



**Watlington Parish  
Council**

**Watlington**  
Neighbourhood  
Development Plan



## **WATLINGTON EDGE ROAD**

**Notes of the meeting with Oxfordshire County Council held on Friday 11<sup>th</sup> January 2019.**

### **Present:**

**Oxfordshire County Council:** Jason Sherwood, (Growth Officer), Gavin Belcher (Senior Transport Planner – South and Vale), Rebecca Crowe, (Transport Planning Officer)

**Watlington Parish Council:** Roger Beattie, Tom Bindoff, Ian Hill, Terry Jackson, Fergus Lapage, Andrew McAuley, Rob Smith, Tony Williamson

**NP Advisory Board:** Gill Bindoff, Keith Jackson, Peter Richardson

The purpose of the meeting was:

- A. To visit key points along the route of the edge road in order to share information and to discuss, on site, issues arising from each location.
  - B. To review the funding of the road and consider a possible timetable for delivery.
1. Visit to the Pyrton Crossroads:
    - It was confirmed that a roundabout is currently proposed at the junction of the B4009 and the edge road. This will meet the usual required standards.
    - It is expected that the highway works will be contained within the existing highway and the development site PYR 1.
    - The roundabout is likely to be similar to the existing one on Cuxham Road by the Industrial Estate. There needs to be sufficient space for large, permitted, HGVs to navigate the roundabout safely.
    - It was noted that the new roundabout could provide a useful opportunity for HGVs excluded by the 7.5t limit to return to the M40.
    - The site is environmentally sensitive because of its proximity to the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The boundary extends to the white lining on the escarpment side of the B4009.
    - There is also the boundary of the Registered Park and Garden at Shirburn Castle along the Oxfordshire Way. The evergreen oak trees are a significant feature and their protection will be ensured when design details of the edge road are brought forward.
    - The route for traffic from the Motorway direction travelling through the town will need to be deflected in order to direct it via the new roundabout – the possibility of a ‘straight through’ route will be avoided.

- The deflection could be achieved by a build out by Station Road but no design details have been agreed.
- The junction with Station Road will remain and will be separate from the new roundabout.
- Vehicular traffic from Pyrton village will use the new roundabout and not the section of the Oxfordshire Way which joins the B4009. Horse riders, cyclists, pedestrians and all other authorised users will be able to use a new crossing point connecting the Oxfordshire Way on both sides of the B4009.
- There may be a case for ‘staggering’ the speed restriction from 50mph on the B4009 after Shirburn village to 40mph and then 30mph at the new roundabout.

2. Crossing point at Pyrton Lane by Icknield Community College/Site PYR 2/Site C:

- It is likely that the new edge road will approach this point along Pyrton Lane from the north east direction. A more diagonal route through site PYR 2 would cut through land which may be required for expansion of Icknield College.
- The land available for the road at the point where it enters Site C is unlikely to be able to provide a full width cycleway and footpath. It is acceptable to OCC that a reduced width could be provided at this point.
- It was noted that a new bridleway is sought by the Watlington NDP from Cuxham Road via sites B and C to Pyrton Lane to access the Oxfordshire Way. This would avoid horse riders who approach from the Cuxham direction having to cross the edge road on Cuxham Road. OCC was asked to take this requirement into account.
- It was also noted that the Watlington NDP makes provision for the existing footpath along the perimeter of Icknield College to be made into a cycleway/footpath to link with the schools on the site, the recreation ground, playing field, B4009 and town centre.
- There was discussion about the possibility of routing school buses along the edge road and avoiding the town centre. If this is to be achieved, a scheme would need to be agreed with Icknield College for students arriving/leaving by bus to access the school from the Pyrton Lane side.
- There was discussion about the location of the junction of the edge road with a new access road to Pyrton village. This could be close to the new roundabout on the B4009 and/or close to Pyrton Lane. This will be finalised as the design stage is completed and in discussion with Pyrton Parish Council.
- Watlington PC and residents of Pyrton Lane and St Leonard’s Close support a proposal to close the Lane to motorised traffic beyond the houses and to retain its use from the ‘S’ bends by cyclists, pedestrians, horse riders etc. It is intended that the Lane will connect with new cycling and pedestrian routes provided on Sites B and C.
- There is also a proposal to close the Pyrton end of the Lane to motorised traffic as well, creating a quiet route for other users and to provide a safe route between Watlington and Pyrton village.

