

THE M50

Gloucestershire Gateway are emphasising the point that the M50 should be brought into the equation when deciding whether a new MSA is needed on the M5 at Brookthorpe. All traffic coming from the M50 and going North can stop at the Strensham MSA, a distance of only 22 miles from the start of the M50 at Ross. Cars and other vehicles travelling at 70 mph will do this in 19 minutes, and HGVs at 56 mph will cover the distance in 24 minutes, both well under the Dept for Transport's [Circular 1/2008](#) requirement of 30 minutes.

Going south it is a different story. From the start of the M50 at Ross, it is 53.5 miles to Michaelwood MSA. A car travelling at 70 mph will take 46 minutes to cover this distance, and HGVs will take 58 minutes. In practice, all cars and LGVs going from Ross southwards would choose to go on the A40 - a distance of 22 miles rather than 37 miles via the M50 - and pick up the M5 at Junction 11a. This is confirmed by Eric Vick, MD of the local transport firm, who says that his drivers would always use the A40 route from Gloucester to Ross, or vice versa, rather than the longer M50 route which would be more expensive in both time and diesel. Even to the proposed MSA at Brookthorpe, if it were ever built, the distance from the Ross end of the M50 via the M5 is about 40 miles, still way over the 28 mile/30 minute rule of Circular 1/2008, so would be of no real advantage to HGV drivers.

If an HGV driver going South wanted to take the M50 route from Ross, he would reach the M5 at Junction 8 after 22 miles, and in only another four miles, we he would reach Junction 9, the BP Shopping Complex with a Little Chef, M & S Food and a BP Filling Station with HGV lanes. This meets all transport needs and is only 26 miles from the start of the M50 at Ross, well inside the 28 mile/30 minute rule, and a far better option than suggesting that it is necessary to build another MSA at Brookthorpe which anyhow would be another 12 miles on.

Once again, Gloucester Gateway are picking up on what they think is a loophole, and trying to build on it - to no avail. It is outrageous to suggest that, for the benefit of the minimal traffic on the M50, a Motorway Service area is required on the proposed Brookthorpe site.