



## M4 Junction 18a News: YOUR COMMUNITY NEEDS YOU!

**Pucklechurch Parish Council believes that our parish is facing one of the biggest challenges to its continued existence: if enacted, the option to create a new motorway junction and associated link road here will have potentially devastating and irreversible consequences for both the local landscape and our community.**

This newsletter has been produced by the Parish Council to provide information about the proposal and the ways in which you can make your views known.

**All residents are urged to take part in the public consultation.**

### Background

A feasibility study into the creation of a new motorway junction on the M4 (18a) and the route of an associated link road to the A4174 Ring Road has resulted in two options being put forward for consultation.

One of these options, the Eastern Option - would involve the construction of a new motorway junction at the Westerleigh Rd. bridge and a road through our parish. Two possible routes for the road – Eastern Option A and Eastern Option B - have been marked on the map.

The independent study was commissioned by South Gloucestershire Council and Highways England. The aim of the new junction would be to tackle congestion problems in the north-east fringe of Bristol and help businesses operate more efficiently. Funding for the study was secured from the Department of Transport after a campaign led by Chris Skidmore MP that made the case for a new junction in Emersons Green that would serve the Bristol & Bath Science Park and the community at Lyde Green.

## **Opposition to the Eastern Option**

On 5<sup>th</sup> July PPC unanimously resolved to oppose the option for the construction of a new link road through the parish and for junction 18A to be sited at Westerleigh Rd.

On 14<sup>th</sup> July Chris Skidmore MP and Luke Hall MP, as well as more than 100 residents, attended a public protest meeting at which the MPs pledged to oppose the Pucklechurch option. Chris Skidmore went so far as to say that he would remove support for Junction 18a if the Pucklechurch option remained on the table.

### **A whole parish issue with consequences for all areas of settlement**

Pucklechurch Parish Council has pledged that it will do all that it can to ensure that residents are able to make their voices heard and to feel that their contribution to the consultation process has the capacity to make a real difference. The Council acts on behalf of the whole community and whilst acknowledging there are specific issues affecting the residents of particular areas it will make no distinction in fighting harder for one area over another.

### **Parish Council view**

The Council position is that the Eastern Option does not deliver the outcomes the cross-party campaign fought for: there would be irreversible consequences for the Bristol/Bath Green Belt and potentially devastating consequences for our community identity, multiple designated heritage assets, our industrial and archaeological heritage, the conservation area, the character of the local landscape (including the setting of the Cotswolds AONB) and its biodiversity, as well as residential amenity, traffic and air quality. Our primary aim at this stage is to demonstrate the Eastern Options are not an option.

Councillors have also been meeting with representatives of other parish councils with a view to impressing upon them that this is more than a Pucklechurch Parish issue: one likely consequence of the Eastern Option would be the creation of new rat runs and traffic congestion over a much wider rural and regional road network (induced traffic).

## Housing development

There is much speculation about how building a road through the parish might lead to future housing development but there is no evidence to support this as a driver for building the road here. The Council is aware that a number of speculative development proposals were produced as the result of the local plan-making process. PPC would like to reiterate that NONE of these sites has been approved but they have been offered by private developers whose concept documents will always present a convincing case in their own favour whilst playing down the constraints. **Pucklechurch and its surrounding area has not been identified for strategic housing growth as it is not considered compatible with the spatial strategy.**

## Your view

There are a number of reasons you might oppose the Pucklechurch option.

**It also possible that you may object to the construction of any junction at all.**

You might object for one or all of the reasons suggested below and may have others:

- Loss of Green Belt and harm the local landscape
- Increase in traffic and congestion on local roads
- Damage to conservation areas, heritage sites and listed buildings
- Harm to protected wildlife, valuable natural habitats, woodland etc.
- Spoil the setting and views from the Cotswolds AONB
- Increase air pollution and carbon emissions
- Harm to residential amenity, health and well-being
- Loss of community identity because of potential for housing development
- Threaten public transport provision by encouraging more car travel
- Isolate areas of the community from one another
- Make it dangerous for people to access local facilities by walking or cycling
- Damage local trade/employment by taking business away from the local area
- Fail to reduce congestion and meet business needs at Emersons Green
- Create new traffic hot spots and no upgrades to the A4174 roundabouts
- Divert the spending of public money from more pressing needs

**NB The plan at the centre of this newsletter is subject to revision by SGC**

## Public Consultation: how to make your views known

This is the first stage in overall scheme development. If the scheme progresses, it would still require detailed design, evaluation, preparation of business cases and statutory permissions: there would be more public consultation over several years.

