



The countryside charity  
Oxfordshire

Campaigning to protect our rural county

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Planning Department  
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7<sup>th</sup> March 2022

**Planning Application R3.0138/21**

**- The dualling of the A4130 carriageway (A4130 Widening) from the Milton Gate Junction eastwards, including the construction of three roundabouts; - A road bridge over the Great Western Mainline (Didcot Science Bridge) and realignment of the A4130 north-east of the proposed road bridge including the relocation of a lagoon; - .....**

**Combined response from CPRE South Oxfordshire and CPRE Vale of White Horse Districts**

CPRE South Oxfordshire and CPRE Vale of White Horse Districts wish to register their strong concern about this scheme.<sup>1</sup>

1. We are particularly concerned about the impact of this development on the local villages and the rural character of the area.
2. New roads have generally been shown to increase traffic and rarely deliver the promised benefits, as outlined in CPRE's 2017 report - '*The end of the road? Challenging the road-building consensus*'.<sup>2</sup>
3. The recent '*Computer Says Road*' Briefing Paper published by Create Streets endorsed these findings, quoting an American study which found that there is an almost perfect one-to-one relationship between new roads and new traffic added.<sup>3</sup> The Paper's key recommendation is to

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<sup>1</sup> NB This submission should be considered as an addition to the earlier CPRE South & Vale Districts submission (Dec 2021) relating principally to issues in connection with rights of way and lighting.

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.cpre.org.uk/resources/the-end-of-the-road-challenging-the-road-building-consensus/>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.createstreets.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/Computer-says-road-1.pdf>



*'Dispense with 'Predict and Provide' traffic modelling and adopt the 'Vision and Validate' methodology for all schemes. Plan for the traffic and place your residents want. We need to start with the vision and desired outcomes. **What does the community want their place to look and feel like?***

4. It is quite clear that the local communities that would be impacted by the HIF1 scheme do not support the proposals and do not want their places to look and feel as if they are being formed around a road-building agenda.
5. The carbon and environmental costs of the proposals would be significant and appear to have been downplayed in the current assessments. We support the concerns raised by the POETS, particularly in relation to their critique of the current Environmental Statement which identifies serious shortcomings including a failure to assess all the impacted localities, a failure to consider viable alternatives and a lack of appropriate mitigation measures.
6. Our understanding is that the full costs of the scheme are now well beyond the money received via the HIF allocation. The project certainly should not proceed without all funds in place and, given the pressure on local authority finances, we do not believe the burden of filling any funding gap could be justified by Oxfordshire County Council.
7. The risk of rat-running and the impact on communities beyond the immediate scheme need greater consideration. Whilst HIF1 may possibly facilitate traffic movement as far as the Golden Balls roundabout, it seems likely it would then 'drop' a significant amount of traffic onto rural roads leading across to the M40. The electorate has already made clear its views on an OxCam Expressway and does not want to see such a financially and ecologically costly project introduced by stealth.
8. This project was initiated many years ago and is now completely out of kilter with current policy on climate change and the environment. It is not in line with the Council's own emerging Local Transport & Connectivity Plan 5, which seeks to develop a zero-carbon transport system which prioritises walking and cycling and reduces car journeys.
9. CPRE believes the entire HIF1 project should be shelved in order to concentrate on the stated objectives of this broader emerging Plan.

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