



Reference:- https://consultations.oxfordshire.gov.uk/consult.ti/Wolvercote_Cuttleslowe/consultationHome

Date 30th July 2014

Respondents:- Wolvercote Neighbourhood Form.

David Stone, MSc.

SUBMISSION TO THE O.C.C. CONSULTATION ABOUT PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS TO THE WOLVERCOTE AND CUTTLESLOWE ROUNDABOUTS.

General Comments

The Wolvercote Neighbourhood Forum welcomes constructive improvements to the Wolvercote and Cuttleslowe roundabouts, which deliver significant sustainable long term reductions in traffic congestion; noise, emissions and better, safe, access for drivers, bus users, pedestrians and cyclist, to minimise risk from injury.

Every effort should be made to retain as much of the landmark green environment on and surrounding these junctions as possible, given the excessive levels of pollution which they generate.

The 'OCC Roundabouts Consultation' failed to evidence, offer alternatives or fully explain and demonstrate how these objectives will be satisfactorily achieved. Nor does it show how residents, in Wolvercote Ward, using the local road and cycle network will be completely integrated within this scheme without being at greater risk or further inconvenienced.

Background Issues.

The Wolvercote and Cuttleslowe roundabouts are linked together by Sunderland Avenue. The roundabouts and this section of road first opened for traffic in 1934. They are no longer fit for purpose and are unable to cope with the present volume of traffic, thus causing acute congestion and, consequently, unacceptable levels of pollution.

The main A40 London trunk road intersects at both the Cuttleslowe and Wolvercote roundabouts which carry high volumes of traffic on to the extremely busy and frequently blocked, A44 and A34 dual carriageway at Peartree. The A40 routes at the Cuttleslowe and Wolvercote roundabouts also serve as the main external arterial ring road around the City of Oxford. The roundabouts on this section of road are unsuitable to fulfil both transportation functions.

These busy intersections are joined in the north and south, by the A4165 Banbury Road, the A44 /A4144 and carry a significant influx of traffic into the City, resulting in long tailbacks. The present roundabouts are totally inadequate and presently unsafe for cyclists and pedestrian use.

The tail backs on the main roads approaching the roundabouts, with City inward and outward bound traffic on the A4165 Banbury road, currently cause serious main road access problems. This is especially so when attempting to cross and turn right over main roads, for the communities north west in Sunderland Avenue, Rothafields Road, Linkside Avenue, Jordan Hill, Five Mile Drive, Harbord Road, Templar Road estate and Harefields.

Access to and from Upper and Lower Wolvercote via Godstow Road is constrained by the brow of the hill and difficulty in negotiating on-coming traffic often changing lanes on the roundabout. The problem is exacerbated, by what is a large diameter roundabout and lack of road markings for Godstow road and Five Mile Drive.

The road layout and sheer volume of traffic, tail back congestion and acute difficulty experienced in securing safe access across these main roads and roundabouts significantly reduces community cohesion and integration north and south of the A40 and east and west of the A4165 Banbury Road. This significantly affects the quality of life for the 5,866¹ residents in Wolvercote Ward.

The Government Inspector at the Public Inquiry into the Core Strategy stated:-

4.137 Highways and traffic Northern Gateway lies at the focus of 3 extremely busy main roads, the A34 trunk road, the A40 and A44; all of which suffer from very high levels of traffic; the most congested area in Oxfordshire and one of the most stressed parts of the road network in the whole South East, with well documented very real problems of congestion

(CD5/11). The roundabouts at Wolvercote and Cutteslowe are heavily overloaded. To be acceptable, any development must show that the site can be developed in a sustainable manner, with priority given to non-car modes of access, and that the nearby road system can accommodate any additional traffic in an acceptable manner.

4.138 As matters stand at the moment, there appears little doubt that the existing main road network could not accommodate any additional traffic generated here without very severe increases in congestion....

