

**THE WELSH MINISTERS (THE DOLGELLAU TO SOUTH OF BIRKENHEAD TRUNK ROAD
(A494) (QUEENSFERRY INTERCHANGE TO GARDEN CITY IMPROVEMENT))
COMPULSORY PURCHASE ORDER 202-**

STATEMENT OF REASONS

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Welsh Ministers, as the relevant Highway Authority, are responsible for the motorway and trunk road network in Wales.
- 1.2 The A494 Trunk Road (A494(T)) together with the A55 and A550 Trunk Roads form a key east-west corridor between Queensferry and Ellesmere Port, as well as the wider North West of England to the rest of North Wales.
- 1.3 It is a major link within the Mersey Dee area carrying a mix of local and strategic traffic including important access to Holyhead port and on to Ireland. The route is also heavily utilised by visitors accessing the many popular tourist destinations in North Wales.
- 1.4 The River Dee bridge, which was constructed in the early 1960s, forms a critical part of this corridor, carrying circa 70,000 vehicles per day.
- 1.5 The need for a new bridge is driven by the poor structural condition of the existing bridge deck. The inspections and monitoring to date have concluded that the frequency of repairs and the risk of major repair and intervention requiring the closure of the bridge is growing year-on-year.
- 1.6 In addition to the draft Orders now published the draft proposals include the use of powers conferred on the Welsh Ministers by the Highways Act 1980 in conjunction with the Acquisition of Land Act 1981 (see “Section 8 Powers to Construct the Scheme”, below) to undertake the widening of the existing A494 Trunk Road between Queensferry Interchange and Garden City in the County of Flintshire (referred to overall as “the Scheme”) and construct an integral cycle track.
- 1.7 The Scheme would provide a new bridge over the River Dee, located to the south of the existing bridge crossing, which would be demolished, except for the in-river support piers that will remain in place. This new crossing would carry a dual two-lane urban highway and include a two-way cycle track (with a right of way on foot) and maintenance access route integral to the A494 trunk road. The cycle track would run along the southeastern side of the bridge and would continue for the full length of the Scheme, from Chester Road East to north-east of the River Dee, where it would connect with the existing integral trunk road cycle track.

1.8 The Scheme also involves upgrading the A494(T) road on both sides of the river. On the southwest side, the road will be widened and improved for about 800 metres, starting from the Queensferry Interchange up to the beginning of the new bridge. On the north-east side, the improvements continue for around 380 metres from the end of the bridge. The upgraded road will be a dual two-lane urban highway, with two lanes and a 3-metre-wide hard shoulder in each direction

1.9 The published proposals comprise—

(a) The draft Line and Bridge Order now published is –

‘The Dollgellau to South of Birkenhead Trunk Road (A494) (River Dee Bridge Replacement) Order 202-’ to provide for the construction of a length of the trunk road, to include a two way cycle track (with a right of way on foot) and maintenance access route integral to the A494 trunk road running along its south eastern side, commencing at a point approximately 39 metres south east of the centre point of the existing trunk road and approximately 20 metres south west of the south western bank of the navigable waterway known as the River Dee and extending north eastwards for a distance of 166 metres to a point approximately 30 metres south east of the centre point of the existing trunk road and approximately 23 metres north east of the north eastern river bank of the River Dee.

(b) The draft Side Roads Order now published is –

‘The Dolgellau to South of Birkenhead Trunk Road (A494) (Queensferry Interchange to Garden City Improvement) (Side Roads) Order 202-’ which authorises the improvement of highways, the stopping up of existing highways (which includes footpaths, cycle tracks and all-purpose highways), the construction of new highways (which includes footpaths, cycle tracks and all-purpose highways) the stopping up of private means of access to premises, and the provision of new means of access to such premises; the construction of temporary highways and the temporary closure of highways .

(c) The draft Compulsory Purchase Order, now published is-

‘The Welsh Ministers (The Dolgellau to South of Birkenhead Trunk Road (A494) (Queensferry Interchange to Garden City Improvement)) Compulsory Purchase Order 202-’ to provide for the acquisition of land and rights required for the construction and maintenance of the Scheme.
(Collectively referred to as “the draft Orders”).

