



Arborfield & Newland Parish Council

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20th September 2017

Nick Chancellor
Wokingham Borough Council
Civic Offices
Shute End
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RG40 1BN

Dear Nick,

Planning application 172209 – Full application for the construction of a 2.3km Arborfield Cross Relief Road (including shared use pathway) linking A327 Reading Road in the north and A327 Eversley Road in the south east. The proposal includes two new roundabout junctions link to the exiting road network along the A327, a new staggered priority junction at Swallowfield Road and a new shared use (non-motorised user) bridge where Arborfield Footpath 17 intersects the proposed relief road.

Arborfield and Newland Parish Council welcome the submission of proposals for the construction of the Arborfield Cross Relief Road, and the opportunity to comment on them. The Council has a number of concerns, however, that it wishes to see addressed:

- This Council has made representations, repeatedly, about the importance of the mitigation measures as a means of protecting nearby residents against the negative impacts arising from operation of this major road, especially in view of the revisions made in 2014 without consultation. Specifically, we request the reinstatement of 3m high bunds in the Greensward Lane and Highfield Park areas of the scheme to protect residential properties against increased noise, as originally approved and promised.
- We have also advised against the adopted staggered crossroads junction at Swallowfield Road, preferring the original proposal for a roundabout on road safety grounds, notwithstanding the likely beneficial effect of traffic reduction in Swallowfield Road and across the entrance to Arborfield Park. A commitment to present an assessment of the roundabout alternative as part of the Environmental Statement has not been honoured.
- This Council has asked repeatedly for clarification of the proposed traffic operations on the southern approaches to the scheme, in order to establish the traffic management arrangements

necessary to prevent the revised junction arrangements leading to more Arborfield Green traffic continuing to use the existing A327 through Arborfield Cross village.

- The Council is also concerned about the effective operation of 4 roundabouts in close proximity (Poperinghe, Relief Road, Langley Common, and Biggs Lane), and requests that this combination be modelled in detail to identify traffic issues associated with future operation.
- The proposed speed limit of 50mph is inappropriate for a road with an uncontrolled crossing at Arborfield Footpath 22, and for a staggered crossroads. The originally adopted proposal for a 40mph speed limit should be restored.
- Planting schemes should consist of specimens of reasonable size, so as to reduce to a practical minimum the period required for the scheme to reach maturity. We note that the long-term impact of the scheme allows 15 years for development, which is far too long.
- Planting proposed for the area between the new southern terminus roundabout and nearby properties will need to be further reviewed in order to minimise the visual impact of the view along the new road. A denser planting scheme is needed that provides more effective screening.
- Six veteran trees, cherished by the community as important heritage assets, are scheduled for removal. It would appear, from the scheme drawings, that there is scope to retain some of these veteran trees, which would require special protection during construction. We urge Wokingham Borough Council to review this potential.
- We further urge Wokingham Borough Council to progress this scheme without delay. The programmed opening date has slipped by 2 years in the last 4, whilst development of Arborfield Green and other sites along the A327 continues apace.

Should you have any queries regarding the above please contact me.

Kind Regards

Alison Ward
Parish Clerk