online public consultation events held via Microsoft Teams:

- **August 17th – 7:00pm-8.30pm**
- **August 24th – 7:00pm-8.30pm**

To book onto these sessions please email your name and the date of the online event you would like to attend to a5towcester@jacobs.com and we'll provide you with further details and the event link.

Where to get the brochure and response form

Printed copies of the consultation brochure and response form will be available at our face to face consultation events above. They will also be available at the following locations from Monday 22 August, or on our scheme webpage.

Towcester Library, The Forum
Moat Lane
Towcester, NN12 6AD

Opening times:

- **Monday – Friday – 9am – 6pm**
- **Saturday – 9am – 5pm**
- **Sunday – Closed**

Towcester Sports & Social Club
5 Swinneyford Road
Towcester NN12 6HD

Opening times:

- **Monday - Thursday – 7pm – 11pm**
- **Friday – 12pm - 4pm**
- **Saturday – Sunday - 12pm-12am**

If you need help accessing this or any other National Highways information, please call **0300 123 5000** and we will help you.



More information

For more information about the scheme, please visit our webpage, where you can also sign up to receive regular updates: <https://nationalhighways.co.uk/our-roads/east-midlands/towcester-improvements/>

If you require a paper copy of this documents or would like to talk with a member of our team, you can get in touch with us as follows:

In writing:

FREEPOST RTUK – RBLY – XUBT

A5 Towcester Improvement
5 First Street, Manchester
M15 4GU

By email:

a5towcester@jacobs.com

By telephone (24 hours):

0300 123 5000 – our Customer Contact Centre will pass on a message to the project team

Webpage:

<https://nationalhighways.co.uk/our-roads/east-midlands/towcester-improvements/>

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National Highways: East Midlands

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If you have any enquiries about this publication email info@nationalhighways.co.uk or call **0300 123 5000**. Please quote the National Highways publications code **PR161/22**.

National Highways creative job number BHM22_0118

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Registered office Bridge House, 1 Walnut Tree Close, Guildford GU1 4LZ. National Highways Company Limited registered in England and Wales number 09346363

Appendix B. Questionnaire

A5 Towcester Improvements

1. I am completing this survey...
 - For Myself
 - On behalf of a group
 - On behalf of an organisation

If responding on behalf of a group/ Organisation, what is the name of the group/ Organisation?

If responding on behalf of a group/ Organisation, what is your role in the group/ Organisation?

If responding on behalf of a group/ Organisation, how were the views of members/ Organisation gathered?

2. What is your name?

3. What is your email address?

4. What is your postcode?

5. Do you live in Towcester?

- Yes
- No

6. Do you work in Towcester?

- Yes
- No

7. Do you travel through Towcester?

- Yes
- No

If you selected 'yes', please tell us where you are travelling to.

8. Do you shop in Towcester?
- Yes
 - No

If you selected 'no', please tell us where you shop

9. What is the likelihood that the proposals would encourage you to shop in Towcester?
- Very likely
 - Likely
 - Not likely
 - Not likely at all

10. Which option do you feel would benefit Towcester most?
- Option A
 - Option B
 - Option C with A
 - Option C with B

11. Please select the option you prefer from the following questions.

	Option A	Option B	Option C with A	Option C with B	None of them
Which option do you think would make driving through Towcester easier?					
Which option do you think would make driving around in the town centre easier?					
Which option would encourage you to visit the town centre?					
Which option would encourage you to shop in the town centre?					
Which option would encourage you to walk in the town centre?					
Which option would encourage you to cycle in the town centre?					

12. How do you normally travel to Towcester?

- Drive
- Walk
- Cycle
- Bus
- Taxi
- Other

If you selected 'other', please tell us how you normally travel to Towcester

13. How do you normally travel within Towcester once you're there?

- Drive
- Walk
- Cycle
- Bus
- Taxi
- Other

If you selected 'Other', please tell us how you usually travel within Towcester

14. Do you think there is enough short stay parking in Towcester?

- Yes
- No

If no, where would you like to see more spaces?

15. Do you think there is enough long stay parking in Towcester?

- Yes
- No

If no, where would you like to see more spaces?

16. Do you think there is enough accessible parking in Towcester?

- Yes
- No

If no, where would you like to see more spaces?

17. Is there anything else you think we should know?

Demographic Questions

18. What is your age?

- 16-24
- 25-34
- 35-44
- 45-54
- 55-64
- 65+

19. What is your gender?

- Male
- Female
- Prefer not to say

20. Did you attend one of our face to face or online events?

- Yes
- No

21. By responding to this consultation, you've indicated that you have an interest in the project. It would help us if you could identify the nature of your interest (tick all that apply)

- Local Business
- Residential
- Agricultural interest
- Public Rights of Way
- Leisure
- Other

If you selected 'other', please tell us what your interest in the project is

22. How did you find out about the consultation?

23. Do you have any comments about the events, or how we have managed the consultation?

Appendix C. Virtual Event Slides



A5 Towcester Improvements

Virtual Event

August 2022

Welcome and housekeeping

Welcome from the A5 Towcester Improvements project delivery team.

We'll be letting you know:

- How the session will run
- How to ask questions and when they'll be answered
- How you can provide feedback



Why is the scheme needed?

- Longstanding issues with the high levels of traffic passing through the town centre
- Environmental, safety and accessibility concerns of residents and businesses
- New link road between the A5 and A43 (south of the town)
- Encourage through traffic, particularly goods vehicles, to use the new link road and the A43 as an alternative to the A5, improving accessibility and quality of life in Towcester



Scheme objectives

The main objectives of the scheme are to:

- Improve safety for all
- Reduce the impact of air and noise pollution on surrounding environments and habitats
- Increase the number of trips made in Towcester by walking and cycling
- Help boost the local economy through increased trade and footfall
- Make Towcester's High Street as an attractive place to visit
- Improve accessibility to Towcester town centre for everyone
- Preserve Towcester's rich history and identity

What we've done so far

We ran workshops with the following stakeholders:

- Town and Parish Councils
- West Northamptonshire Council
- Police

The workshops allowed us to identify themes which are important to stakeholders and key to achieving the scheme objectives.



Stakeholder workshops: key themes

Key themes from the workshops:

- Road Safety
- Parking
- Improvements to public areas
- Congestion & HGV issues
- The A5/A43 Link Road



Stakeholder workshops: outputs

The engagement workshops steered us to rule out several different options that wouldn't be suitable for the scheme.

The measures considered not appropriate are identified below:

- Traffic calming measures such as road humps and chicanes
- One-way systems
- Removal of traffic signals and replacement with a roundabout at Brackley Road/Northampton Road junction

What we considered

From the feedback we received during our engagement workshops, we identified four key areas that required improvements. These **four** key areas are listed below and have been included for **all** options:

- Improved signage
- Introduction of vehicle restrictions (speed and weight)
- Improved active travel (walking and cycling)
- Public space improvements

