

**This is the response of Eynsham Parish Council to
OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
INVESTING IN THE A40 CONSULTATION**



To: Henry Hilsdon
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Agreed Investment in the A40 up to 2025

Eynsham Parish Council (EPC) is very disappointed that during the whole planning process for this stage, no attempt was made to consult EPC. Improvements listed as 'F', 'G', 'H' and 'I' will all have a substantial impact on the people of Eynsham and the future development of the village. Yet this appears to have been given no consideration whatsoever in the A40 Science Transit Local Growth Fund Scheme.

During the Connecting Oxfordshire: Local Transport Plan 2015-3031 Consultation which ended in April 2015, this part of the A40 strategy was conspicuous by its absence, thereby pre-empting any chance for the people of Eynsham to consult, or even be informed, prior to this Scheme being agreed by Cabinet in July 2015.

The A40 is the major constraint on development in Eynsham, both residential and commercial, as the village struggles to accommodate the necessary sustainable development proposed by West Oxfordshire District Council draft Local Plan 2031.

Congestion, difficult access and the internal road layout of Eynsham all need to be satisfactorily resolved if these targets are to be met. Key to this is improvement of the A40 in a way compatible with the future growth of Eynsham which, to date, has been ignored by OCC contrary to paragraph 31 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

The Capital Governance Approval Document prepared for the July 2015 Cabinet (at p220) expressly refers to a park and ride car park to be located adjacent to the A40 in the Eynsham area, junction improvements to the junctions of the A40 with Elms Place, Cuckoo Lane and Witney Road in Eynsham together with the accesses to the Eynsham Service area and Evenlode public house. It further expresses concern about the junctions onto the A40 in the Eynsham area, particularly the traffic signals at Witney Road, indicating that there may be benefits for all traffic if these were re-designed.

However, in a presentation to EPC by OCC officers Lisa Michelson and Odele Payne on 6 October 2015, EPC was told that in the technical study for these, to be commissioned early 2016, the brief would be to just look at the A40 and public transport aspects with no consideration to be given to the impact of any of this on the surrounding settlement of Eynsham or its future.

EPC is currently developing a neighbourhood plan in compliance with the WODC draft local plan 2031, which is itself currently under examination. This is intended to include proposals for in excess of 250 new homes in Eynsham, which will clearly generate an increase in both private and public transport and the need for accessibility to employment.

To date, WODC have refused two proposed developments totalling 96 homes and is anticipated to refuse a further 160 home development, primarily on access grounds. All three are on the western edge of the village and all require access via Witney Road as no other suitable route is available.

Without some certainty that changes to the A40 will also connect with and include road infrastructure for Eynsham's growth, it is difficult for Eynsham to develop its neighbourhood plan for Eynsham's future or, in the wider context, for WODC to comply with its draft local plan for development and government housing targets.

If this initiative is not to be a wasted opportunity, OCC must comply with paragraph 31 of the NPPF and work with both WODC and the parish councils affected to develop plan-led strategies for the provision of viable infrastructure necessary to support the proposed sustainable development.

Consultation Feedback Form

The Consultation Feedback Form for this consultation pointedly avoids any reference to the components of the Local Growth Fund Scheme which overlap the options on which OCC is purporting to consult. It is also disappointing that OCC has not chosen to provide any background documents for reference on its consultation page other than the 'Investing in the A40' outline. This is clearly based on the A40 Witney – Oxford Corridor Route Strategy Baseline Statement, September 2014, yet neither this, nor any other supporting documents, have been made accessible so people can make more informed decisions about the choices offered.

None of the options available will be viable unless it is shown how they fit into the overall developing infrastructure of West Oxfordshire, and particularly with those settlements directly affected along the A40 route.

Because of the failure of OCC to provide adequate supporting documentation for these proposals and the apparent non-compliance with NPPF 31, EPC cannot comment on any of the proposals other than as above.

DS for EYNESHAM PARISH COUNCIL 4/11/15