

Transport update: proposed construction on the A303

I have been asked by my Right Honourable Friend, the Secretary of State, to make this Written Ministerial Statement. This statement concerns the application made under the Planning Act 2008 for the proposed construction by Highways England of a continuous dual carriageway on the A303 linking the Podimore Roundabout and the Sparkford Bypass.

Under section 107(1) of the Planning Act 2008, the Secretary of State must make his decision within 3 months of receipt of the Examining Authority's report unless exercising the power under section 107(3) to extend the deadline and make a Statement to the House of Parliament announcing the new deadline. The Secretary of State received the Examining Authority's report on the A303 Sparkford to Ilchester Development Consent Order application on 12 September 2019 and the deadline for a decision was previously extended from 12 December 2019 until 17 July 2020 to allow for further work to be carried out.

The deadline for the decision is to be further extended to 20 November 2020 (an extension of 4 months) to enable further information to be provided by the applicant and interested parties on outstanding concerns raised by the Examining Authority and consideration of that provided information before determination of the application by the Secretary of State.

The decision to set a new deadline is without prejudice to the decision on whether to give development consent.