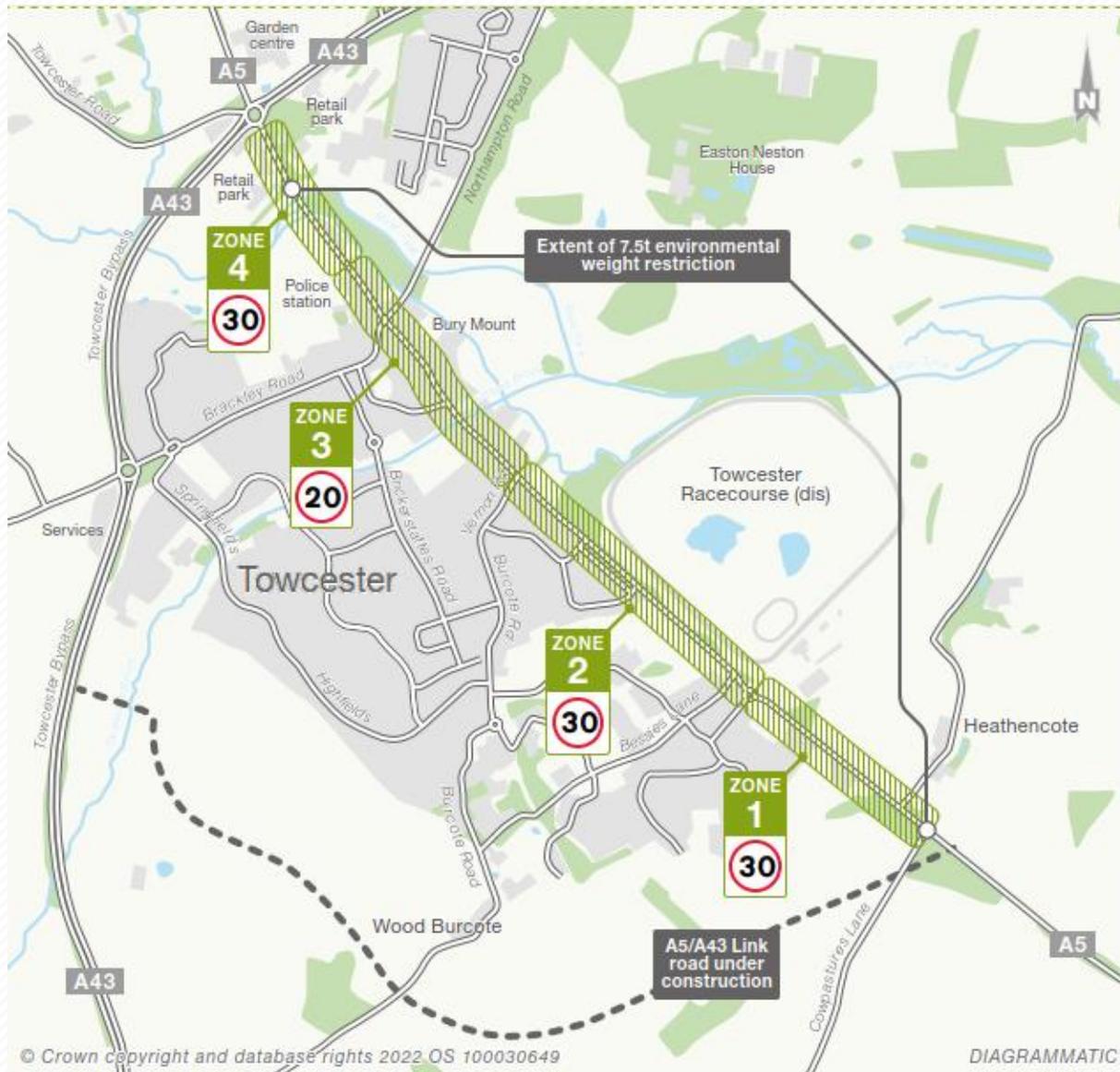


Source: Cycle Enfield

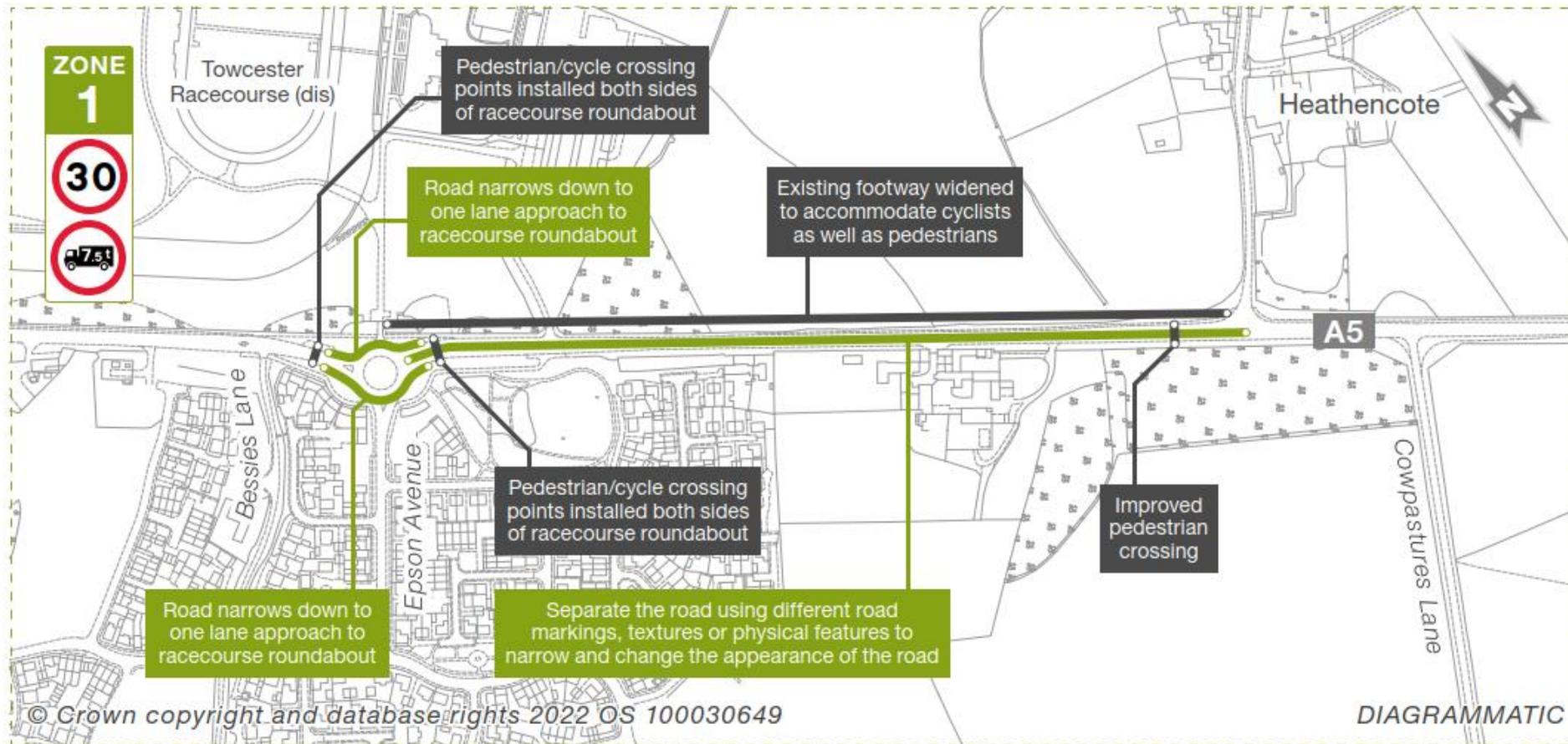
Design Approach

We split the route into zone areas to reflect different road environments i.e. urban/rural

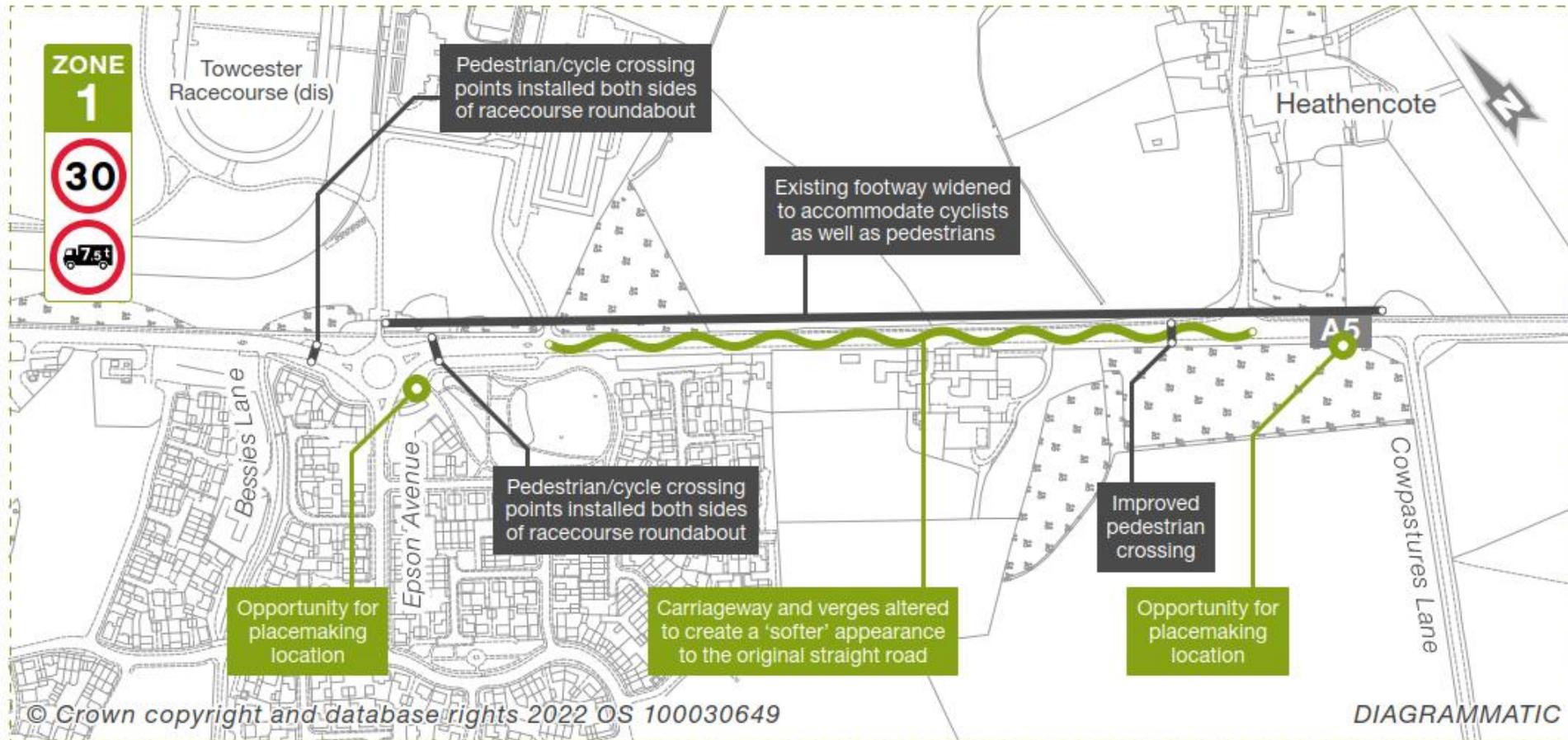
Each zone represents a different character or change in road environment where different types of interventions can be applied.



