

The A38 BREP scheme F – FAQ

Below is a series of FAQ responses to questions about scheme F. It covers most of the issues that have arisen too date.

Why is the A38 Through Bromsgrove important?

The A38 is one of Worcestershire's most important strategic transport routes, connecting northern Worcestershire with key destinations throughout the region including the wider West Midlands and the Strategic Road Network (the M5 and M42). It also serves local key destinations (Redditch, Droitwich and Kidderminster) as well as local access throughout Bromsgrove and the town centre. It forms part of the country's Major Road Network (MRN) which are the links just below motorway and trunk road status. It is the key transport corridor within Bromsgrove and is vitally important in terms of access for economic prosperity and well-being in the area. Significant congestion within the area not only impacts on journey times and journey time reliability but also creates poor environmental conditions. An additional key issue that is often overlooked is the impact of congestion on economic activity and growth and how this hinders the wider prosperity of the area.

What is A38 BREP?

The A38 Bromsgrove Route Enhancement Programme (A38 BREP) is a series of improvements to the highway network throughout the A38 corridor in Bromsgrove seeking to tackle existing and future congestion and accessibility issues. It includes:

- Junction capacity improvements (additional lanes, local widening etc.).
- Junction safety improvements (junction signalisation, new or improved pedestrian / cycle crossings etc.)
- Link capacity enhancements (additional lanes, dedicated right turn lanes etc)
- Active travel (cycling and walking) improvements both parallel too and crossing the A38 (new / improved footpaths, new / improved cycle paths and new and improved shared pedestrian / cycle routes)

The aim of the A38 BREP is to reduce congestion within the corridor and to tackle many of the issues that are currently present, and which will inevitably get worse in future years as traffic continues to grow and environmental conditions continue to worsen.

For a plan of the overall A38 BREP schemes and the more detail of each individual scheme please visit:

[Phase 3 A38 BREP improvements | Phase 3 A38 BREP improvements | Worcestershire County Council](#)

What is Scheme F?

Scheme F is one of the seven individual highway schemes within the A38 corridor (schemes A to G) and 6 active travel schemes (schemes 1 to 6) designed to deliver the improvements collectively known as A38BREP. Scheme F runs along the A38 south from the M42 J1 through to just past the A38 junction with Birmingham Road. The scheme consists of creation of a second lane southbound on the A38 between these two points, predominantly taking out the existing central hatching area. This creates additional capacity away from the M42 J1 towards Bromsgrove.

In order to create this second lane will require the removal of the existing dedicated right turn lane from the A38 into School Lane. Due to safety concerns/capacity concerns without this dedicated right turn lane and the crossing of two lanes south bound it is not considered appropriate to maintain this right turn into School Lane. The left turn into and the left turn out of School Lane will be maintained.

A plan of the scheme proposals can be seen on the council's website at:

[Phase 3 A 38 maps and information](#) | [Phase 3 A38 BREP improvements](#) | [Worcestershire County Council](#)

As part of the scheme the Council is proposing to introduce a 30mph speed limit from the M42 J1 to just north of the A38 / Birmingham Road Junction. It would be intended that this would be enforced by either fixed safety cameras or average speed camera along the section.

What is the aim of Scheme F?

The scheme is aimed at reducing congestion within the area both currently and as traffic continues to grow in future years. Most of the area-wide congestion is caused by the A38 southbound traffic blocking back at the M42 J1 down to Birmingham Road, causing congestion around the junction and on all arms of the M42 J1. Reducing the likelihood of this tailback occurring would improve safety, reduce congestion, improve journey time reliability and environmental conditions within the area. The introduction of two lanes on the A38 southbound from M42J1 to Birmingham Road is designed to provide the additional capacity to enable traffic to flow without blocking back through the M42 J1. The County Council has undertaken significant computerised transportation modelling of the area that demonstrates, in overall terms, that the scheme provides significant improvements in journey times and reduction in congestion in future years for the area generally.

This increased capacity on the A38 southbound would allow traffic at M42 J1 to operate at its full capacity as all movements onto and off the junction, even those not heading on the A38 southbound, would benefit from reduced congestion and better access at the junction.

The proposed southbound two-lane section would extend to the A38 / Birmingham Road junction. By this point approximately 25% of the traffic has turned right into Birmingham Road (towards the town centre). The remaining traffic on the mainline A38 has therefore fallen substantially and the transportation modelling has indicated that a single carriageway would have sufficient traffic capacity to carry the remaining volume.

In overall terms the detailed analysis of the area demonstrates considerable benefits in terms of reducing congestion and improving journey time reliability within this section of the A38.

What about the current / future environmental issues, particularly in relationship to noise and air quality?