The outcome of this consultation will be published in March 2018.

**It is vitally important that as many people respond to the consultation as possible. There are three ways to register an opinion - you might want to pursue all of them:**

- **Write a letter to South Gloucestershire Council:**

South Gloucestershire Council Consultation Team (M4 J18 scheme), SGC Council Offices, Badminton Road, Yate, BRISTOL, BS37 5AF

- **Respond to South Gloucestershire Council's public consultation**

This will run for eight weeks starting on 21 August. You can register to receive notifications about this consultation by recording your details with SGC at: [www.consultations.southglos.gov.uk/consult.ti/system/home](http://www.consultations.southglos.gov.uk/consult.ti/system/home)

- **Sign the online petition set up by Chris Skidmore MP & Luke Hall MP**

at [www.chrisskidmore.com/m4link](http://www.chrisskidmore.com/m4link) or call Chris Skidmore's office on 0117 9081524 if you need help to do so.

**SGC** will provide information and an online questionnaire and public exhibitions at venues in Pucklechurch, Westerleigh and Emersons Green.

**PPC** will provide links to information and the consultation will be made available on the Pucklechurch Community website at [www.pucklechurch.org](http://www.pucklechurch.org) and PPC's website at: [www.pucklechurchparishcouncil.weebly.com/m4-junction-18a.html](http://www.pucklechurchparishcouncil.weebly.com/m4-junction-18a.html).

**Notices** will also be posted on all Pucklechurch Parish Council noticeboards and others around the parish (e.g. Social Clubs, Surgery, Homefield Centre)

**Leaflets produced by PPC** will be distributed to all households to advise of the times and dates of meetings and exhibitions.

## Want to find out more or need help?

**Pucklechurch Parish Council has pledged to help all those who want to participate to do so and especially those cannot use a computer or access the internet. If you would like more information, help to complete the online survey or require a paper copy you can:**

- Attend one of the PPC weekly drop-in sessions that will take place throughout the consultation period on Saturday mornings (10-11.30am) and Tuesday evenings (6 - 7.30pm) at Pucklechurch Community Centre meeting room.
- Pick up a paper copy at:
  - Mike Walker's Newsagents
  - Pucklechurch Community Centre Social Club
  - Pucklechurch Village Sports and Social Club
  - The Homefield Centre
  - The Bridge Inn, Shortwood
- Request a paper copy at a local library or one stop shop
- Call Pucklechurch Parish Council on 0117 9374105 to request a paper copy or help – please leave a message with your name and contact details.

## Public Meeting

A public meeting will take place at Pucklechurch Community Centre on September 12<sup>th</sup> (7.30pm)

## Social Media & Email lists

Up to the minute news is being broadcast on two websites, Twitter and Facebook:

[www.pucklechurchparishcouncil.weebly.com](http://www.pucklechurchparishcouncil.weebly.com)

[www.pucklechurch.org](http://www.pucklechurch.org) (sign up to the mailing list here)

@M418aNews

[www.facebook.com/groups/1940588919512554](https://www.facebook.com/groups/1940588919512554) (Pucklechurch Jct 18a Action Group)

## Want to help with the campaign?

Pucklechurch Parish Council is looking for help in the following ways:



### Become a Street Champion:

We are looking for someone in every street in the parish who can

- deliver leaflets, consultation documents, or information sheets to that street

### Be a 'Consultation Buddy'

We are looking for people who can offer assistance

- to residents who need help to complete paper or online responses to the consultation or with the writing of objection letters
- to collect completed forms and return to the Parish Council who will forward to SGC
- to act as a two-way point of contact between the Parish Council and residents

### Knowledge and expertise:

We are looking for residents with specific skills relevant to this consultation who might be willing to offer their knowledge and expertise in, for example:

- traffic engineering
- road transport
- biodiversity
- heritage sites
- public consultations

### Local business contacts:

We are looking for people who might be able to help write impact statements, offer resources or to communicate information through their networks

**CALL 0117 937 4105 AND LEAVE A MESSAGE OR CONTACT BOB SYMONS VIA EMAIL AT [parish.council@pucklechurch.org](mailto:parish.council@pucklechurch.org)**