Zone 1 - Option A - Cowpastures Lane to racecourse roundabout



Zone 1 - Option B - Cowpastures Lane to racecourse roundabout



Zone 1 - Examples

Example of carriageway separation for Option A



Source: Google Street View

Examples of 'softer' appearance for Option B

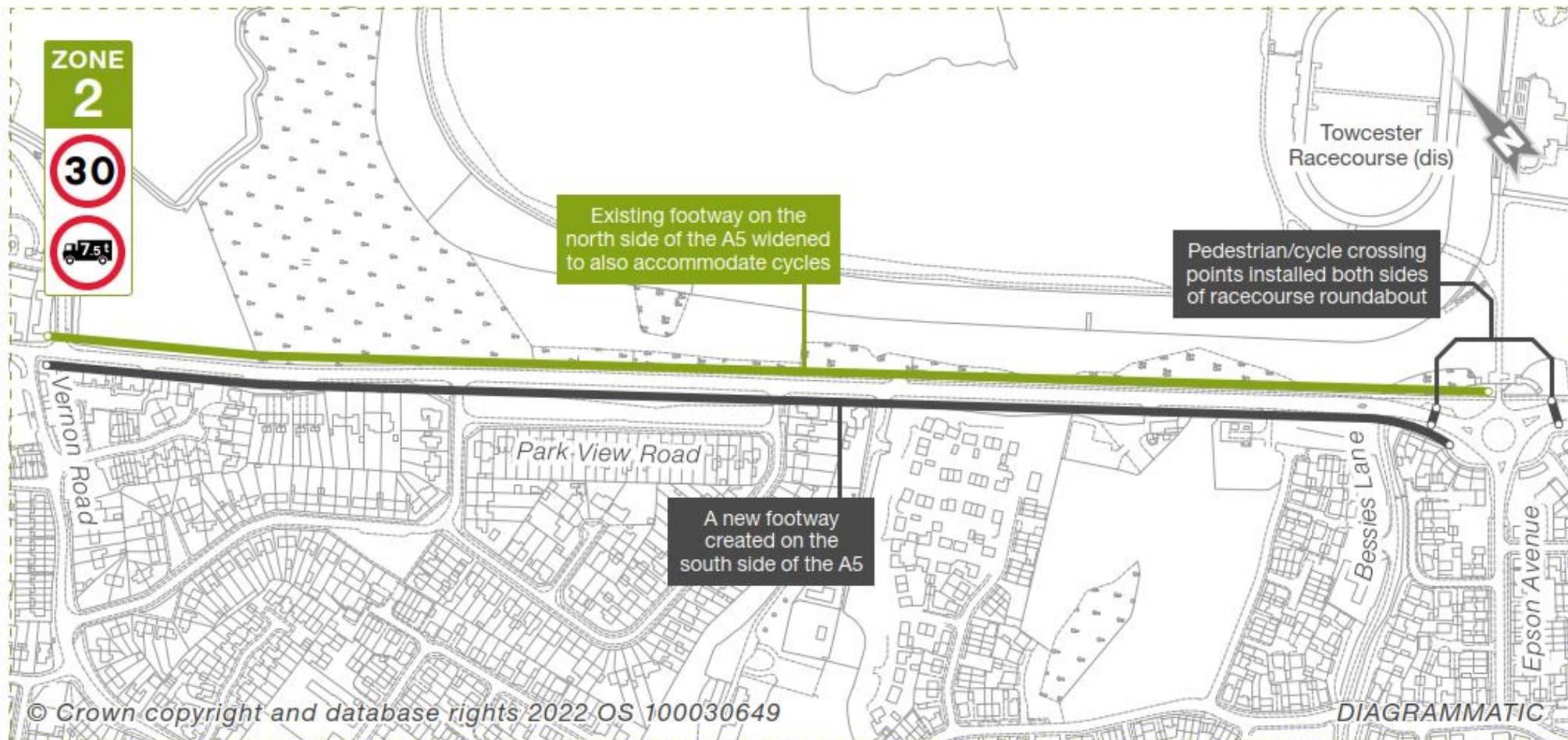


Source: Mayor of London

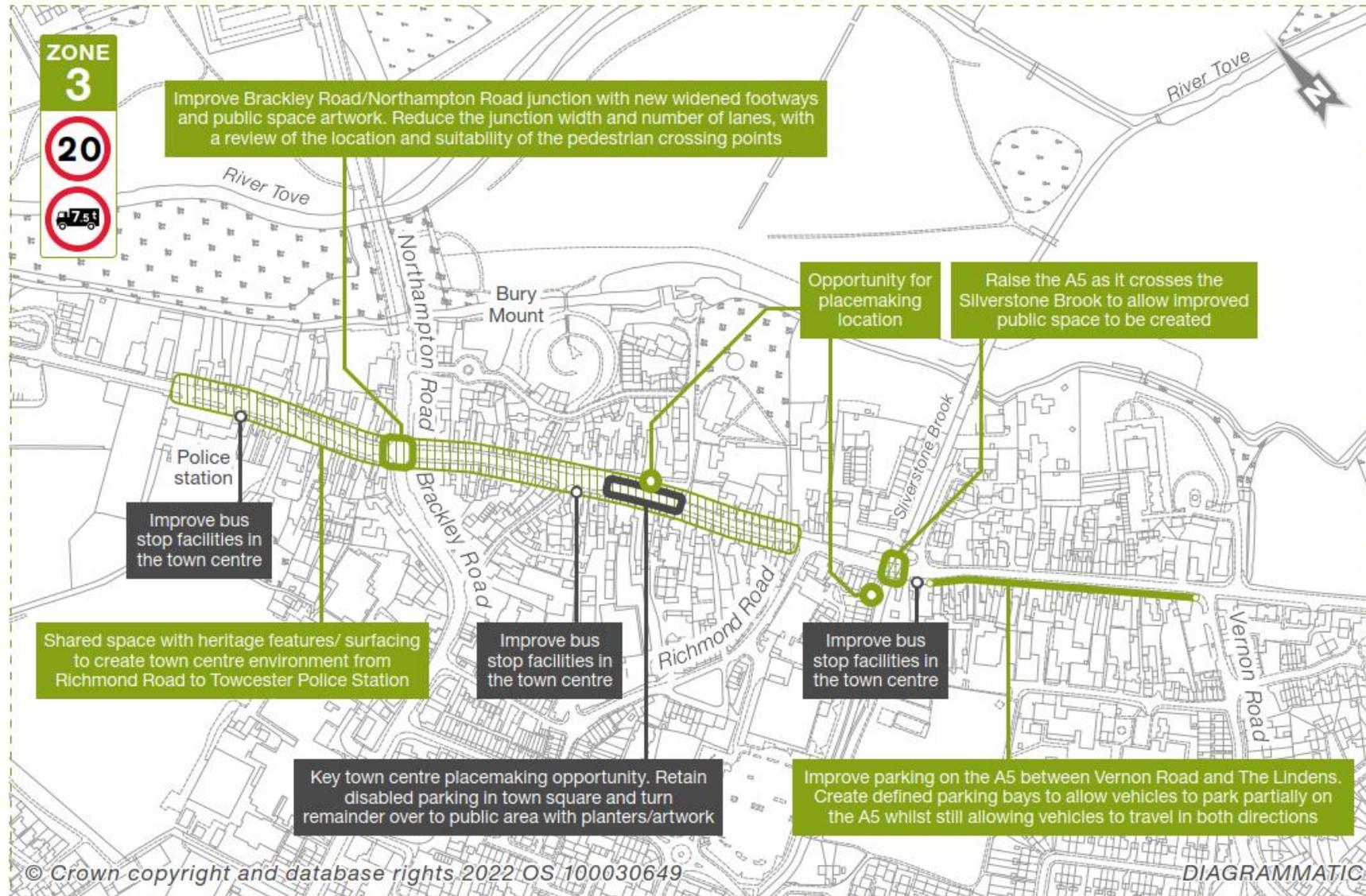
Zone 2 - Option A – Racecourse roundabout to Vernon Road



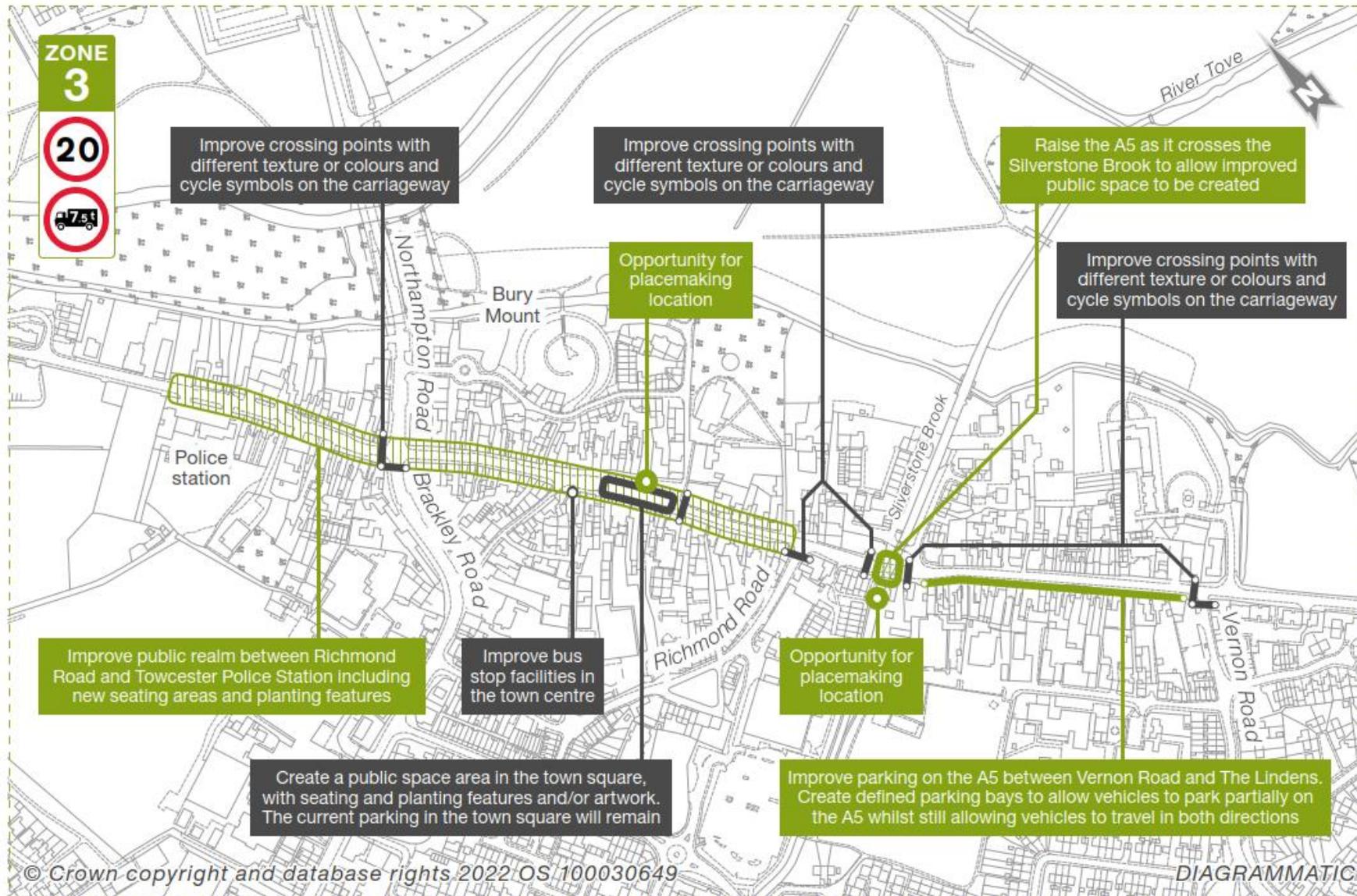
Zone 2 - Option B - Racecourse roundabout to Vernon Road



Zone 3 - Option A – Vernon Road to Police Station



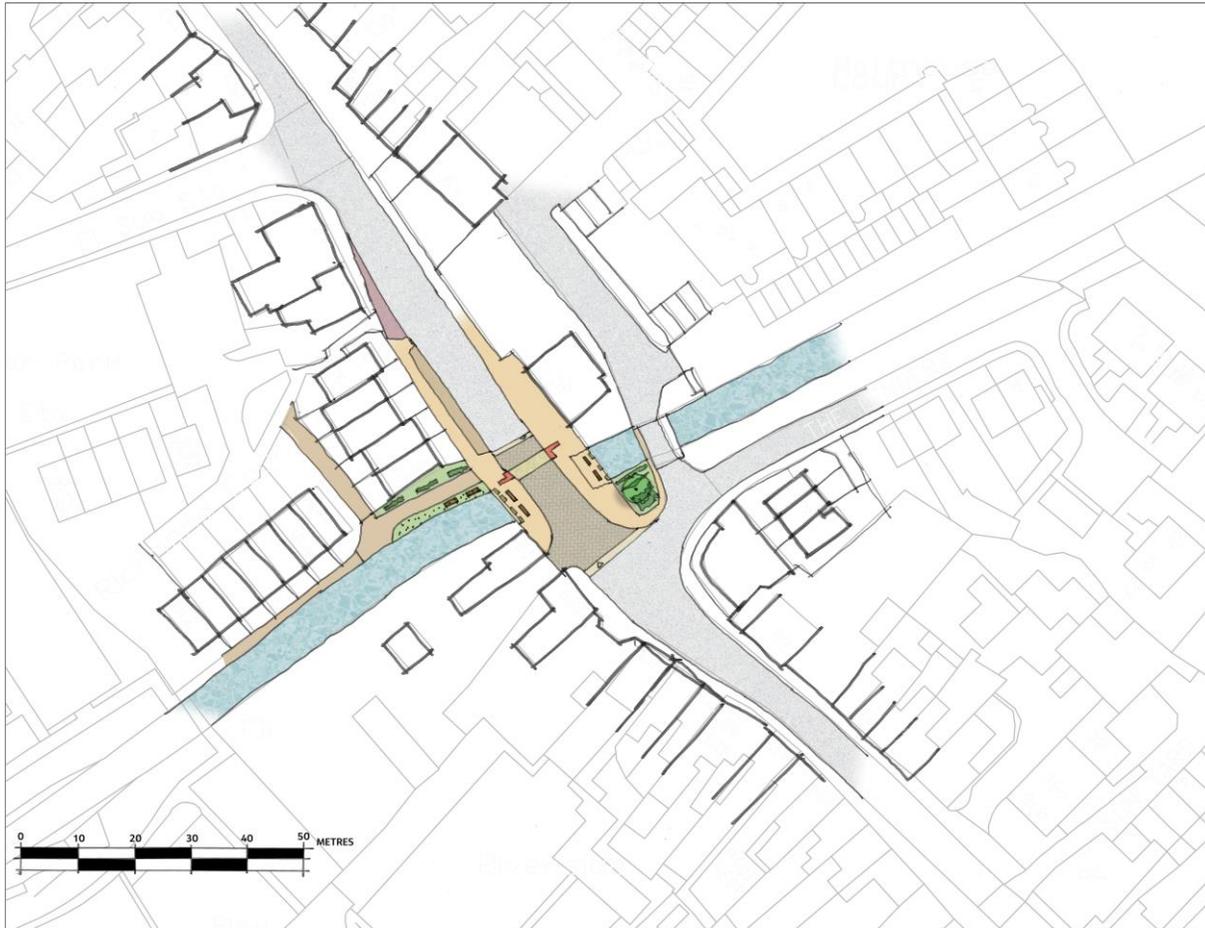
Zone 3 - Option B – Vernon Road to Police Station