- 1.10 An Environmental Statement (ES) has been prepared in association with the above draft Orders and is available for inspection on the Welsh Government website at <https://gov.wales/a494-river-dee-bridge> and as advised in the public notices for the Scheme. This Scheme is subject to an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) in accordance with Part VA of the Highways Act 1980, Directive 2011/92 EU (as amended by 2014/52/EU) and the Environmental Impact Assessment (Miscellaneous Amendments relating to Harbours, Highways and Transport) Regulations 2017.
- 1.11 In accordance with Part 6 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended), a Statement to Inform an Appropriate Assessment (SIAA) has been prepared on the possible impacts associated with the Scheme on the following European Sites of Conservation:
- River Dee and Bala Lake Special Area of Conservation (SAC) – Atlantic salmon, Sea and River lamprey and otter;
 - Dee Estuary SAC and Ramsar Site – Atlantic salt meadows (including saltmarsh), estuaries (including saltmarsh), mudflats and sandflats not covered at low tide, and sea and river lamprey;
 - Dee Estuary Special Protection Area (SPA) – All features of interest (Common Tern, Little Tern, Sandwich Tern, Bar-tailed Goodwit (wintering), Redshank, Black-tailed Goodwit (wintering), Curlew (wintering), Dunlin (wintering), Grey Plover (wintering), Knot (wintering), Oystercatcher (wintering), Pintail (wintering), Redshank (wintering), Shelduck (wintering) and Teal (wintering)) and sub features - rocky shores, shingle banks, saltmarsh, intertidal mudflats and estuary channels;
 - These sites now form part of the national sites network as amended by the Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019 (the 2019 Regulations).
- 1.12 The ES describes the proposals, identifies the main environmental effects on both the man-made and natural environment and describes the proposed measures to avoid, mitigate and reduce impacts and provide environmental enhancement where relevant.
- 1.13 The ES is reported in four parts:
- The Non-Technical Summary
 - Volume 1 – Technical Assessment Report
 - Volume 2 – Figures
 - Volume 3 – Technical Appendices

A Non-Technical Summary (NTS) summarises the ES in non-technical language. Volume 1 is the main technical assessment report, which details the methodology and results of the EIA. It sets out ways in which identified impacts can be effectively mitigated. Volume 2 is a set of supporting figures which should be read alongside Volume 1. Volume 3 is a set of technical appendices which should also be read alongside Volume 1.

2. BACKGROUND TO THE PROJECT - THE NEED FOR REPLACING THE A494(T) RIVER DEE BRIDGE

Existing Conditions

- 2.1 The A494(T) is a route of local, national importance and a key route in linking Ireland, through the UK to the European continent. At a regional and local level, it serves as the main economic artery for North Wales. The existing River Dee bridge is a pivotal connection on this key route.
- 2.2 The need for a new bridge is driven by the poor structural condition of the existing bridge deck.
- 2.3 If nothing is done, the bridge will continue to deteriorate which may require measures such as further weight restrictions and lane closures in the short to medium term and result in closure in the medium to long term.
- 2.4 Replacing the deteriorated parts of the bridge would require the closure of the A494(T) for significantly long periods, resulting in severe disruption and delays to journeys both for bridge users and for those travelling on the local road network.
- 2.5 The absence of hard shoulders on the route and a lack of good local diversionary routes, compounds the poor performance of the bridge at peak times when long delays occur and which can hinder emergency services.
- 2.6 Non-motorised vehicular user facilities on the bridge are also sub-standard. The footway is very narrow and no longer offers a suitable connection down to the Wales Coast Path on the northeast side of the River Dee. The A494(T) route here has no segregated facilities for cyclists.

Need for the Scheme

- 2.7 Over recent years several repairs have been undertaken to keep the bridge operational. However, inspections and monitoring undertaken have concluded that the frequency of repairs and risk of future major repair and intervention requiring the closure of the bridge is increasing.

- 2.8 The bridge was identified as being sub-standard in 2012 and placed in special measures. Control measures are currently being implemented to ensure the risks to public safety are assessed and managed. The bridge has been assessed as having a 40-tonne capacity, however abnormal loads cannot use it, therefore, have to divert along the A55.
- 2.9 In line with Llwybr Newydd: the Wales Transport Strategy 2021 (WTS) priorities, the Welsh Government need to ensure that the A494 corridor is maintained and operated in a way that meets statutory obligations, minimizes adverse environmental impacts, promotes active travel, sustains and creates employment and reduces the backlog of maintenance.
- 2.10 Resolving this critical weak point on the A494 corridor is also consistent with WTS priorities to make best use of the existing transport infrastructure by maintaining it and managing it effectively and efficiently.

