

Oxford Cambridge Expressway: summary of issues and the potential impact on North Hinksey Parish of widening the Botley section of the A34 to three lanes

1. Capacity and Air Pollution Issues:

The long term capacity issues relating both to the A34, and to the local road network (in particular the West Way / Botley Road link into Oxford City) are well recognised.

Air pollution issues resulting from high levels of traffic have also been known about for many years, with an Air Quality Management Area running along both sides of the A34 in Botley having been in place since 2008.

The Vale of White Horse District Council Air Quality Action Plan 2015 identified that HGVs on the A34 in the Botley area (the majority of which would be through traffic) constituted under 9% of the vehicles, but produced around 45% of the NOx emissions.

The logical solution to both capacity and air pollution issues would be to reduce traffic levels on the A34, primarily by lowering the levels of through traffic. A widening of the A34 to 3 lanes as part of a planned Oxford Cambridge Expressway would hugely exacerbate the problem.

2. Potential impact on local infrastructure and facilities:

The section of the A34 running through North Hinksey Parish is a widely recognised pinch-point, however, the extent to which the local infrastructure and facilities would be damaged by a potential widening of the Botley section of the A34 has not necessarily been fully taken on board. The following are locations that would suffer from a serious negative impact were that option ever to be implemented.

(a) On the East side of the A34, running from North to South:

- Seacourt Tower Retail Park, and other business sites on the South side of West Way.
- Botley Cemetery, including the nationally important Commonwealth War Graves site.
- Housing that is currently accessed directly from the A34.
- North Hinksey Primary School.
- North Hinksey Village Conservation Area, which includes a number of listed buildings.
- North Hinksey Rugby Club and Tennis Club.

(b) On the West side of the A34, running from North to South:

- Botley Primary School.
- Botley Centre – the main retail / mixed use site within the Parish which is currently undergoing major redevelopment after several years of planning in line with key elements of the Vale of White Horse District Council Local Plan 2031.
- Westminster Way – a major local link road running immediately adjacent to the A34, which, if removed, would, in addition to traffic flow issues, have serious knock-on effects for:
 - Housing along Westminster Way itself.
 - Our Lady of the Rosary Catholic Church.
 - Raleigh Park.
 - Access to the whole of Harcourt Hill (including the Brookes University Harcourt Hill Campus as well as housing), which would effectively become detached from the rest of the Parish.