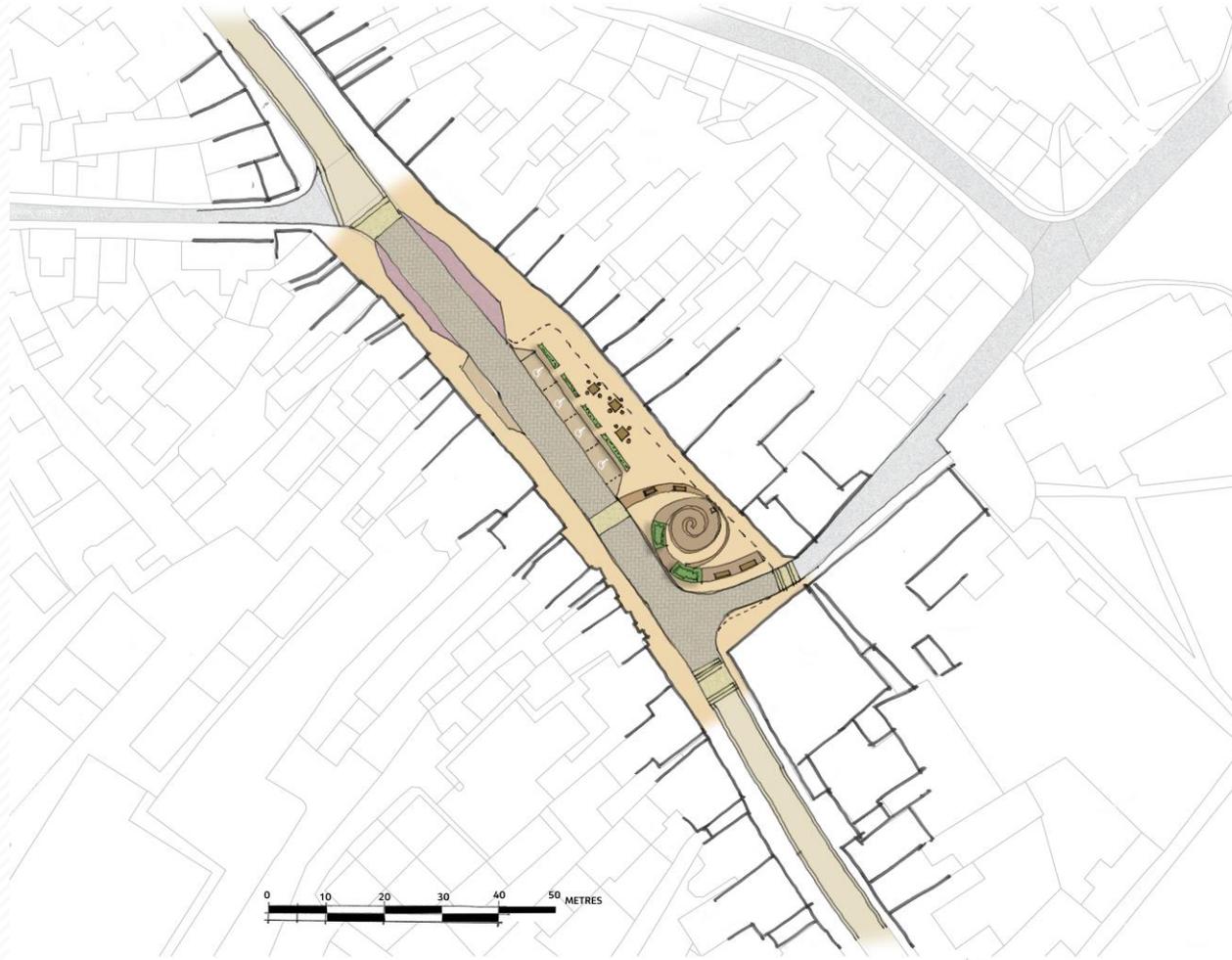
Zone 3 - Options A & B – Vernon Road to The Lindens



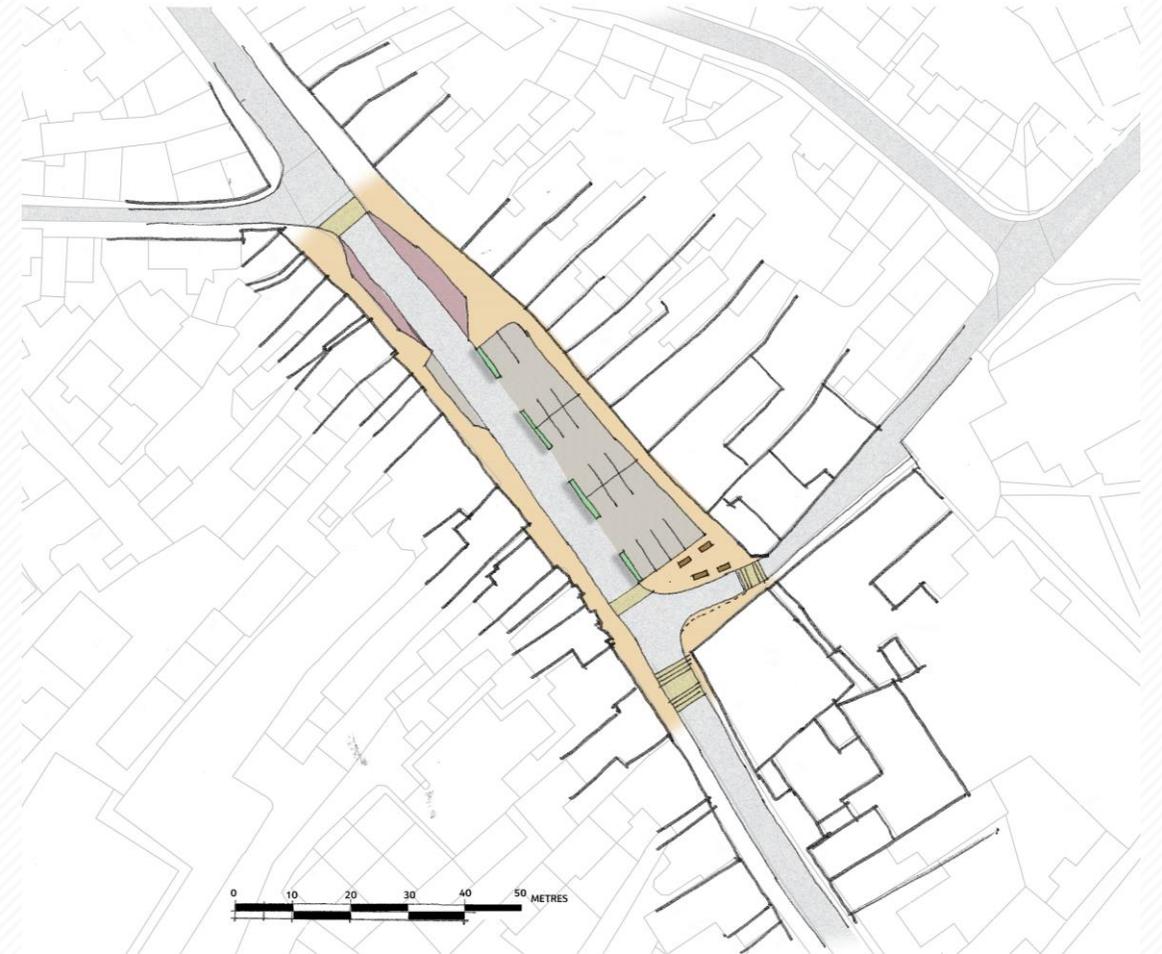
Zone 3 - Options A & B – Silverstone Brook Bridge



Zone 3 - Option A Town Sq



Zone 3 - Option B Town Sq



Zone 3 - Option A – Town Square



Zone 3 - Option A – Northampton Road to Police Station

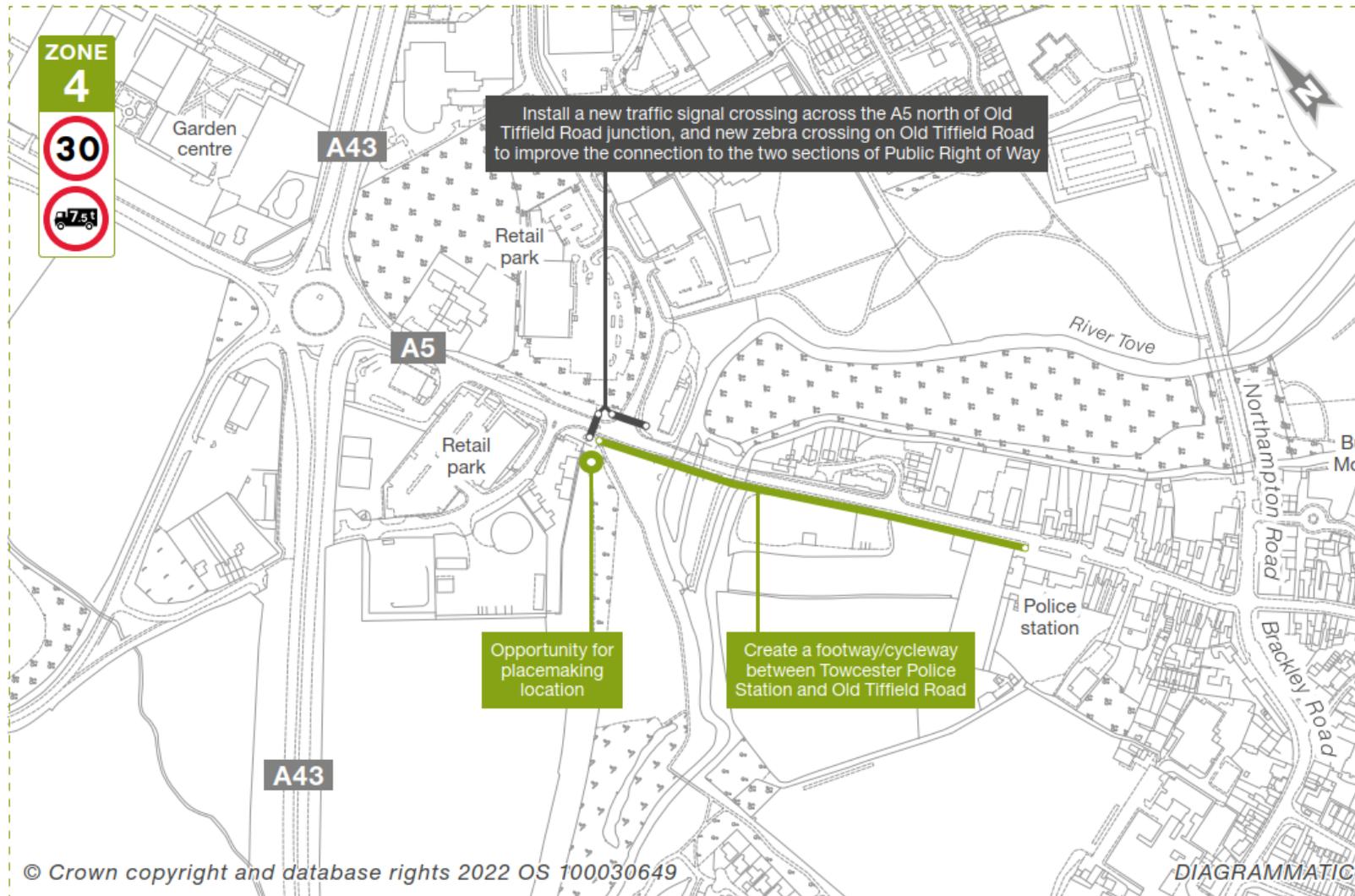


Textured edge bands to visually narrow road space and calm traffic speed



Raised junction example

Zone 4 - Option A & B – Police Station to Old Greens Norton Road



- Weight limit restrictions to start after the start of Old Tiffield Road junction.

Zone 4 – Options A & B - Old Greens Norton Road / Old Tiffield Road



Option C – Park and Ride

This option can be added to **either** Option A or B however, cannot be used alone.



Examples of Potential Placemaking Initiatives



Example of shared space environment with surface treatments indicating zones of use, well-marked informal pedestrian crossings, and pedestrian oriented urban realm



Shared street with half kerb example



Example of inset disabled parking bays that can provide a wider footway when not in use



Improved bus stop example



Example of rain garden to provide sustainable drainage and create a visually attractive barrier between vehicle and pedestrian areas



Example of raised zebra crossing with planting and cycle stands which prioritises pedestrians and encourages vehicles to slow down

Our Next Steps

Once the consultation closes on 11 September we will:

- Review & report
- Determine the preferred solution
- Develop the chosen option
- Create a business case for funding (around Autumn 2023)
- Start construction (provisional target of late 2024/early 2025)

Q&A

- We will pick some of your key questions
- If your question was not answered in the session, we will be writing a summary of the questions asked. This will be published on the project webpage.