3. OBJECTIVES OF THE PROPOSED SCHEME

- 3.1 By working with key stakeholders and by obtaining a developed understanding of the current problems and issues experienced by the travelling public using the bridge, the Welsh Ministers have developed a Scheme, which has objectives to:
- Maintain connectivity of the A494(T) strategic corridor by addressing the life expired River Dee Bridge.
 - Maximise opportunities for modal shift through better provision for alternative modes.
 - Minimise scheme whole life carbon emissions through applying carbon reduction measures to design, construction and operation.
 - Maintain and enhance the local environment by securing long term net benefit for biodiversity.
 - Improve resilience on the A494(T) corridor by minimising the impacts of incidents and accidents and enhancing safety for road users and maintenance personnel.
 - Maintain connectivity along the A494(T) strategic corridor during construction to minimise impacts on residents, businesses, strategic and local traffic.

4. CONSULTATIONS

4.1 Through understanding the current issues and future challenges, a long list of potential options was identified which aim to deliver the Scheme objectives.

4.2 These options were assessed using the Welsh Transport Appraisal Guidance (“WelTAG”), which is the Welsh Government guidance on planning and appraisal for transport, and through a process of design and engineering, transport and environmental appraisal these options were assessed to identify a short list of five options. These short-listed options were:

- Option B – New twin structure River Dee Bridge plus active travel link within existing rail underbridge. This would replace the River Dee Bridge with two new bridges. Work at the railway would be minimised with the existing highway verge area through the structure being reconfigured to facilitate an active travel path. Up to 3km of new and improved active travel paths.
- Option C - New twin structure River Dee Bridge plus separate rail underbridge for active travel. This would replace the River Dee Bridge with 2 new bridges. A new underbridge would be constructed through the railway embankment for an active travel path. Up to 3km of new and improved active travel paths.
- Option D - New off-line single structure River Dee Bridge plus new westbound rail underbridge. This would replace the River Dee Bridge with a new bridge immediately upstream. The existing river bridge would either be re-purposed for a non-motoring usage or demolished. A new underbridge would be constructed through the railway embankment for westbound road traffic and an active travel path. Up to 3km of new and improved active travel paths.
- Option E - New off-line single structure River Dee Bridge plus active travel link within existing rail underbridge. This would replace the River Dee Bridge with a new bridge immediately upstream. Work at the railway would be minimised with the existing highway verge area through the structure being reconfigured to facilitate an active travel path. Up to 3km of new and improved active travel paths.
- Option F - New off-line single structure River Dee Bridge plus separate rail underbridge for active travel. This would replace the River Dee Bridge with a new bridge immediately upstream. A new underbridge would be constructed through the railway embankment for an active travel path. Up to 3km of new and improved active travel paths.

4.3 The WelTAG Stage 2 appraisal concluded that the best performing option was Option E and consists of constructing a new bridge to carry two lanes of eastbound and

westbound traffic and a shared use path for cyclists and pedestrians. This option is scored well in the WelTAG appraisal due to the following key aspects:

- Strong alignment with the priorities and requirements of the WTS.
- Minimised construction impact with the bulk of the construction undertaken without disrupting current traffic using the A494(T).
- Better opportunities to minimise the level of carbon during construction and reuse existing land for biodiversity improvement.
- Reduced impact on third party assets such as the North Wales Coast Railway and public utility supplies such as electricity, water/sewage and gas supply cables and pipes.
- Improved active travel facilities with new links and connections.
- Lower construction carbon and capital cost.

4.4 A thirteen-week public consultation, including a public consultation exhibition held on Tuesday 21st January 2025, was held between December 2024 and March 2025, with members of the public invited to comment on the five short list options. Option E was listed as the best performing option arising from the WelTAG assessment.

4.5 Local Authority Liaison Group (LALG), Environmental Liaison Group (ELG) and Active Travel Liaison Group (ATLG) meetings were held with key consultees during the evolution of the Scheme design and the assessment process. These will continue to be held on a recurring basis.

4.6 The public consultation showed strong support for Option E and a desire for the Scheme to proceed as soon as possible. The Cabinet Secretary for Transport and North Wales, Ken Skates, subsequently announced in June 2025 that Option E was the preferred option to move ahead to the next development stage and to be followed by the publication of draft Orders. Option E, referred to as the proposed Scheme in the remainder of this document and is described in the next section.

4.7 Statutory undertakers were consulted regarding diversions and protection of infrastructure and the effects of the Scheme on their assets. Landowners, other interested parties and people whose properties or private means of access would be directly affected by the Scheme have been contacted and informed about the details of the proposed Scheme.

5. GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED SCHEME

- 5.1 The full Scheme length is approximately 1.3 kilometres, extending from the north-east side of Queensferry Interchange in the south-west, north eastwards to a point approximately 380 metres north-east of the northeast bank of the River Dee at Garden City.
- 5.2 The proposed Scheme consists of a new bridge over the navigable waters of the River Dee.
- 5.3 The new bridge will be located to the south-east of the existing bridge. It will carry vehicular traffic and include, as an integral component of the trunk road, a shared use cycle track for cyclists and pedestrians, which will also function as a trunk road maintenance track.
- 5.4 Works to the highway will extend from where the A494(T) passes under the North Wales Coast Line (CNH3) in the south-west, to the north-east of the River Dee at Garden City. The improvement works will include introducing a new hard shoulder in each direction connecting to the existing hard shoulders to the east of the River Dee, alignment improvements and new drainage systems.
- 5.5 An integral cycle track (with a right of way on foot), combined with a maintenance access track, integral to the A494(T) will be provided over the length of the Scheme, running alongside its westbound carriageway, from the underpass of the A494(T) at Queensferry Interchange, to north-east of the River Dee, where it will connect to the existing A494(T) integral cycle track. Other new non-motorised user routes will be provided to connect with the local highways network.
- 5.6 A new and improved left-in / left-out priority junction will be provided from the westbound carriageway of the A494(T) to the Riverside Gypsy Travellers site and to commercial properties on the southwest bank of the River Dee and to a river pumping station.
- 5.7 The estimated cost of the Scheme (excluding VAT), based on second quarter 2025 prices, is £144 million.
- 5.8 The construction phase for the Scheme is anticipated to take approximately 32 months. To minimise disruption to A494(T) traffic, the new bridge would be located to the southeast of the existing bridge and construction works to take place 'offline' of the existing highway and allow the road to remain open during the majority of construction.

6. THE KEY FEATURES OF THE PROPOSED SCHEME

- 6.1 The key features of the proposed Scheme are:

- (a) a new River Dee bridge to carry two lanes of traffic in each direction and an adjacent cycle track (with a right of way on foot), shared with a trunk road maintenance track, integral to the A494(T);
- (b) improvements to the existing A494(T) carriageway, to the east of where the road passes under the North Wales Coast Railway Line (CNH3), including introducing a new hard shoulder in each direction connecting to the existing hard shoulders to the east of the River Dee, alignment improvements and introduction of sustainable drainage systems;
- (c) a new priority junction connecting the Riverside area (located south of the new River Dee bridge) to the westbound carriageway of the A494(T);
- (d) a new highway link road connecting the priority junction described in (c) above to the Riverside Gypsy and Traveller site, commercial properties on the southwest bank of the River Dee, and a river pumping station;
- (e) a cycle track, for pedestrians and cyclists, combined with a maintenance vehicular access route, running along the south-east side of the westbound carriageway, integral to the A494(T), between Queensferry Interchange and the integral cycle track of the A494(T) on the northeast side of the River Dee. This new A494(T) cycle track will provide connections with – (i) the Wales Coast Path/NCN 568 on the northeast side of the River Dee, as well as the trunk road cycle track to the northeast of the river which runs through and connects to Drome Corner and Sealand Road; (ii) the new local cycle track connection with the B5441 Station Road mentioned in (f) below; (iii) the new local cycle track connection with unclassified Factory Road mentioned in (g) below; and (iv) the integral cycle track network and underpass of the Queensferry Interchange, on the south east side of the A494(T);
- (f) a new local cycle track, for pedestrians and cyclists, shared with a vehicular private access track, running from north-west termination point of the new highway link road described in (d) above, extending north eastwards, then generally north westwards, crossing beneath the new bridge on the southwest bank of the River Dee, connecting to the B5441 Station Road;
- (g) a new local cycle track, for pedestrians and cyclists, shared with a vehicular private access track, running from the north-west termination of the highway link road described in (d) above, extending southeastwards and then generally south westwards connection with Factory Road, and which will link to the integral A494(T) cycle track mentioned in (e) above;
- (h) improvement of an informal path for pedestrians, cyclists and private means of vehicular access running between the Wales Coast Path/NCN 568 and Claremont Avenue.