3. New crossing of Cuxham Road:

- This will be between sites A and B and located near Webbs Yard which is in residential use. There will be a landscaped buffer between the new road and Webbs Yard.
- The crossing point is likely to be a roundabout – this could be offset so that it is located towards Site B.
- Conservation of the chalk stream – Chalgrove Brook – is a major consideration in the design of the edge road at this location. The Environment Agency will provide

guidance about what is required as it is classified as a 'main river'. The stream will need to be culverted and there are EA guidelines for this which have been altered since the existing Cuxham Road roundabout was constructed.

4. Junction with Britwell Road:

- The need to reduce the impact of traffic using the new Britwell Road/edge road junction on residents of Britwell Road was explained. Residents are concerned that vehicle headlights are likely to be very intrusive.
- The current aim is to construct the junction in accordance with the long term design rather than the short term junction which had been proposed.
- There are landscaping designs which can reduce the impact of light-spill from vehicle headlights. A 'living fence' has been used at Benson which uses fast growing ivy as a cladding and which is an effective solution to the problem.
- The need to improve access for pedestrians along Britwell Road was noted. The area of pavement near The Goggs is inadequate for safety and needs to be looked at as part of the Edge Road scheme as there will be an increase in the number of pedestrians using the route from the new development on Site A.
- There is also inadequate provision for pedestrians along Cuxham Road.

5. Proposed One-way traffic system:

- In order to improve safety for pedestrians on both Britwell Road and Cuxham Road and provide continuous pavements of a safe width, Watlington PC supports a proposal to use a one-way system for traffic which takes traffic from the existing roundabout at Cuxham Road into the town and from the junction of Britwell Road, Brook Street and Cuxham Road along Britwell Road out of the town. This would provide a 'triangular' system with the two 'old' sides being one way and each connecting with the new two way Edge Road and existing two way Brook Street.

6. Notes of the indoor part of the meeting held in the Community Office:

- The Growth Board has allocated funding towards the Edge Road from the scheme agreed with the Government. £1.2m has been allocated to the Watlington scheme for Year 1 which ends on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2019. This is being used to make progress towards the necessary legal requirements with developers and to work up details of the design.
- It is expected that further funding will be allocated for the next funding period. The Growth Board deal provides a total of £150m over a five year period for new infrastructure which is required for house building schemes across the county.
- OCC is working towards a scheme for front funding the Edge Road but details of the funding package have not been finalised yet.
- Development proposals at Watlington are being looked at by OCC and SODC as an integrated scheme which depends on the construction of the Edge Road. The Edge Road is essential infrastructure not only for development in Watlington but also for development within the B4009 corridor.
- Development will be managed in a way that land is released for development as the delivery of the edge road progresses. This will be on the basis of legal agreements between the developers and OCC via S106 Agreements, serving as Grampian Conditions, which guarantee that development will not progress without the new road.
- Timescales are not finalised yet but there is considerable pressure from the Growth Board to make progress on the Watlington development scheme. A draft timescale should be available in a few months.

- It was noted that the airfield at Chalgrove is still included in the SODC Local Plan as a strategic development site. A consultation on the Plan runs from 04.01.19 to 18.02.19 and it is expected that the Inspection will be completed by the end of this year. If the adopted Plan includes Chalgrove, OCC will be in further discussions with Homes England about the infrastructure required to support it. It may be possible to agree a retrospective contribution towards the cost of the Watlington edge road. However, funding from Homes England is not essential to the scheme going forward at this stage.
- It was confirmed that there are no proposals to change the existing area which is designated as a 7.5t weight restricted zone. The new edge road will be within the zone.
- It was noted that lighting schemes for the new road will need to take account of the rural nature of the area and the proximity of the Chilterns AONB. Watlington is hoping to gain designation as a 'Dark Skies' area so lighting schemes will need to be sensitive to this.

#### 7. Summary and way forward:

- It was agreed that the meeting had been very useful from both the Watlington and OCC sides. The OCC team were thanked for their support.
- Watlington intends to hold a public 'drop-in' event to update people on progress on the Watlington NDP, the development programme and the edge road. This will be when further information is available and the planning application process on the development sites has moved forward. It may be useful to use this as an opportunity for OCC to involve people from neighbouring communities which will be affected by the changes the edge road is likely to bring.
- Agreements between developers and OCC about developers' contributions to traffic improvements in the town will now take account of the edge road being constructed. They will no longer be regarded as 'traffic mitigation' measures.
- It was agreed that Watlington will send a programme of preferred works to OCC and that there will be discussion between them about priorities. The programme will be reviewed by WPC in the first instance to assess the need and effectiveness of the proposed schemes now that the edge road will become a reality.

Notes taken by Tom Bindoff  
14.01.19.