Consultation Events

Visit us at one of our public consultation events:

- Sawpits Centre, Wednesday 31 August 2022, 10am until 7pm, Sawpits Centre, Towcester NN12 6FT
- Waitrose car park Monday 5 September 2022, 12pm until 7pm, Richmond Road, Towcester NN12 6HZ
- Aldi car park Tuesday 6 September 2022, 9am to 2pm, Old Greens Norton Road, Towcester NN12 8AX

Opportunity to feedback

The consultation runs between 15 August and 11 September. We want to hear your feedback.

During the consultation period you can get the brochure and response form on our scheme webpage or at our pick-up points at the following locations:

Towcester Library

The Forum, Moat Lane, Towcester,
NN12 6AD

Opening times:

- Monday – Friday – 9am – 6pm
- Saturday – 9am – 5pm
- Sunday – Closed

Towcester Sports & Social Club

5 Swinneyford Road, Towcester NN12
6HD

Opening times:

- Monday - Thursday – 7pm – 11pm
- Friday – 12pm - 4pm
- Saturday – Sunday - 12pm-12am

Webpage: <https://nationalhighways.co.uk/our-roads/east-midlands/towcester-improvements/>

Find out more



0300 123 5000



a5towcester@jacobs.com

<https://nationalhighways.co.uk/our-roads/east-midlands/towcester-improvements/>



Twitter [@HighwaysEMIDS](https://twitter.com/HighwaysEMIDS)



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Improvement, 5 First Street,
Manchester, M15 4GU



Appendix D. Sawpits Centre Boards



A5

Towcester Improvements

Welcome



Introduction

The need for the scheme

Towcester has longstanding issues with the high levels of traffic passing through its historic town centre, causing environmental, safety and accessibility concerns to residents and businesses.

Due to the new link road being built between the A5 and A43 (south of the town), National Highways is now able to investigate options for improving Towcester town centre.

This proposed scheme aims to encourage through traffic, particularly goods vehicles, to use the new link road and the A43 as an alternative to the A5. This will alleviate some of the more disruptive traffic from the town centre, improving accessibility and quality of life in Towcester.



Scheme objectives

The main objectives of the scheme are to:

- Improve safety for all
- Reduce the impact of air and noise pollution on surrounding environments and habitats
- Increase the number of trips made in Towcester by walking and cycling
- Help boost the local economy through increased trade and footfall
- Make Towcester's High Street an attractive place to visit
- Improve accessibility to Towcester town centre for everyone
- Preserve Towcester's rich history and identity

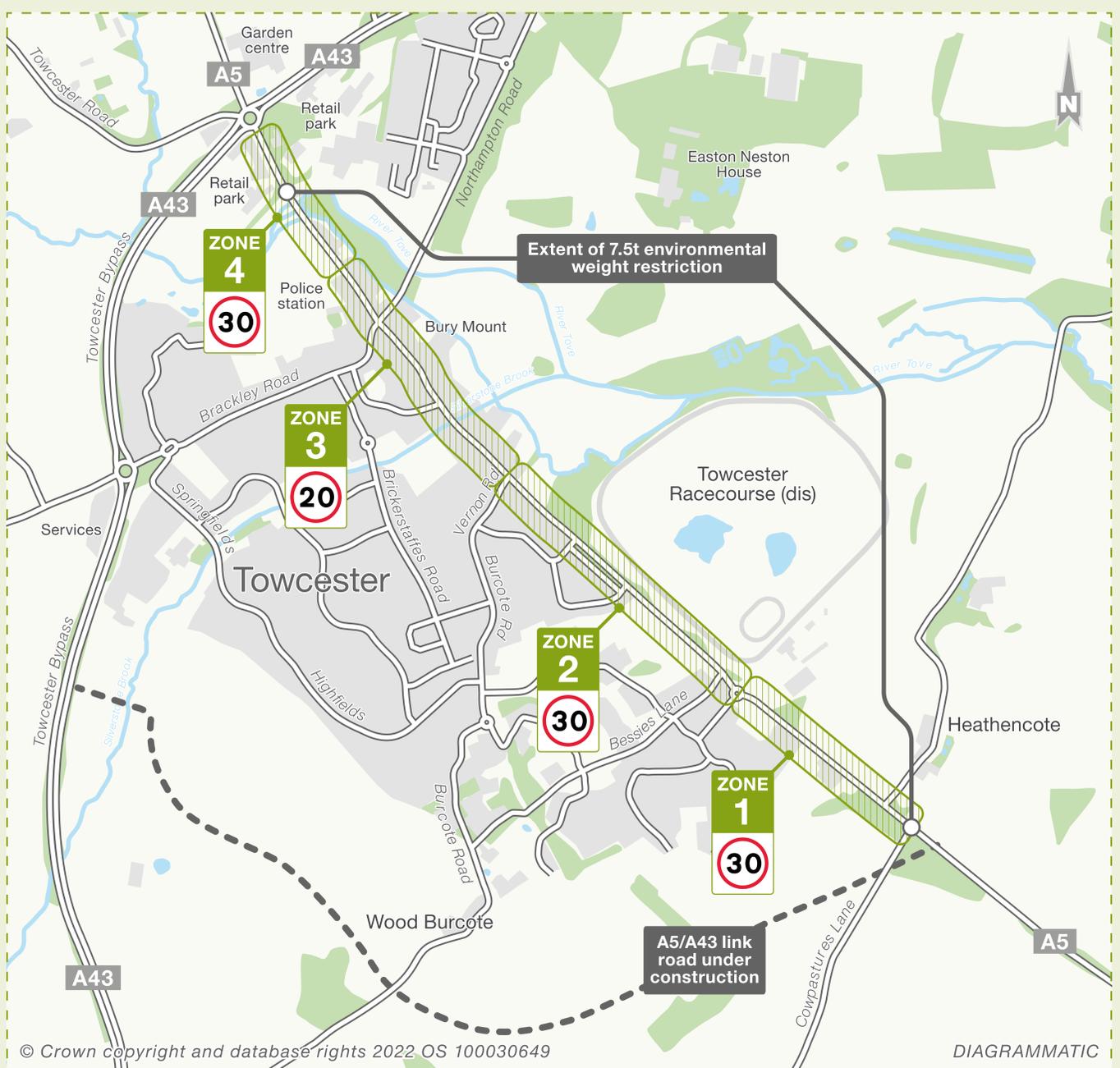


Design approach

Zones

As part of our design approach to providing improvement measures along the A5 into and through the town of Towcester, we have split the route into zones. The zones can broadly be classified into urban and rural areas. Each zone represents a different character or change in the road environment where different types of interventions can be applied. Zones 1 and 4 are recognised as being more rural and less built up. Zones 2 and 3 represent a more urban, built-up area where residential, commercial and retail buildings are present.

Scheme extent and scheme area zones



Options: What we considered

From the feedback we received during our engagement workshops, we identified four key areas that required improvements. These are; **improved signage; introduction of vehicle restrictions (speed and weight); improved active travel (walking and cycling); and public space improvements.** These have been included for all options.

The three options outlined have been shortlisted following a thorough option identification process and in addition to the four key areas identified. We've made sure the options are in line with the key themes raised during the stakeholder workshops and with the stakeholder objectives. **All options include speed reduction and a 7.5t environmental weight restriction.**

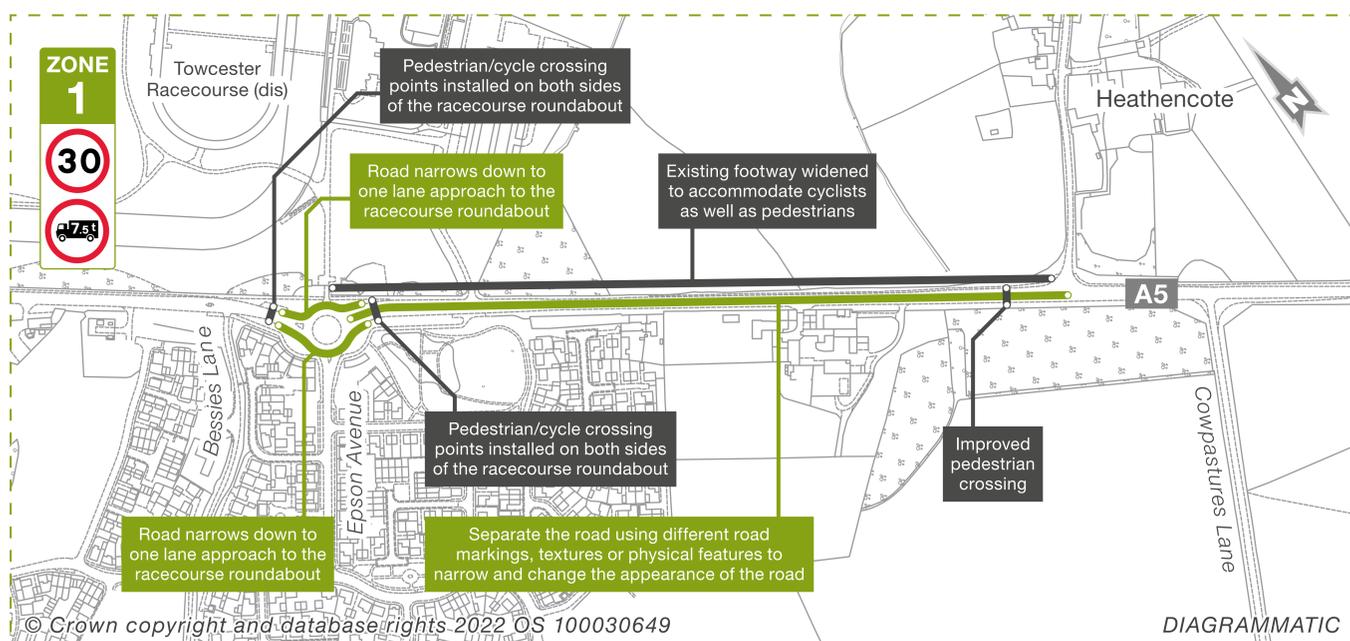
Option A

Improved active travel (walking and cycling)