- (i) a new footpath running between the A494(T) highway boundary and the Chemistry Lane/Factory Road junction located to the southwest of Footpath 15 (West Saltney) which is to be stopped up, and along the northeast boundary of the North Wales Coast line (CNH3);
- (j) collectively, the proposed non-motorised user provisions described in (e) to (i) above, along with enhancements to existing connections, will deliver up to 3 km of new and improved walking and cycling routes. This includes a continuous public walking and cycling route extending from the Drome Corner junction in the north-east to the Queensferry Interchange in the south-west, with additional links to and from the B5441 Station Road and the unclassified Factory Road. These improvements are expected to enhance safety for cyclists, pedestrians, and vehicular users of the A494(T) by providing clear segregation between motorised and non-motorised traffic. Some of the routes may experience low and infrequent use by maintenance vehicles;
- (k) the diversion of the 'Queensferry Drain' (a main river designated by Natural Resources Wales), located on the south-east side of the A494(T). The drain currently flows through a culvert beneath the A494(T), west of the North Wales Coast Line (CNH3), and continues in an open channel to the east of the railway line. As part of the Scheme, new sections of open channel would be constructed on the south-east side of the widened A494(T), on both sides of the North Wales Coast Line. The existing culvert beneath the railway will be retained and supplemented with new culverted sections to connect the open channels. Additional drainage infrastructure would also be provided within the widened trunk road corridor to support the Scheme's overall drainage requirements;
- (l) a new River Dee sluice will be created, and a new Queensferry Pumping Station facility provided, located to the south-west of the River Dee and at the north-west termination point of the new highway link road connecting to the Riverside area as described in (d) above;
- (m) demolition of the existing A494 River Dee Bridge, except for the river piers, which will remain in-situ.
- (n) local environmental mitigation works, in consequence of the Scheme, will be provided –
 - to the northeast of the unclassified Chester Road East at its new north-westerly termination point, where mature trees at the rear garden of 1 Bridge Houses (which is to be demolished) will be retained to avoid loss of habitat and provide shading to proposed bat roost structures against artificial light.

- by way of new hedgerows connecting existing habitats to the southeast of the new Queensferry Drain (Open Channel), off unclassified Chester Road East, together with further areas of soft estate just to the southwest of the North Wales Coast Line (CNH3) at the northeast end of the new Channel's new maintenance access road.
- by way of new hedgerows, connecting existing habitats, to be provided to the southeast of the realigned Queensferry Drain (Open Channel), at the northwest boundary of the Welsh Water Queensferry Sewage Treatment Works, together with further areas of soft estate just to the northeast of the North Wales Coast Line (CNH3) at the southwest end of the realigned Channel's new maintenance access road.
- by way of new hedgerows connecting existing habitats to the southwest of Ferrybank Farm and to the southeast of the trunk road cycle track that connects the Wales Coast Path/NCN 568 to Foxes Lane.
- by way of installation and monitoring of bat boxes near the Queensferry Interchange, to the south of A494(T) and northeast of the B5129 Chester Road East, providing roosting opportunities and enhanced connectivity between existing habitats.
- by way of construction of a dedicated bat roost building and subsequent monitoring at land to the southwest of the River Dee, adjacent to the proposed pumping station and near the southern extent of the Scheme, contributing to long-term habitat provision and species opportunities for biodiversity.

These mitigation measures will provide both fauna permanent habitat and green infrastructure which will integrate the Scheme more sensitively within the wider environment;

- (o) the Scheme would result in the demolition of four properties, Nos 1 – 4 Bridge Houses, three of which (Nos. 2 – 4) are owned by the Welsh Ministers, and one (No. 1) owned by Flintshire County Council. All properties are unoccupied;
- (p) business sites that would be lost to the Scheme, are – T K Motor Repairs, at Unit 1, located on the western side of unclassified Chester Road East; and J & M Garner (Haulage) Limited premises, situated to the southeast of the A494(T) and on the southwest bank of the River Dee;
- (q) the highway, and private access road, known as By Pass Road, direct off the southeast side of the A494(T) serving other land interests, including Riverside Joinery and Chaloner Auto Repairs Ltd, on the southwest bank of the River Dee, and the Riverside Gypsy Travellers Site, as well as the Queensferry Pumping

Station and River Dee Sluice sites, will be removed by the Scheme, and replaced by the a new priority junction and link road as described in (c) and (d) above;

- (r) offsite environmental mitigation works are proposed for the foreshore area of Greenfield Marsh, near Walwen. This site is located northeast of the Greenfield Recycling Centre and the North Wales Coast Line, and southwest of the River Dee Estuary off Bagillt Bank, within the Community of Holywell. The works will involve the removal of rubble patches, likely remnants from a nearby former landfill. The area will be preserved and monitored to support the natural colonisation of saltmarsh habitat. If environmental conditions change, targeted manual enrichment may be undertaken to support key saltmarsh species. A dedicated environmental management and monitoring plan (EMMP) will be implemented at pre-construction stage, with ongoing ecological monitoring assessments for five years post-construction, to track habitat development and ensure long-term habitat restoration success.

7. POLICY CONTEXT

- 7.1 A review of the legislative and policy context from an environmental perspective and for the Scheme is reported in the ES, Volume 1 Chapter 5: Legislative and Policy Context.