Specific Comments

- 1) The rationale behind the present proposals for re-designing the roundabouts at Wolvercote and Cutteslowe appears to be to **increase traffic flow and capacity** at these key inter-sections. The singular "preferred design," as presented, ignores the substantial, sequential effects upon 'local traffic.' It may provide minor improvements for cyclists, but the increased traffic volume, increases safety risks for local road users.
- 2) This re-design should assist traffic movements, in providing some form of priority at these key junctions which does not exist at present. However, no data was presented at the consultation to demonstrate changes. It is difficult to fully assess the veracity and impact of these proposals.
- 3) Presently, at peak times, on the roundabouts, traffic form up in long tail backs, preventing movement and significantly impeding access. This is no obvious right of way to cross the Banbury Road for residents and commercial drivers exiting from east or west. Free movement on the present roundabouts is possible with caution.
- 4) The proposals do not demonstrate how increases in traffic volume will impact on road users on the A4165 north and south, given the extra traffic coming from Water Eaton Parkway station.
- 5) If the main northern and east west arterial roads 'grind to a halt,' as often happens, (eg on the A34), the consequences of increasing traffic volume and capacity at the roundabouts will result increased delays on adjoining roads to the Peartree Roundabout, which is a focal point on an "accident hotspot."
- 6) Removal of the Wolvercote exit from Five Mile Drive may be intended to solve "rat running" issues and complications from the number of access points on the Wolvercote Roundabout, but it creates further problems:- Access and egress to Sunderland Avenue, A4165 Banbury Road and opposite from Harbord Road, will be constrained and present significantly greater navigation risks.
- 7) It is essential, in the interests of safety to have priority and access at peak times. Traffic signals are an essential part of the scheme to modify the roundabouts. These traffic lights should be fully integrated with junctions at Five Mile Drive, Harbord Road, Jordan Hill and Harefields.
- 8) The junctions from Five Mile Drive and Harbord Road, will become more dangerous with additional traffic coming to and from Water Eaton Parkway Oxford Parkway rail Station, particularly the right turn to the Cutteslowe roundabout and the misuse of the service roads and Rothafield Road, to access Five Mile Drive.

Ecology and Pollution

- 1) The greenery on the Cutteslowe and Wolvercote roundabouts are a longstanding feature of the area. It would be regrettable if they were removed without any form of renewal / replacement. The vegetation assists in reducing pollution and masks glare from the lights of oncoming traffic.

These mitigating factors contribute environmental benefit and add definative character to the area.

Conclusions

1) The Oxfordshire County Council's North Oxford Transport Strategy report dated 29th June 2014, states:-

“5.3 However the improvements proposed will not fully solve the existing traffic problems in the North Oxford area, with some key junctions as you cross the northern bypass, particularly the physically constrained junction at Cutteslowe expected to continue to operate over capacity following the City Deal improvement schemes. “

The proposals for the Cutteslowe and Wolvercote Roundabouts, lack credibility to deliver reduced journey times and sustainable long term improvements on the A4165 Banbury Road and A4144 Woodstock Road. Indeed, no evidence was presented to show, given additional traffic volume, resulting from peripheral new developments, in particular, Water Eaton Parkway Rail Station and the Northern Gateway, that tailbacks, from the lights, at these presently highly congested key intersections will not get worse. This is a serious concern, since re-configuring the Cutteslowe and Wolvercote Roundabouts should not be done, without first evaluating and fully discussing the implications for local residents' safety and effective traffic management, in accessing these already busy main roads.

The consultation, failed to engage with local people, in so much, no serious alternatives were discussed or presented. No facts or figures were offered to judge, evidence or validate the proposal. It was explained by Council Officers that their priority was primarily to secure Government funds to do the alterations, irrespective of any complexity in addressing local needs.

Unfortunately, short term solutions can lead to longer term problems, concerns remain, that insufficient priority is being given to the needs of the disabled, people crossing on foot, cyclists and bus users in the area. Motorists may move through these intersections quicker, in one direction, but unless a more holistic approach is adopted towards management of the local road system, this is likely to result in moving vehicles to the nearest traffic backlog on roads to the east, north and south, which will not best serve the interests of businesses or residents on the Northern Gateway.

No timescale was given in relation to the level of additional inconvenience and disruption roads works will cause at these roundabouts and the consequential effects from other planned road alterations around the City of Oxford.

No information was forthcoming about the impact upon air quality at these already highly polluted roundabouts.

It is apparent, increases in capacity at these busy roundabouts, will result in generation of greater usage to the potential detriment in pollution, noise and quality of life of residents in Wolvercote Ward, unless further measures are taken to mitigate these factors.