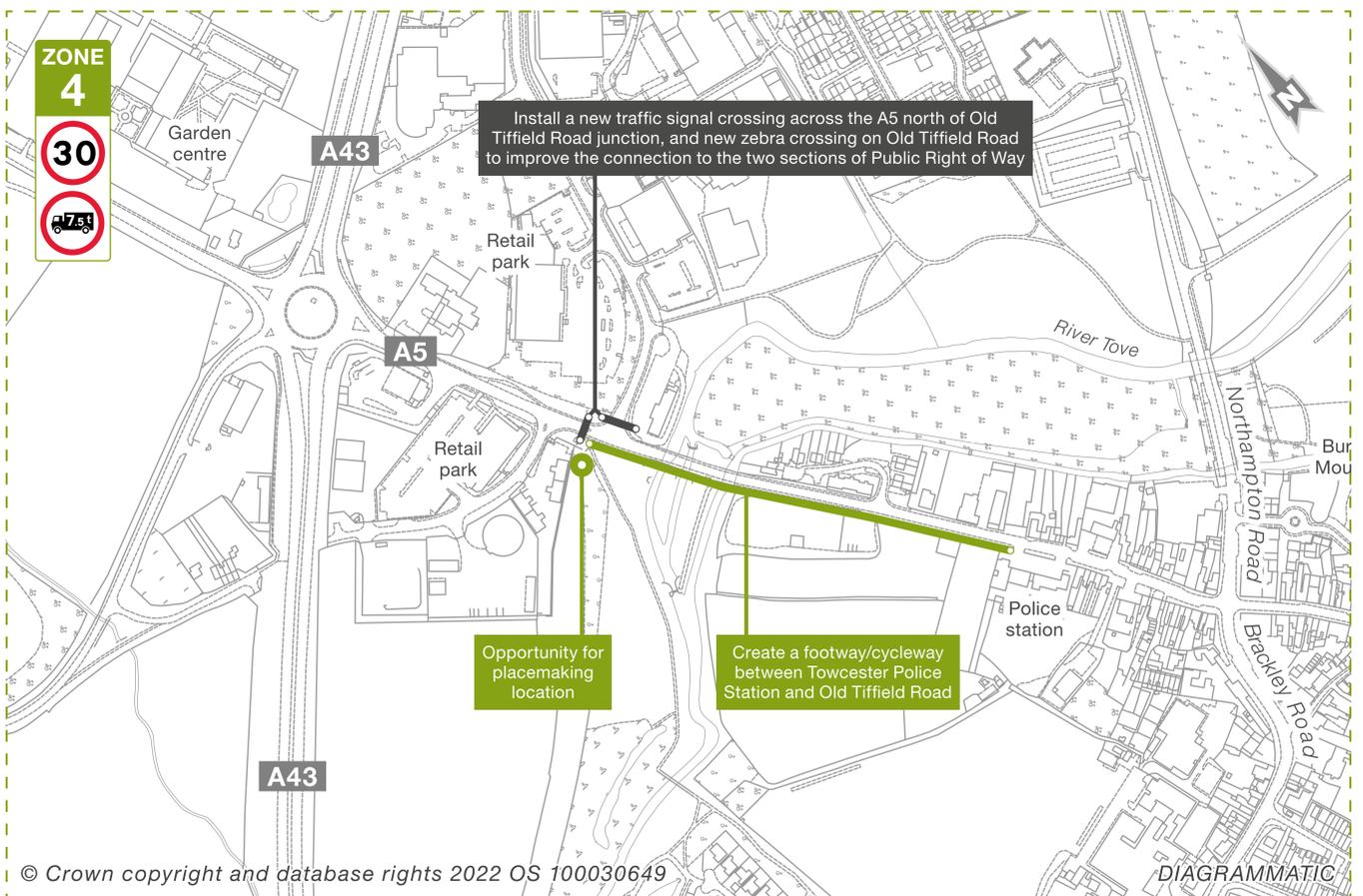
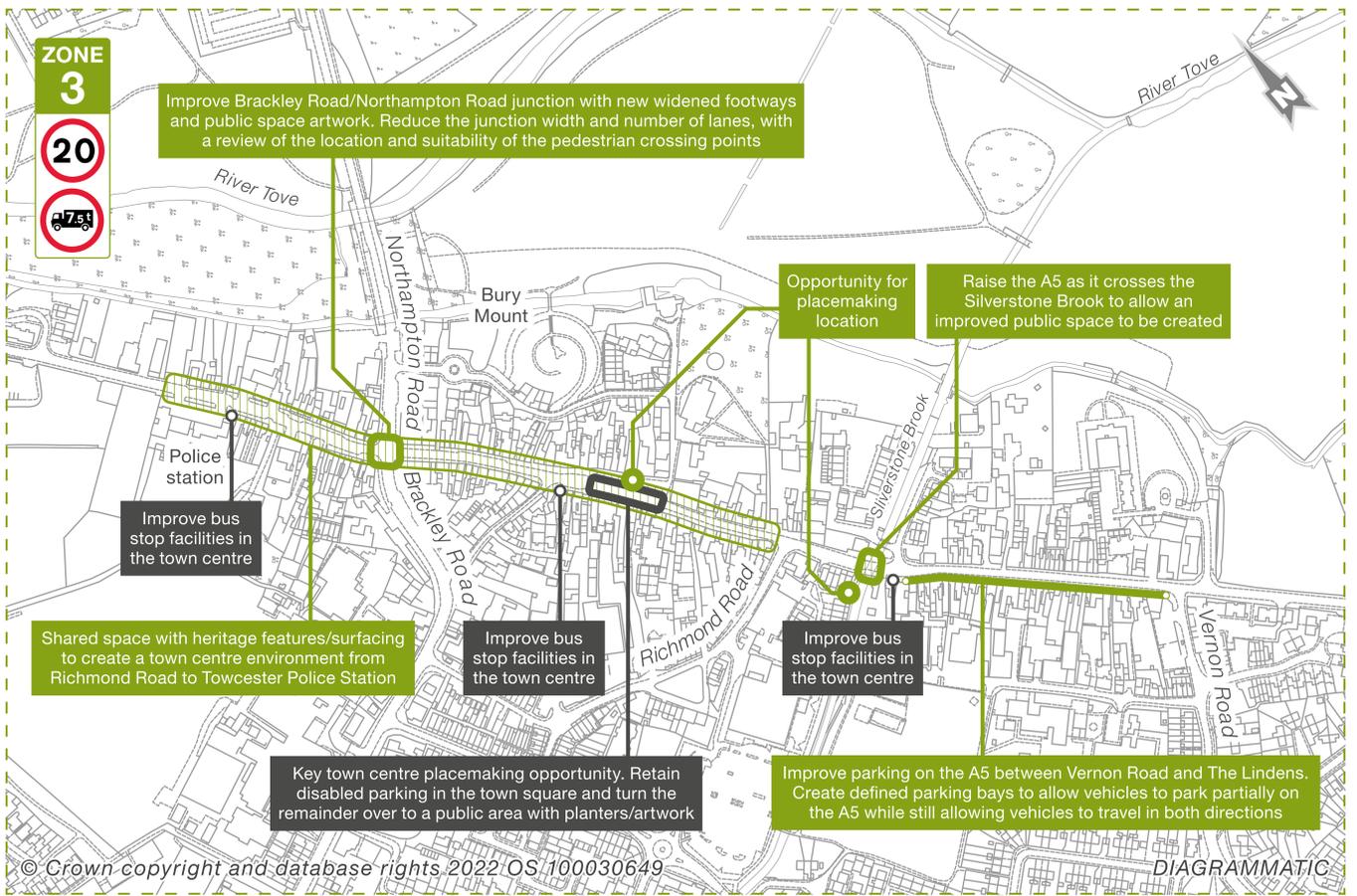
- Widen the current footway between the A5/Heathencote junction and the racecourse roundabout to allow a combined footway/cycleway to be created.
- Separate the road using different road markings, textures and/or physical features to narrow and change the appearance of the road.
- Narrow the racecourse roundabout down to one traffic lane on all approaches by altering the kerbs and/or road markings.
- Create a new footway/cycleway on the south side of the A5 between the exit of the racecourse roundabout and Vernon Road. The current footway on the north side will remain.

Public space improvement

- Create a public space area in the current town square, with seating and planting features and/or artwork. Remove existing parking provisions except for disabled parking bays.
- Improve bus stop facilities in the town centre.
- Make Richmond Road to Towcester Police Station a shared space for vehicles, pedestrians, and cyclists by removing kerbs and road surface markings.
- Improve Brackley Road/Northampton Road junction with new widened footways and public space artwork.
- Reduce the width and number of lanes at the Brackley Road/Northampton Road junction and review the location and suitability of the pedestrian crossing points.



Option A



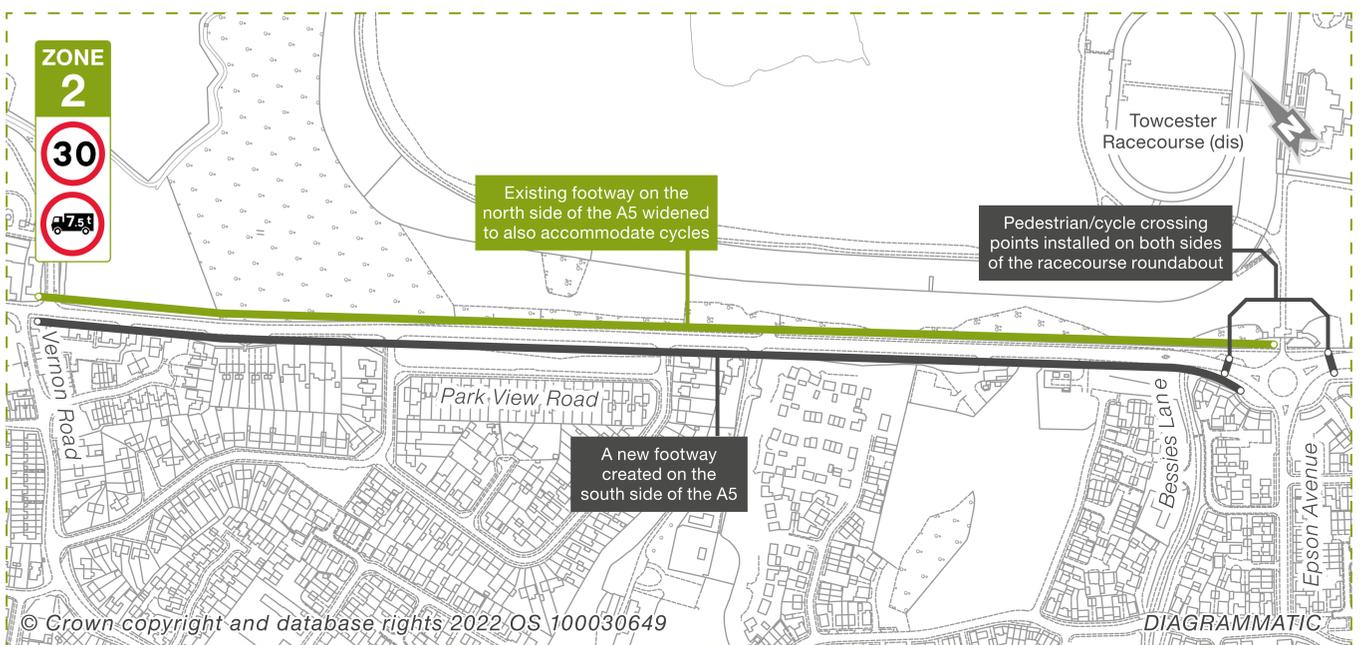
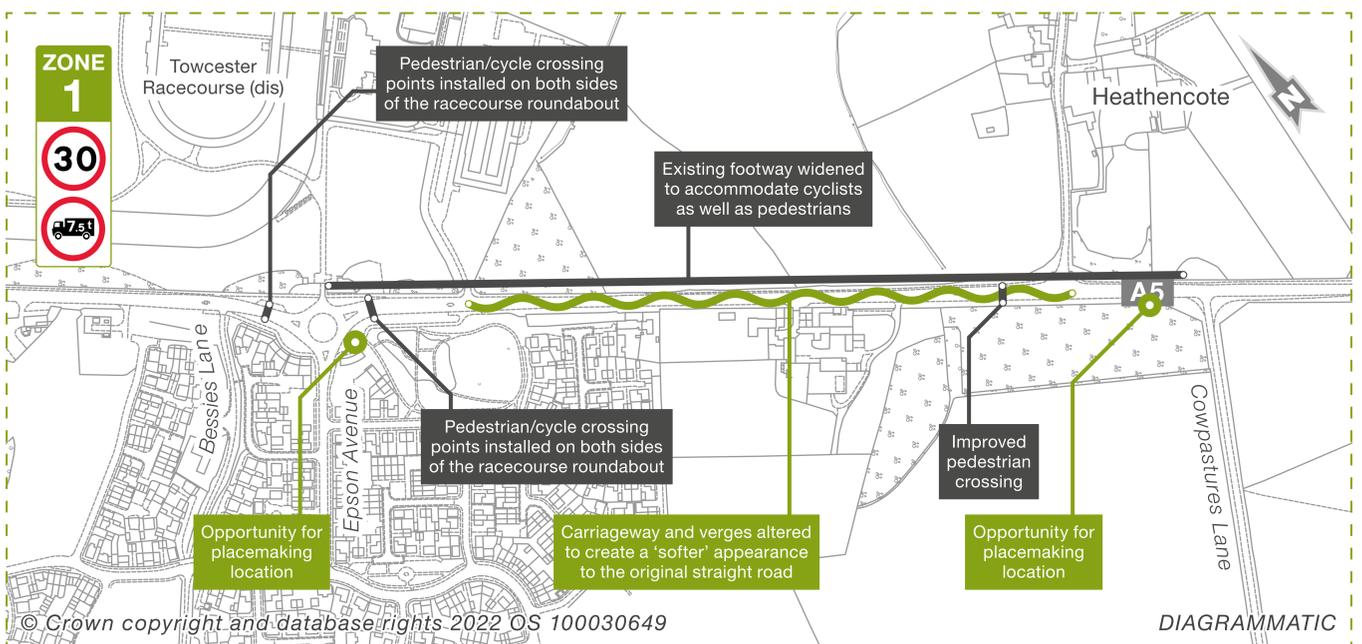
Option B