Many of the environmental are made worse by the idling or stop/starting of cars within the corridor i.e., congestion. This creates poor environmental conditions including pollution issues and greenhouse gases. By allowing the traffic to flow more freely this reduces the overall environmental impacts. A full suite of environmental assessments of the scheme has been undertaken and the output results will be published on the County Council's website in due course.

A suite of environmental reports has been produced. These are available on the WCC website at:

[Insert link to environmental report](#)

What about emergency service (blue light) access when Scheme F is in place?

It is important that congestion issues are tackled to address emergency service access, where possible. This promotes access, reduces journey times and assists them in getting to incidents more quickly. By reducing the overall level of congestion within the area this would improve blue light response times for all. This is specifically importance given the location of the location of the ambulance station just south of the M42 J1.

With specific reference to the ambulance station, it is most important that ambulances can exit the station and travel as fast as possible. Currently, although ambulances have the option of using the central hatched area on the A38 southbound, once they reach School Lane their passage is obstructed by traffic queuing in the right turn lane for School Lane. With the new scheme, the additional A38 lane southbound would provide a similar, if not improved response time, as traffic would naturally move to the inside lane and there would be no obstruction of traffic waiting to turn right turn into School Lane. It is therefore considering the scheme would benefit the ambulance egress and help to promote blue light response times, by reducing overall congestion.

With the banning of the right turn movement into School Lane will this not increase traffic on Alcester Road. What are you seeking to do about that?

It is recognised that as part of the with the banning of the right turn into School Lane there will inevitably be an increase in traffic along Alcester Road southbound from M42 J1 to School Lane. The traffic modelling suggests that this is partly offset by less traffic using the Alcester Road corridor to access western Redditch, as the additional capacity within the A38 corridor means more traffic would use the A38/A448 corridor instead of the Alcester Road corridor to make these journeys. Overall, this means there would be a small increase in traffic using Alcester Road between the M42J1 and School Lane.

It is however recognised that this localised diversion is of concern to local residents and there is a considerable sum of money set aside, as part of the A38 overall project, to develop a traffic management / local safety scheme to mitigate the impacts of the changes in traffic patterns within the corridor. Unfortunately, due to the pandemic it has not been possible to undertake the required traffic and parking surveys and therefore we cannot present the detailed scheme at this time. However, as traffic returns to normal these surveys can be completed and an appropriate scheme can be introduced to mitigate this impact.

I have not heard of A38 BREP previously / What engagement has been done to date?

The County Council undertook an extensive consultation exercise in early 2020 on the A38 BREP schemes. All of the engagement exercises are described on the County Council website at:

[Engagement summary | Phase 2 A38 BREP improvements | Worcestershire County Council](#)

The website also contains all of the engagement plans, summary engagement reports and various other information on the project.

In addition, the council maintains an email address for people to supply observations / comments on all its proposals. This is:

What is the extent of Scheme F?

The proposed A38 southbound two-lane section would extend from M42J1 to Birmingham Road junction. By this point approximately 25% of the traffic has turned right into Birmingham Road (towards the town centre). The remaining traffic on the mainline A38 at this point has therefore fallen substantially and the transportation modelling has indicated that a single carriageway would have sufficient traffic capacity to carry the remaining volume.

Is there any requirement for private / 3rd Party Land to deliver scheme F?

Scheme F does not require the acquisition of any private (3rd party) land.

Footways alongside the A38

It is recognised that the footways alongside the A38 within the section between Birmingham Road and the M42 J1 are not up to modern standards. As part of the scheme, we are seeking to widen the existing footways to a better standard to achieve the following over the majority of the route:

- A 2m wide footway on the vast majority of the east side of the A38
- A 1.8m wide footway on the vast majority of the west side of the A38

We believe that this can be achieved within the existing highway boundary, with no need for third party land and this will enhance pedestrian safety within the corridor.

Alternative Options / Western Bypass

The Council have investigated several options both within the corridor and the potential for alternative route options to deal with the existing and future issues within the corridor. None of these options investigated to date either elevate the issues of the link and / or are realistically viable alternative solutions.

One of the main alternative options highlighted is the Bromsgrove western bypass, the County Council has reviewed this option. It has concluded that due to the nature, origin and destination and alternative routes currently used, if constructed, the western bypass would have very little impact on the level of traffic on this section of the A38. Therefore, an improvement scheme within this section would still be required to combat the existing and future predicted issues. Even if the western bypass was constructed the A38 would remain by far the busiest and the main strategic route for Bromsgrove and the most economically important road within the area.

Additional capacity improvements within the corridor including such options as dualling the section, creating a new signalised junction at School Lane etc. would all require significant land / property acquisition to facilitate. This is considered to be both inappropriate within this area and/or economically unviable.