Given the issues; further attention needs to be given to increasing parking capacity and arrangements on the outskirts of Oxford to make these facilities more attractive to commuters to use public transport rather than using over crowded roads putting avoidable pressure on busy roundabouts.

1. Source:- 2011 Census of Population for Wolvercote Ward.

Appendix

Results of a Survey of Residents in Jordan Hill, concerning closure of Five Mile Drive.

1.

25 Jordan Hill

Oxford

OX2 8ET

26th March 2014.

City Development Planning Policy Team

Oxford City Council,

St Aldates, Oxford

OX1 1DS

Re Northern Gateway AAP Consultation

To whom it concerns,

I have contributed to and endorse Wolvercote Commoners' Committee response and am a member of Wolvercote Neighbourhood Forum Steering Group and have taken part in their consultation programme.

I wish to make additional comment as a resident of the above address.

It is clear that Northern Gateway development as well as the Oxford Parkway Station and pending Wolvercote Mill development will add greatly to traffic and possible parking problems for Jordan Hill residents. Also, permission has already been given for a development on O.U.P.A.A.C. Sports Ground which will further add to these problems. I recently conducted a survey of the residents and the clear majority are opposed to the rumoured closure of Five Mile Drive from Wolvercote Roundabout which would inevitably increase congestion in Sunderland Avenue and add greatly to our travel time. Responses were also unanimous in the belief that we need either a roundabout or traffic lights at the estate entrance with a slight preference for a roundabout. The removal of a traffic island some years ago and the business park development increased access and exit problems for cars, cycles and pedestrians. Parking problems on the residential estate have also increased due to the Business Park and commuters. Measures need to be taken before the Northern Gateway development to ensure these problems are addressed and not increased.

Cycle lanes in the area should be improved, clearly signed and adequately lit. Adjacent footpaths should not be narrower and street side of cycle lanes as this presents a greater hazard for pedestrians, especially those with small children, and for pushchairs, wheelchairs and those walking dogs. These problems should be addressed now as part of the proposed traffic mitigating measures before the N.G. development adds to them. Do we need cycle tracks both sides of the road where the pavement has to be shared and bus stops negotiated by all concerned?

Wolvercote roundabout needs improved pedestrian crossing for those wishing to walk to/from Wolvercote, preferably a bridge.

The Northern Gateway development itself must follow Secure By Design guidelines and be a pleasant/safe place to live. Steps must also be taken to include it into the local community. Jordan Hill is an example of in some ways an isolated population.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Angela Goff". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping 'G'.

Angela Goff

Jordan Hill Questionnaire
(I have the replies + a summary)

URGENT

Dear Resident , Firstly I wish you all a healthy and happy 2014. As you will be aware we are faced with various developments in our area, in particular Northern Gateway and the Water Eaton Parkway Station, also the Mill site. Amongst other concerns there are obviously going to be major traffic implications for us at Jordan Hill. The Wolvercote Neighbourhood Forum Steering Group is the local representative group on these matters and as a member of that group I would like to know and represent your views on the following 2 points URGENTLY please:

1. There is a suggestion that Five Mile Drive be closed to traffic from Wolvercote Roundabout which would obviously have impact on local residents and cause more congestion on Sunderland Avenue and at the Cutteslowe roundabout for which traffic lights have already been approved. Do you support this closure or oppose it?
 2. As the entrance to and exit from Jordan Hill will be greatly affected by the increased traffic, the Forum intends to recommend something to offset this. The suggestion has been for traffic lights. Do you support that idea or would you prefer to see a roundabout which would mean all traffic simply giving way to traffic coming from the right?
-

Please indicate your preference

Closure of Five Mile Drive to traffic from Wolvercote Roundabout. Support Yes / No

Jordan Hill junction. Traffic lights Yes / No Roundabout Yes / No

Name..... Address.....

Any additional comments

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Please return this slip to me as soon as possible. Lastly, the Neighbourhood Forum needs more helpers and is holding an information session on Saturday morning 18th January regarding the procedure it has to carry out. If you would be interested in attending that session, helping the Forum, or like more information please let me know. Jordan Hill is part of the designated Forum area and we need to ensure our views are heard.

Many thanks

Angie Goff 25 Jordan Hill 6. 1. 2014

