

## Bicester Bike Users Group – Response to application number 24/00245/OUT

CDC will be aware of expressions of interest by other developers, amounting to more than 700 new houses in Caversfield. While Caversfield is physically close to the NW Bicester area it has its own infrastructure needs (travel as well as power, water, school access etc), so this development decision should be part of a coherent long term plan for the village which includes transport/travel.

For cyclists, runners and walkers Fringford Rd is the only safe route out of Bicester to the North and East. Banbury Rd to the West and Buckingham Rd to the East are busy, fast moving, totally motor vehicle dominated and unsuitable for cycling. Bucknell Rd, further West, has no acceptable cycling infrastructure in compliance with LTN 1/20 and most cyclists would deem it unsafe to use. Fringford Rd is very well used for leisure and fitness being in the middle of a green corridor between Banbury and Buckingham roads, which starts at Southwold Lane and gives access to many quiet lanes and villages as one travels towards Banbury, Brackley and Buckingham. Thus, from its southern end onwards Fringford Rd is an arterial route for active travel and a leisure resource for everyone in Bicester. This derives from the relatively quiet road and the experience of being in open countryside from Bicester's ring road onwards.

The application describes a potential active travel route to the NW Bicester area via Aunt Ems Lane to a pedestrian crossing to be built across Banbury Rd. This could be very valuable for all residents of Caversfield as currently the only way round is via the ring road, a long way South, or Aunt Ems lane (unlit, no footpath). However, until there is more certainty about timescales and details of the crossing and street layout to the West of Banbury Rd, this link is speculative.

The distances from the proposed development to many of the anticipated amenities in NW Bicester cannot be calculated accurately until that area develops more fully but are likely to be much more conducive to cycling than walking. Therefore, if the link to NW Bicester is established, it should include a protected, two way cycle track at least 2.5m wide (LTN 1/20) as well as simply a footpath from the road in the housing estate to the Banbury Rd crossing. There also needs to be a plan for a cycle crossing at Banbury Rd, as well as the pedestrian crossing, as there would otherwise be no safe way for cyclists to cross into NW Bicester.

The plans for the development show a 3m shared pedestrian and cycle path into the estate. LTN 1/20 advises against shared paths and placing pedestrians and cyclists in conflict. Therefore, there needs to be a plan for segregated pedestrian and cycle ways with appropriate buffering from the highway depending on the proposed speed of the road.

In summary, at present there is not enough consideration given to active travel. The current active travel infrastructure plans are not in compliance with LTN 1/20 and OCC's own guidance. The developers need to be asked to amend the plans to allow for segregated, protected cycleways at the entrance of and within the estate, and also to provide a plan for cycles along Aunt Ems lane and at the crossing at Banbury Rd to allow access to NW Bicester.