- 7.2 In summary, the main legislative and policy documents taken into account in the ES include:

- (a) Highways Act 1980

The empowering Act for making the Orders and, if the Orders are made, for undertaking the Scheme works.

- (b) The National Assembly for Wales (Transfer of Functions) Order 1999 and the Government of Wales Act 2006

The legislative powers which transferred devolved powers to the Welsh Ministers.

- (c) Environment (Wales) Act 2016

An Act providing a framework for ensuring that managing natural resources sustainably will be central to development design, including of road schemes so that they can be delivered in a way that manages natural resources sustainably, and will be a core consideration in decision making.

- (d) The Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015

An Act embodying the improvement of the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales, with seven well-being goals – a prosperous Wales; a resilient Wales; a healthier Wales; a more equal Wales; a Wales of cohesive communities; a Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language; and a globally responsible Wales, being at its core.

(e) Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013

An Act requiring local authorities in Wales to map and plan for suitable routes for active travel, and to build and improve their infrastructure for walking and cycling every year and to consider the needs of walkers, cyclists and other non-motorised users and make better provision for them. It also requires Welsh Government and local authorities to promote walking and cycling to place less reliance on making short journeys by car.

(f) Human Rights Act 1998

An Act which sets out the fundamental rights and freedoms that everyone in the UK is entitled to. It incorporates the rights set out in the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) into domestic law. The ECHR protects the human rights of people in countries that belong to the Council of Europe (which includes the UK). The Act prohibits public authorities from acting in a way which is incompatible with the Convention.

In particular –

Article 1 of the First Protocol protects the right of everyone every natural or legal person to the peaceful enjoyment of their possessions. No one can be deprived of their possessions except in the public interest and subject to the conditions provided for by law and the general principles of international law.

Article 8 protects the right to respect for your private life, and your family life, your home and correspondence. No public authority can interfere with those interests the exercise of this right unless it is in accordance with the law and it is necessary in a democratic society in the interests of national security, public safety or the economic well-being of the country, for the prevention of disorder or crime, for the protection of health or morals, or for the protection of the rights or freedoms of others.

In considering these matters it has been recognised that a fair balance has to be struck between the competing interests of the individual and of the community as a whole.

(g) Climate Change Act 2008

An Act which places a duty to reduce UK greenhouse gas emissions by 2050 to a level which is at least 100% below 1990 levels, and to set carbon budgets on successive five-year rolling periods and proposals for meeting those budgets.

- (h) Economic Renewal, A New Direction (July 2010)

Setting out the role which Welsh Government can play in providing the best conditions and framework to enable the private sector to grow and flourish.

- (i) Economic Mission: Priorities for a Stronger Economy 2023

Setting out Welsh Government's priorities for building a more prosperous, equal, and greener economy.

- (j) Llwybr Newydd: The Wales Transport Strategy 2021

A national framework for transport planning in Wales and also the Welsh Government's Transport Strategy. It includes the ambitions from 2021 to 2041, and priorities from 2021 to 2026. The document outlines the need to future-proof the existing road network in terms of reliability and resilience and all Schemes must be developed according to a sustainable transport hierarchy.

- (k) Wales Infrastructure Investment Strategy (2021)

The Wales infrastructure investment strategy 2021 (WIIS) sets out the Welsh Government's 10-year vision and investment strategy designed to prioritise, scope and coordinate delivery of the Welsh Government's major infrastructure investments, whilst improving the long term economic, social and environmental well-being of people and communities in Wales.

- (l) One Wales: One Planet (May 2009)

Setting objectives to achieving the goal of sustainable development; 'enabling all people throughout the world to satisfy their basic needs and enjoy a better quality of life without compromising the quality of life of future generations.'

- (m) Future Wales: The National Plan 2040

This National development plan covers the whole of Wales for the period up to 2040. The plan seeks to provide a strategy for addressing key national priorities through the planning system. It includes economy, housing and environment. It shows where nationally significant developments like energy, transport, water and waste projects should take place. The plan shows where growth should happen, what infrastructure and services are needed.

- (n) Planning Policy Wales

Welsh Government's published national planning policy document, under which local planning authorities prepare their Local Development Plans.

- (o) North Wales Regional Transport Plan 2025.

As of June 2025, the new Regional Transport Plan for North Wales is about to be adopted following public consultation. The plan identifies the ambitions and priorities for transport in North Wales, including Eryri National Park, and the investments required.

- (p) Local Policy - Flintshire Local Development Plan (LDP) 2015 - 2030

Adopted in January 2023, the Local Development Plan sets out the policy framework and site allocations against which planning applications for development will be guided and judged.