Why 2 lanes southbound not northbound?

It would be equally as technically feasible to have two lanes northbound (towards the M42) as southbound (away from the M42), within this section. With regard to this option the following is concluded:

- Although it creates additional storage capacity on the approach to the M42 and the actual queue length approaching the M42 J1 would be reduced, as there is no additional capacity created at the stop line of the M42 J1 (the main restricting factor in terms of capacity) there would only be limited benefits of the scheme; and
- The main capacity issue at this location is traffic blocking back from A38 southbound through the M42 J1. This option does nothing to tackle this and therefore the main capacity issue will not be addressed.

Is the scheme safe?

The key driver in all of the Worcestershire County Council schemes is safety. In overall terms we need to consider whether the network will be safer after the scheme is built, than before, in terms of severity and frequency of incidents. An independent overall safety assessment has been undertaken for the scheme and it is considered that in overall terms the scheme will improve safety compared with not doing anything within the corridor.

The scheme will continue to go through the standard rigorous safety audit process as the scheme develops going forward to maximise safety within the corridor and surrounding road network.

Existing vehicular speed is an issue, the scheme will make this worse. What is being done about this?

The current speed limit within this section of road is 40mph. Concern have been raised by local residents to both existing vehicular speeds within the corridor and whether the changes made to road layout would encourage faster speeds. As part of the scheme proposals and following the safety review, the revised proposal would involve the reduction in speed limit to 30mph throughout this section. It is proposed that the speed limit would be to enforce this with speed cameras either at fixed points or with average speed cameras.

What will the impact of closing the right turn into School Lane be?

The County Council is not proposing the full closure of School Lane, which was one of the options considered in the 2020 engagement. Rather, the current scheme proposal is to ban the right turn into School Lane but allow traffic to turn left into and left out of School Lane. It is recognised that the traffic that currently turns right into School Lane would have to go up to the M42 J1 roundabout to access Lickey end and Alcester Road. This equates to approximately 10% of traffic flow currently heading north on A38 towards M42 J1. The overall scheme assessment has been based upon this.

The scheme is aimed at reducing congestion within the area both currently and as traffic continues to grow in future years. Most of the area-wide congestion is caused by the A38 southbound traffic blocking back at the M42 J1 down to Birmingham Road. This causes congestion around the junction and on all arms of the M42 J1. Reducing the likelihood of this tailback occurring would improve safety, reduce congestion, improve journey time reliability and environmental conditions within the area. The introduction of two lanes on the A38 southbound from M42J1 to Birmingham Road is designed to provide the additional capacity to enable traffic to flow without blocking back through the M42 J1. The County Council has undertaken significant computerised transportation modelling of the area that demonstrates, in overall terms, that the scheme provides significant improvements in journey times and reduction in congestion in future years for the area generally.

This overall improvement in capacity equally applies to the residents of Lickey End and surrounding communities. Allowing congestion at M42 J1 to continue to get worse would reduce accessibility generally to Lickey End and increasing delays access and egressing the area would create significant issues for local residents.

This increased capacity on the A38 southbound would allow traffic at M42 J1 to operate at its full capacity as all movements onto and off the junction, even those not heading on the A38 southbound, would benefit from reduced congestion and better access at the junction.

How will the A38 BREP be funded?

It is proposed to fund the A38 BREP proposals via a funding application to the Government (Department for Transport (DfT)) via the MRN funding initiative. A Strategic Outline Business Case (SOBC) was submitted in 2019. The council has recently submitted an Outline Business Case (OBC) which builds upon the SOBC previously submitted providing additional scheme detail that the Government require prior to allocating funding to the project.

Should the DfT support the funding application then the schemes will be further developed, prior to submission of a Full Business Case. This, if approved, will finalise the funding bid and allow construction of the project to begin.

The project is also supported by a local contribution. This local contribution which is required by the DfT is made up of grants from the local enterprise partnership (LEP) and contributions from local development with and around Bromsgrove.

Why can the money for this be spent on other local priorities?

It is proposed to fund the scheme predominately from a direct government grant, under its MRN initiative. As the funding would be via a direct grant the monies are ring fenced to be spent on highway / active travel improvements within the A38 corridor (as part of the MRN) and can not be spent on anything else.

What happens next?

Should the Council be successful with its funding application to the DfT, construction on the overall A38 BREP project is likely to start late 2022 to early 2023. The programme of works to the A38 corridor would be driven by the appointed contractor, however it is likely that scheme F will be towards the later stages of the envisaged programme. The work will take between 4 to 5 years to complete across the entirety of the A38 BREP project. During the works the council will seek to minimise construction impacts on both residents and traveling public.