Improved active travel (walking and cycling)

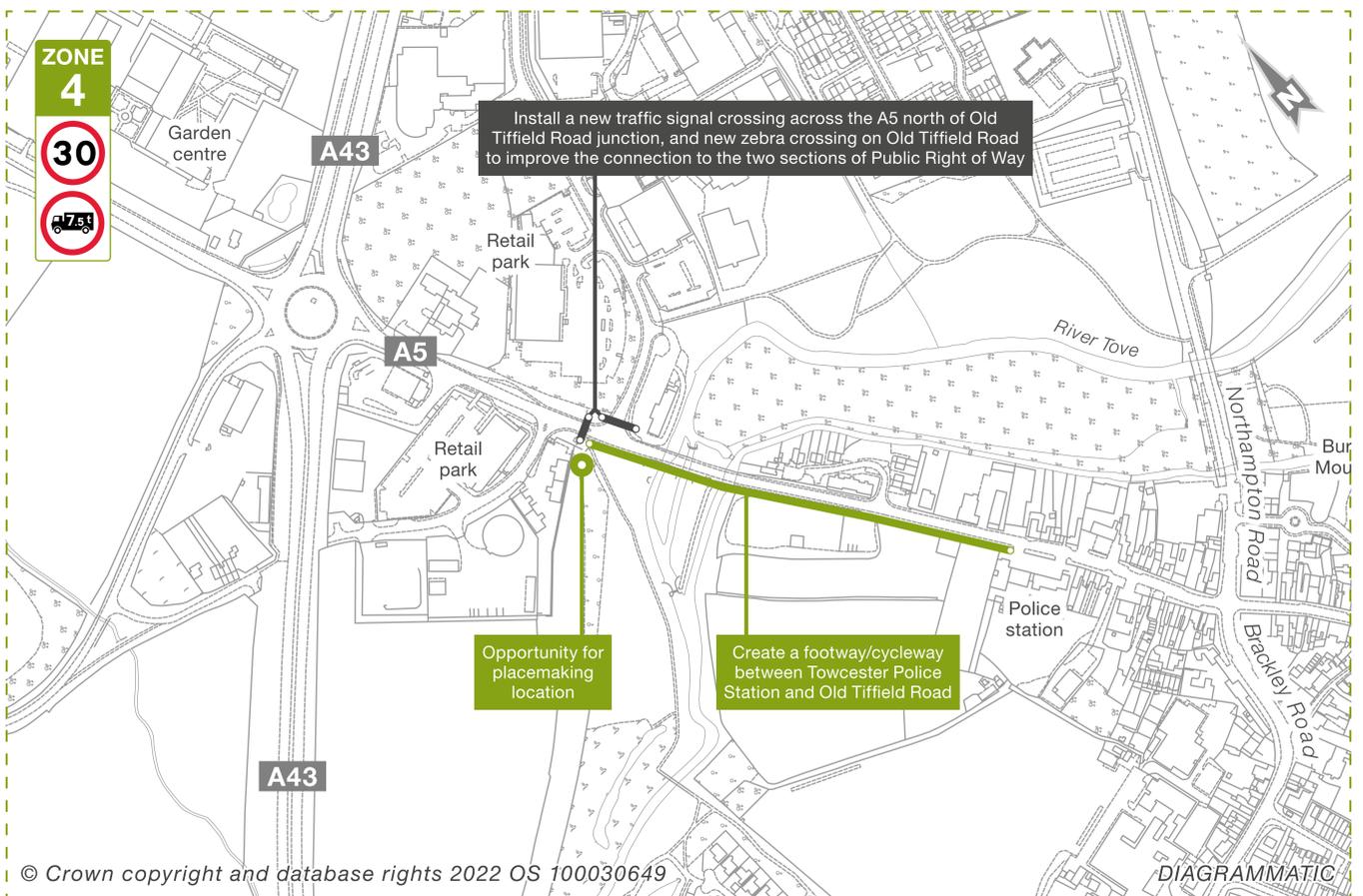
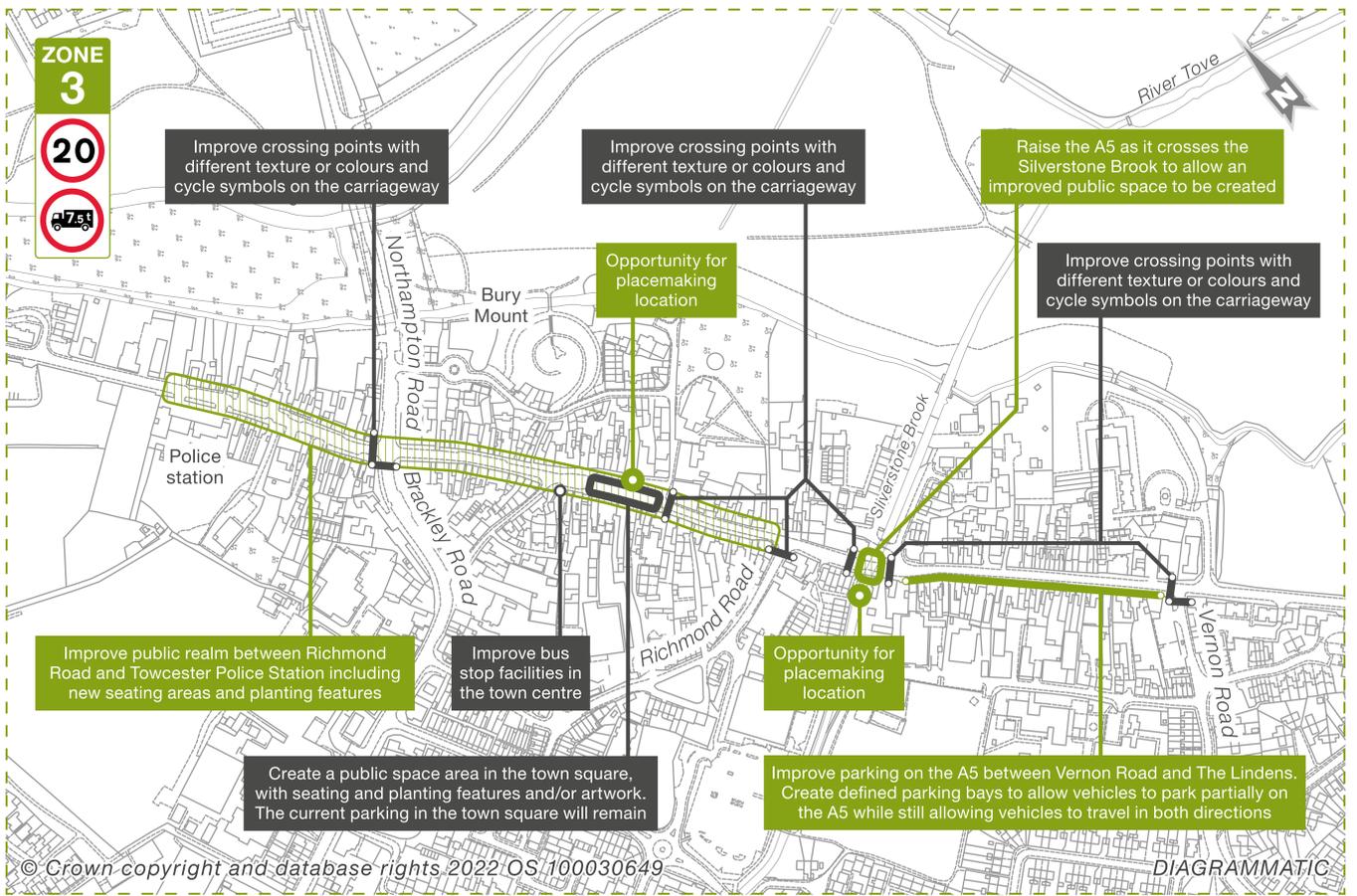
- Widen the current footway between the A5/Heathencote junction and the racecourse roundabout to allow a combined footway/cycleway to be created off road.
- Alter the carriageway and verges to create a 'softer' appearance to the original straight road.
- Create a new footway/cycleway on the north side of the A5 and a new footway on the south side, between the exit of the racecourse roundabout and Vernon Road.

Public space improvement

- Create a public space area in the town square, with seating and planting features and/or artwork. The current parking in the town square will remain.
- Improve crossing points with different textures, colours and cycle symbols on the carriageway.
- Improve the crossing point on the A5 between Richmond Road and Chantry Lane.



Option B



Option C

This option can be added to either Option A or B, but cannot be used alone. It includes the following:

- A Park and Ride created with minibuses providing a shuttle service to Towcester town centre from out of town car parks. The first located near Cowpastures Lane. The second car park located off Towcester roundabout on the opposite side of the A43 where the retail/industrial areas are situated. **Please note locations are indicative at present.**



Vernon Road to The Lindens

Zone 3 - Options A and B



Location of view



Improvement

- 1 Improve parking on the A5 between Vernon Road and The Lindens. Create defined parking bays to allow vehicles to park partially on the A5 while still allowing vehicles to travel in both directions. The use of inset parking bays help create wider footways when not used for parking
- 2 Improve surface texture for cyclists using the A5 into and out of Towcester
- 3 Create a town centre feel by using consistent paving and encouraging pedestrian use

Example of parking bay



Silverstone Brook bridge

Zone 3 - Options A and B



Improvement

- 1 A5 raised as it crosses the Silverstone Brook to create an improved public space. Area over the brook to be a raised table with textured/coloured surface material
- 2 Landscaping around the tree to create colour and interest at the threshold to the bridge
- 3 Benches added with views of Silverstone Brook. Improve the parapets and flower baskets to enhance pedestrian oriented setting
- 4 Crossing location widened and pedestrians given priority
- 5 Opportunity to enhance the space by adding placemaking elements

Rain garden landscaping example



Example bench



Zone 3 - Options A and B



Location of view



Improvement

- 1 A5 raised as it crosses the Silverstone Brook to create an improved public space. Area over the brook to be a raised table with textured/coloured surface material
- 2 Landscaping around the tree to create colour and interest at the threshold to the bridge
- 3 Benches added with views of Silverstone Brook. Improve the parapets and flower baskets to enhance pedestrian oriented setting
- 4 Crossing location widened and pedestrians given priority
- 5 Opportunity to enhance the space by adding placemaking elements