- 7.3 The proposed Scheme positively contributes to the objectives and priorities of the above policy documents. It seeks to, in line with the Wales Transport Strategy, to future-proof the road network through improved resilience of the A494(T) network. It is aligned with the sustainable transport hierarchy by providing new and enhanced active travel provision and does not seek to generate additional vehicle journeys. Further, through its design, it seeks to lessen its impact upon the River Dee and its flood plain area, and through recycling of waste from the existing bridge to minimise the level of carbon created.'

8. POWERS TO CONSTRUCT THE SCHEME

General Powers

- 8.1 The Scheme would be authorised and constructed using the powers conferred on the Welsh Ministers by the Highways Act 1980 in conjunction with the Acquisition of Land Act 1981. The Welsh Ministers are empowered to undertake improvement of the existing trunk road (under general powers of section 62 of Part V of the Highways Act 1980) which would authorise them to widen, improve and carry out other works, to the existing trunk road either side of the River Dee and construct an integral A494(T) cycle track.

The Line and Bridge Order

- 8.2 The new bridge and its specifications and the length of new trunk road carried over the River Dee, would be authorised and constructed using the Order powers conferred on the Welsh Ministers as Highway Authority in accordance with Section 10 and Section 106 of the Highways Act 1980. The new bridge would carry a dual two-lane urban

highway and include a two-way cycle track (with a right of way on foot) and maintenance access integral to the A494 trunk road.

The Side Roads Order

- 8.3 The draft Side Roads Order would be made using the powers conferred on the Welsh Ministers under sections 14, 125 and 268 of the Highways Act 1980. If made, it will authorise the Welsh Ministers to carry out improvements of existing highways, to stop up existing highways, and to construct new highways (which includes footpaths, cycle tracks, and all-purpose highways). It will also authorise the stopping up of private means of access to premises, and the provision of new means of access to such premises, and the construction of temporary highways and the temporary closure of highways.

The Compulsory Purchase Order

- 8.4 The draft Compulsory Purchase Order if made will enable the Welsh Ministers to acquire all the lands and rights over the land necessary for the proposed Scheme. In drawing up the proposed Scheme, regard has been given to the interference with the rights of all those with interests in the relevant lands and/or who would otherwise be affected by the Scheme.
- 8.5 The Compulsory Purchase Order is in pursuance of Sections 239, 240, 246, 250, 254 and 260 of the Highways Act 1980. If made, this would enable the Welsh Ministers to acquire all the land and rights over the land for the Scheme and its purposes of –

- (a) the construction of new trunk road from the southwest of the south western bank of the River Dee in the Community of Queensferry in the County of Flintshire to northeast of the northeastern bank of the River Dee in the Community of Sealand, in the County of Flintshire, in pursuance of the Line and Bridge Order (referred to in paragraph 8.2 above);

Namely, the construction of the new carriageways and an adjacent integral two-way cycle track on a new bridge over the River Dee.

- (b) the construction and improvement of highways and the provision of new means of access to premises from northeast of the Queensferry Interchange north eastwards to northeast of the northeastern bank of the River Dee, in the said Communities in the said County, in pursuance of the Side Roads Order (referred to in paragraph 8.3 above);

Namely, the construction of new Cycle Tracks (with a right of way on foot) and new Footpaths to connect the A494(T) to the surrounding highways

network and new means of access to premises to replace, or be provided in addition to, those affected by the Scheme.

- (c) the improvement of the trunk road, in the said Communities in the said County;

Namely, its widening and other works, either side of the new bridge over the River Dee, between the Queensferry Interchange and north-east of the River Dee.

- (d) the execution of works on watercourses in connection with the construction of the new trunk road and the construction and improvement of other highways and the execution of other works mentioned above;

Namely, a diversion in parts of the Queensferry Drain (a Natural Resources Wales main river) on the southeast side of the A494(T), and the creation of other drainage facilities, including a new pumping station site to replace the Queensferry Pumping Station lost under the Scheme, and a new outfall into the River Dee, associated with the Scheme's locality to the River Dee and its flood plain.

- (e) the provision of buildings and facilities to be used in connection with the construction, use and maintenance of the trunk road;

Namely, inspection, maintenance and vehicular access facility for the replacement pumping station site mentioned at paragraph (d) above.

- (f) use by the Welsh Ministers in connection with such improvement of highways and the execution of other works mentioned above; and

Namely, operational working space by way of works compounds and other land needed to be enabled to implement the Scheme works and justified on environmental grounds in the ES.

- (g) the mitigation of any adverse effects which the existence or use of certain of the highways proposed to be constructed or improved will have on the surroundings thereof.

