

## **A417 Missing Link, Public Consultation, 13 October – 12 November 2020**

### **Response from Coberley Parish Council (CPC)**

#### **1. The proposed new Ullenwood Junction A436 roundabout**

In its response of 25 October 2019, CPC set out its concerns about traffic flow and volumes at this roundabout:

The Parish Council has concerns that congestion, back-up and hazards will continue at this new roundabout, affecting both the A436 in a westerly direction and the Leckhampton Hill Road, in a south-westerly direction.

a. Although the roundabout will be free of the through-traffic on the A417, it will still be subject to the considerable, and growing, daily commuter traffic to/from Cheltenham and to/from Oxford/London direction.

b. The flow from the A417 exit road into this roundabout is likely to be travelling faster, and more uninterrupted, than at present and hence, more hazardous to the traffic entering the roundabout from Leckhampton Hill Road

CPC therefore, requested that a detailed study be carried out on projected traffic volumes and flows at the roundabout and designs in mitigating solutions.

We understand that traffic modelling was carried out, but has not yet been shared with us. However, we understand that it has shown that traffic volume will increase on the Leckhampton Hill Road and decrease on the A436.

We are concerned about management of traffic flow at the new roundabout. We envisage that there will continue to be a build-up of traffic from Cheltenham, heading south on the C/377 Leckhampton Hill Road, held up by traffic from the A417 flowing towards Seven Springs/Oxford.

We note that you will be installing attenuation tanks around the Ullenwood Junction. Please advise us how you will ensure these have minimum visual impact on the landscape of the area.

We expressed concern in the 2019 consultation regarding potential flooding near this new roundabout, due to water flowing down the new link road from the Shab Hill Junction. Please confirm that these attenuation tanks will mitigate any such problems.

#### **2. Leckhampton Hill Road (we believe this is now classified as C/377) is a small country road, not designed to cope with the heavy commuter traffic which it currently experiences. How will it be enhanced?**

There is a hazardous cross roads with Ullenwood Manor Road and Greenway Lane, access to the popular Crickley Hill Country Park, a 27-dwelling property development under construction at Ullenwood Court.

Where this road enters the urban area of Cheltenham on Leckhampton Road, there is a busy junction with Old Bath Road, a new housing development at Leckhampton Views, two busy roundabouts at the Church Road/Charlton

Lane and Norwood Inn. The whole route is lined with residential properties, with car parking on both sides of the road.  
It is not suitable for current, let alone, increased commuter traffic.

### 3. **A436**

We understand that your modelling suggests that traffic volume will decrease on this road. We do not understand the rationale for this. Please would you explain. We believe traffic volume will increase as the route becomes more popular due to reduced congestion and speeds will increase.

In its response of 25 October, CPC set out its concerns over speeds and junction hazards on this road:

Likely increased speeds on the A436, due to freer flowing traffic travelling east from the new roundabout, will create greater hazards for dwellings, other premises and the Cowley/Ullenwood crossroads on the A436.

The PC requested that the current speed limit of 50 mph is reduced to 40 mph, particularly between east of Oxford Cottages and the new Ullenwood Junction roundabout.

### 4. **Ullenwood/Cowley cross roads on A436**. Already a dangerous junction, there will be increased hazard, due to increased speeds from an easterly direction and increase in traffic volumes over long term.

With the proposed enhancement of the walking, cycling and horse-riding (WCH) facilities as part of the overall scheme, we envisage that there will be increased WCH traffic crossing the A436 at this crossroads.

There will potentially be increased motorised traffic at Barbers Wood.

Crossing the A436 from the Cowley side, visibility of traffic approaching from the east is limited due to the bend and high bank.

Measures must be put in place to slow traffic at this crossroads and to ensure safe crossing for WCH traffic and for motorised traffic either crossing or turning onto the A436.

The PC believes that this junction requires traffic light control or a roundabout. It requests that thorough investigation of this crossroads junction is carried out and appropriate mitigating solutions implemented.

CPC asks to be engaged in discussions regarding development and enhancements of the A436 (between Seven Springs and the new Ullenwood Junction) and the Leckhampton Hill Road C/377.

### 5. **Noise Pollution**

In its response on 25 October 2019, CPC expressed concern about potential noise pollution due to the new road being nearer to the villages of Coberley, Cowley and Ullenwood, particularly the properties along the A436 at Ullenwood.

There is concern that, with the proximity of the new route of the A417 to the villages of Coberley, Ullenwood and Cowley, noise pollution could be a result of the project. The PC therefore, requests that full studies are carried out on potential noise impact and that Highways England sets out proposals to mitigate noise pollution through the topography of the scheme (cuttings), road surfacing, landscaping (substantial tree-planting).

Please advise what measures you have taken to mitigate any potential problems.

## **6. Design of Crickley Hill Bridge**

CPC considers that the design of this bridge does not appear to blend in with the environment, unlike the other overpasses which all have vegetation as part of their design.

We question whether this is an appropriate location for a viewing point, immediately above a 5-lane highway, a) with regard to enjoyment of scenery and b) with regard to health and the vehicle transmissions immediately below.

## **7. Concerns raised with CPC by Parishioners**

- a) Parishioner resident at Shab Hill has raised concerns about the class 5 road which runs from Shab Hill to Ullenwood. He is urging that, as a new PROW is part of the scheme from Birdlip to Shab Hill, this class 5 road should be reclassified to a Restricted Byway, in order that there is a route for pedestrians etc from Birdlip to Ullenwood, unimpeded by vehicles.

Following a hotly contested application to declassify another road within the parish several years ago, Coberley Parish Council undertook not to support declassification of any roads within the parish. Having reviewed this policy at the Parish Council meeting of 9<sup>th</sup> November 2020, the Council concluded that it remains valid; therefore the Council does not support the suggested reclassification.

- b) Parishioner resident at Salterley Grange. Leckhampton Hill Road has raised concerns about the problems which increased traffic on the Leckhampton Hill Road will cause as it enters the urban area of Cheltenham with the numerous roundabouts and busy junctions.
- c) Parishioners living in properties on the A436 between the Ullenwood/Cowley crossroads and the new Ullenwood Junction roundabout have raised concerns about the speed of traffic and difficulty crossing the road and are seeking a reduction in the speed limit. They have also expressed concerns about noise and air pollution.

- d) Parishioner at Salterley Grange asks that the proposed repurposed A417, the Air Balloon Way, will have a sufficiently smooth (tarmacked) surface to be suitable for wheelchairs.
- e) Parishioner in Ullenwood has raised the following concerns: The development is believed to result in a net loss of wildlife habitat and not a net gain, which is the ambition of emerging legislation. This is a pivotal scheme, which should be setting an example as the way forward. At a time when it is so widely acknowledged that natural spaces are more precious than ever, any new scheme should avoid increased impact on the most sensitive wildlife habitat. The road expansion increases severance and destruction within Crickley Hill and Barrow Wake SSSI, and some residents have expressed concern that what is being offered as replacement wildlife opportunities e.g. underground corridors and bridges will make up for the loss of natural corridors and living areas for flora and fauna that exist there now.

**Coberley Parish Council, 9<sup>th</sup> November 2020**