Raised junction crossing example



Town centre

Zone 3 - Option A



Improvement

- 1 Key placemaking opportunity to reclaim parking to create a public space inspired by the Bury Mount, with seating and planting features and/or artwork. Provision for a power supply for a Christmas tree or other festive/market installations. Potential for spiral paving and water jets as a design feature
- 2 Existing parking provision to be removed, however the disabled parking bays have been provided as inset parking bays
- 3 Reclaimed road space for more public realm, outdoor seating for restaurants, planting, seats, cycle racks and other urban realm amenities
- 4 Improve bus stop facilities in the town centre
- 5 Make Richmond Road to Towcester Police Station a shared space for vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists. This will be created by removing kerbs and road surface markings, surface material and pedestrian/cycle oriented design features
- 6 Inset parking to provide wider footway areas when not in use
- 7 Opportunity to enhance the space by adding placemaking elements

Zone 3 - Option B



Improvement

- 1 Create a public space area in the town square, with seating and planting features and/or artwork. The current parking in the town square will remain
- 2 Improve crossing points with different textured or coloured surfaces and cycle symbols on the carriageway
- 3 Improve the crossing points on the A5 between Richmond Road and Chantry Lane

Improved crossing example



Existing town centre parking



Town centre

Zone 3 - Option A



Location of view



Improvement

- 1 Key placemaking opportunity to reclaim parking to create a public plaza inspired by the Bury Mount, with seating and planting features and/or artwork. Provision for a power supply for a Christmas tree or other festive/market installations. Potential for spiral paving and water jets as a design feature
- 2 Existing parking provision to be removed, however the disabled parking bays have been provided as inset parking bays
- 3 Reclaimed road space for more public realm, outdoor seating for restaurants, planting, seats, cycle racks and other urban realm amenities
- 4 Make Richmond Road to Towcester Police Station a shared space for vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists. This will be created by removing kerbs and road surface markings, surface material and pedestrian/cycle oriented design features
- 5 Inset parking to provide wider footway areas when not in use

Northampton Road junction to Police Station

Zone 3 - Option A



Improvement

- 1 Improve Brackley Road/Northampton Road junction with widened footways and public space artwork. Reduce the junction width and number of lanes, with a review of the location and suitability of the pedestrian crossing points. Raised junction to enhance pedestrian comfort
- 2 Bands of texture/colour on either side of the carriageway to make the road appear narrower and encourage vehicles to travel more slowly

Raised junction example



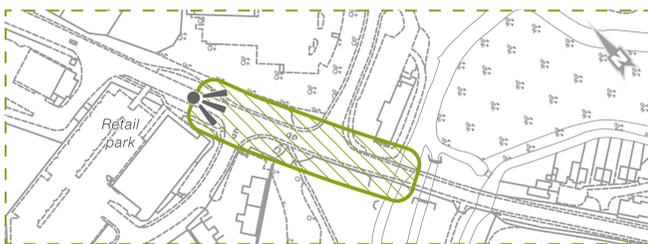
Textured edge bands to visually narrow road space and calm traffic speed



Zone 4 - Options A and B



Location of view



Improvement

- 1 Create a footway/cycleway between Towcester Police Station and Old Tiffield Road
- 2 Install a new traffic signal crossing across the A5 north of Old Tiffield Road Junction, and new zebra crossing point on Old Tiffield Road to improve the connection to the two sections of Public Right of Way
- 3 Opportunity for placemaking location, with gateway treatments including welcome signage, seating, linear wildflower planting, etc.
- 4 Raised junction, coloured/textured surface materials, visually narrowed lanes and overall placemaking improvements to enhance traffic calming

Zebra crossing example





Our next steps

Once the consultation closes on 11 September we'll:

- Review and report
- Determine the preferred solution
- Develop the chosen option
- Create a business case for funding (around Autumn 2023)
- Start construction (provisional target of late 2024/early 2025)

How to get involved

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Questionnaire

<https://highwaysengland.citizenspace.com/he/a5-towcester-improvements/consultation/intro/>



Appendix E. Engagement Event Boards

Welcome



The need for the scheme

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THE OPTIONS: What we considered:

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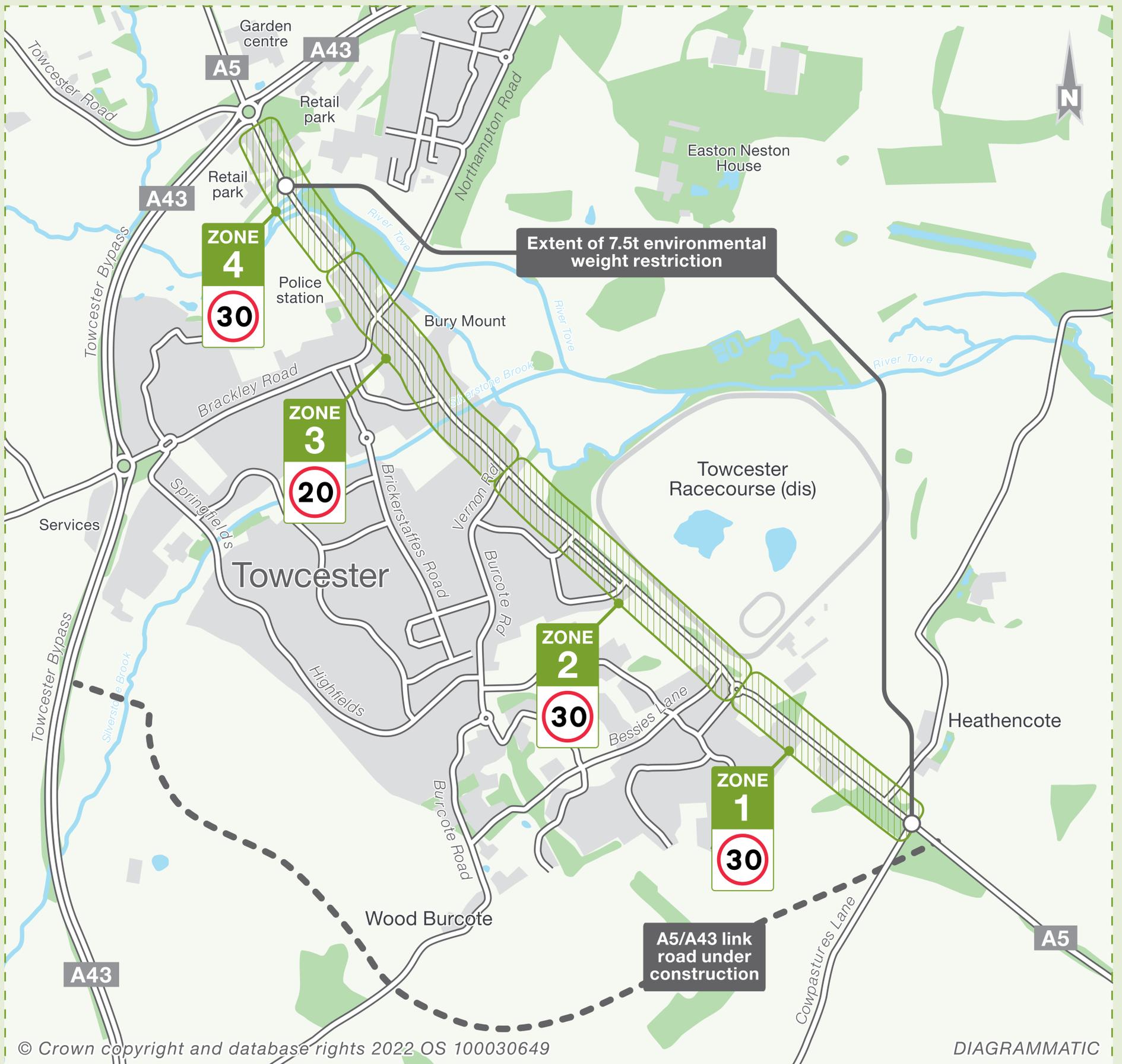




Design approach

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Questionnaire

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Appendix F. Code frame

Towcester: Coding framework

Other

Topic	Code	Number of responses
Relief Road/ Bypass	403	32
De-trunk	402	11
Rat running	404	10
Other	410	8
Warehouse Proposals	401	7
Culture/History	405	7
	Total	75

Options

Topic	Code	Number of responses
Option A: Negative	103	37
Parking: Suggestion	101	36
Option C: Negative	106	34
Option B: Negative	105	22
Option A: Positive	102	11
Required more information to decide	107	11
Option B: Positive	104	9
Weight restriction: Positive	109	8
Option C: Positive	108	4
Crossings: Negative	110	2
	Total	174

Detail

Topic	Code	Number of responses
Suggestion	204	34
Enforcement: Weight	202	33
Walking/Pedestrian	214	28
Cycling	205	20
Local Businesses	212	19
Shopping	211	15
Public Spaces	207	9
Deliveries	213	9
Signage	208	6
Aesthetics	201	4
Enforcement: Speed	203	4
Free Parking	206	4
Short Stay	210	3
Speed limit: Negative	209	2
	Total	190

Experience

Topic	Code	Number of responses
HGVs	304	19
Road Closure	301	13
Air quality: bad	306	12
Parking: Bad	302	11
Bus: Negative	303	11
Walking/pedestrian	307	3
Road Marking	305	2
	Total	68

Appendix G. Sponne School Workshop Summary

A5 Towcester Improvements - Sponne School

Workshop - 11 November 2022

7.1 Workshop summary:

Intro

We contacted Sponne School in Towcester to hold a workshop with their students as the school is near the A5 in Towcester and the pupils would offer the team a better understanding of their commute to school, the challenges they have experienced and how they think we could mitigate them.

The school selected 15 students to attend the workshop from years 7 and 8 (11-13 years old). The students were specially selected as those who walk/cycle to school from the immediate area and travel down the A5.

The workshop opened with a discussion surrounding the A5 Towcester and what it is we are looking for from their input. We then brought out maps of the A5 on large paper and asked the students to annotate the maps with their thoughts and experiences using sticky notes.

Key themes

The key themes raised by the students have been summarised and are listed below: (some comments have been duplicated so there may be fewer points than comments)

Lighting (2 comments)

- More lighting is needed
- Lamp posts are in the centre of the path leaving little room for pedestrians.

Crossing (7 comments)

- Zebra crossing needed
- More crossings needed
- Cars don't stop on crossings
- Add crossing to bus stop locations.
- Need a crossing outside Dominos Pizza as there are accidents there.
- Crossing near the racecourse is hard

Cycling (5 Comments)

- Want a bike lane through town
- Currently too narrow and frightening to cycle

A5 Towcester Improvements Engagement Report 2022

- Pavements too narrow to cycle on
- Add bike stands
- Would be nice to bike but it is too narrow and big lamp posts fill the walking ways

Experiences (7 comments)

- Would avoid the A5 normally
- Too busy to cross the road
- Near McDonald's has a narrow and dangerous path
- Would rather walk down the side streets than A5
- Commuters in traffic don't let you cross the road
- Cars go through red lights, need a camera
- Parents don't let them walk along A5 alone

HGV's (3 comments)

- Would like to see fewer HGVs on the road
- Need to get rid of larger HGVs
- HGVs often blocking the road

Parking (3 comments)

- Too few parking spaces
- Need a car park for residents so they don't park on the roads

Specific mentions (11 comments)

- Watling street bridge - narrow path, needs crossing
- More zebra crossings (outside humbugs)
- Improving crossing from Green Lane - McDonalds
- Improving reactivity + things by Saracens
- Near Bidsworth two ditches on each side of the road. Have to go into ditches to go past.
- Pedestrian refuge needed outside the prem (shop outside the school)
- Traffic lights near Premier (shop outside school)
- Crossing needed between the garage and Aldi
- Crossroad needed from B&M to Tesco because it's too busy

Misc (10 comments)

- Speed bumps needed to slow traffic down
- Tractors cause issues on the road
- Road needs repairing – too many potholes
- Need wider paths
- Need wider roads
- Lower the speed limit
- Less cars on the road
- Need wider paths
- Need wider lanes so cars can pass each other