Namely, the provision of landscaped mitigation works nearby the A494(T) works, providing both fauna replacement habitat and visual screening of the works with their surroundings, and enhancement works to the Salt Marshes, downstream of the new bridge, on the southwest bank of the River Dee, southwest of the River Dee Estuary off Bagillt Bank, in the Community of Holywell.

9. THE CASE FOR COMPULSORY PURCHASE

9.1 The draft Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) is published under the Highways Act 1980 and the Acquisition of Land Act 1981. The draft CPO is published in association with the following draft Orders entitled:

- The Dollgellau to South of Birkenhead Trunk Road (A494) (River Dee Bridge Replacement) Order 202-
- The Dolgellau to South of Birkenhead Trunk Road (A494) (Queensferry Interchange to Garden City Improvement) (Side Roads) Order 202-

9.2 For smaller schemes, the Welsh Government negotiates land acquisition by agreement often in parallel with compulsory purchase procedures, where it involves land/rights acquisition from normally no more than four interests, although consideration would be given to enter negotiations in excess of this should the situation warrant it. It uses compulsory purchase powers for all other schemes, and for those smaller schemes where it cannot reach agreement with all interests after a period of three months.

9.3 The CPO is required to ensure the timely acquisition of land and rights required for the Scheme, including its new side roads and rights of way and alternative means of access to the land affected by the proposed Scheme, and to enable the construction of appropriate environmental mitigation measures.

9.4 The amount of land identified in the CPO for the Scheme is considered to be the minimum necessary to construct and subsequently operate and maintain the Scheme together with the provision and maintenance of the environmental mitigation measures, which are necessary in order to avoid, reduce and remedy adverse effects.

9.5 In drawing up the proposals, regard has been given to the interference with the rights of all those with interests in the CPO and who would otherwise be affected by the Scheme.

10. INSPECTION OF DOCUMENTS

10.1 Copies of the draft Orders, the Environmental Statement, Non-Technical Summary and Statement to Inform an Appropriate Assessment, together with a General Arrangement Drawing illustrating the Scheme proposals, and other supporting information, may be inspected free of charge at reasonable hours at the following deposit locations:

Deeside Library
Leisure Centre
Chester Road West

Queensferry
Deeside
CH5 1SA

Or at

Welsh Government
Llandudno Junction Office
Sarn Mynach
Llandudno Junction
LL31 9RZ

10.2 To arrange an appointment to inspect the documents, please contact the Scheme Public Liaison Officer, Lucy Barnett on telephone no. 0203 1986 257 or email: Lucy.Barnett@mottmac.com.

10.3 A copy of the draft Line and Bridges Order, Side Roads Order, and Compulsory Purchase Order, and their associated Plans, and other documents, can be viewed at <https://gov.wales/a494-river-dee-bridge>.

11. LODGING OBJECTIONS TO THE DRAFT COMPULSORY PURCHASE ORDER

11.1 Any person wishing to support or object may do so by writing to the following address, or by email to transportordersbranch@gov.wales, quoting reference number qA2282121 and stating the grounds of objection:

Orders Branch
Transport
Welsh Government
Cathays Park
CARDIFF
CF10 3NQ.

11.2 Should you wish to object or support, your correspondence will be considered by the Project Team, and we may need to consult with people and organisations outside the Welsh Government. As part of the process of consulting with others we may pass information to them, including information you have given to us and your personal data. We will, however, only disclose your personal details where it is necessary to do so to enable us to deal with issues you brought to our attention. If you do not wish for certain personal data to be forwarded to third parties, you should state why when submitting your correspondence and the Welsh Ministers will copy the representations to the appropriate third parties with the name and address removed. Should the Scheme become the subject of a Public Local Inquiry (PLI), the correspondence will be seen by the Inspector to the PLI who may give them less weight as a result. All correspondence will be kept in the PLI Library and become publicly available.

- 11.3. Any objections, supports or suggested alternatives should be despatched to arrive no later than 11 November 2025.

12. DECISION PROCESS

- 12.1 As part of the legal process, the Welsh Ministers would consider all responses to the draft Orders and then decide whether to hold a PLI.
- 12.2 The decision as to whether or not to make the CPO and the associated Line and Bridge Order and Side Roads Order would then be taken by the Welsh Ministers after taking account of the findings and recommendations of the independent Inspector, should a PLI be held.

13. POST-DECISION PROCEDURES

- 13.1 Should the CPO be made and the Scheme proceed to construction, the Welsh Ministers would, through their valuation agent, enter into negotiations with all directly affected landowners regarding compensation for the land and rights needed and where appropriate the carrying out of any accommodation works on retained land to mitigate the effect of the Scheme.