

**LOWER HEYFORD PC'S RESPONSE TO THE HEYFORD PARK MASTERPLAN
REF: 18/00825/HYBRID**

Developer Contributions to traffic calming under S106

LHPC has been informed that we should expect £50,000 for traffic calming under S106. This amount is insufficient to provide the traffic calming we need in order to minimise the massive impact of an estimated 4,000 extra vehicles per day through our village from this major strategic site. This will nearly double recently recorded traffic on an already busy road. Our 2019 survey shows that we already experience an average 5,332 vehicles per day and 37,324 vehicles per week through Lower Heyford.

Parish Form

Lower Heyford does not have a compact built form and so lacks the visual cues for drivers to slow down. It also contains two separate 30mph sections divided by a higher speed limit. These are factors that will mean more traffic calming is needed here.

The parish also incorporates the village of Caulcott. This village is at present receiving no S106 funding at all despite experiencing a large volume to/from Heyford Park. Although the majority of the village lies off the road, the part of it that falls within the village confine is well known for speeding and leaving South Street at this junction is potentially dangerous. The grade II listed public house is located right on the corner of the road and is also on the opposite side of the road to its visitor parking. Caulcott is a small village but it should receive a proportionate amount of S106 funds for traffic calming.

Safeguarding the Local Community and their Quality of Life

Our traffic survey in 2019 demonstrated that 2,533 vehicles a day were exceeding the 30mph speed limit through Lower Heyford. By any reckoning this is unacceptable.

Station Road plays a central role in our village community: families with young children live on it; people walk along it to the station and village shop; it is on the circular walk and it is hazardous to cross the road in order to follow the footpath or reach the village allotments; it provides access to the bowls club and boatyard. Children using the Station Road bus stop by the Freehold Street crossroads need to cross the road where passing speeds are dangerous (60% exceed the speed limit in our 2019 survey).

The majority of houses along the road have no set back. It can be intimidating to walk along, especially when HGVs pass by. The pavement is narrow in some areas and non existent in others so people have to either walk directly into the road or cross it to the other side.

Tourism

This village is a popular destination for visitors on narrow boat holidays as well as for walkers and visitors to Rousham. The much greater volume of traffic, including HGVs, will have a detrimental impact on tourism here.

Lower Heyford PC would like to see S106 funding that is:

1. Proportionate to the scale and impact of Heyford Park
2. Fairly targeted at locations where Heyford Park's impact is most severe
2. Based on demonstrable evidence such as traffic data and forecasts.

There is an error in the Traffic Assessment where traffic numbers to the south of the Camp Road junction (towards Lower Heyford) have been included to justify traffic calming to the north of it. Allowing for this error, the TA forecasts show that Lower Heyford will have the largest traffic volume and percentage impact of all the villages from this development (Impact on Local Villages, p.139 of the TA).

We support traffic calming in all the affected villages but it would be plainly unreasonable that a location receiving 12 extra vehicles per daily peak hours should receive the same amount of S106 money as one receiving 853 extra vehicles per daily peak in the traffic forecasts. It may also conflict with one of the statutory tests for S106 that contributions must be "*fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development*".

Lower Heyford PC has commissioned a scheme through OCC in order to provide the traffic calming that we believe is necessary to mitigate the impact of this development. We would like to work with OCC on this to arrive at an effective traffic calming plan for Lower Heyford and Caulcott to be financed with S106 money.

We would like to know what has happened to the S106 funding for traffic calming from the first tranche of development at Heyford Park.

Despite the very significant impact on this village as shown by our surveys (19% rise from 2017 to 2019) and our urgent need for traffic calming we have, to date, received no S106 funding at all from development at Heyford Park.

Policy Villages 5 of the Local Plan states that '*given the rural and isolated location of the settlement*' that '*funding the necessary mitigation of transport and heritage impacts will be of particular importance*'. Its policy specifically requires '*measures to minimise the impact of traffic generated by the development on the rural road network to the west of the site*'.

There needs to be a much greater recognition of the impact that Heyford Park's traffic will have on surrounding villages. So much policy is written in the NPPF, the Cherwell Local Plan and the Oxfordshire Transport Plan on the importance of local communities, the impact on health and quality of life, and protecting local heritage and character. If all this is to mean something, it must be given proper weight in relation to S106 negotiations.

Weight Restriction

Lower Heyford has experienced a growing level of HGVs in recent years (200% increase 2017-2019). There has been a proliferation of construction lorries and open lorries with aggregate, presumably to development sites in Heyford Park and Bicester.

It is clear that routing agreements are regularly flouted but there is no enforcement. LHPC has no recourse to act because we do not know which construction sites are their destination.

The noise and vibration is unacceptable, particularly when a 44 ton lorry is able to thunder through the village within 2 metres of some roadside houses. It can be unpleasant and sometimes frightening to pedestrians, particularly where the pavement is narrow or non-existent.

There is regular damage to our Grade II listed Long Bridge which dates back to medieval times and is considered important in relation to Grade I Rousham House. These problems and the need for ongoing maintenance is highlighted in Lower Heyford's Conservation Area Appraisal.

It is LHPC's view that a weight restriction at Lower Heyford is now urgently needed. Further reasons are listed below:

1. It accords with OCC's traffic policy to deter HGVs from using inappropriate minor roads through villages. OCC has made it clear in the past that they are happy with the principle of a weight restriction here.
2. It accords with Local Plan policies and the NPPF to ensure the preservation or enhancement of conservation areas. Station Road was designated as part of the Lower Heyford Conservation Area and has a number of historic and Grade II properties along its route.
3. A weight restriction and bus gate at Middleton Stoney indicates that there is less reason why HGVs need to cross the Cherwell to access Bicester along the B4030.
4. It would mean that the planned cycle route from the Chilgrove Junction to Bicester would be free of HGVs. Our 2019 survey shows that 230 HGVs a day go along the Bicester Road.
5. It would be cheaper for OCC. LHPC have already agreed to finance a weight restriction out of parish funds. It may also mean that some of the remodelling at the junction of Hopcroft Holt may not be necessary.

Heyford Park Site

LHPC would like the development of the junction at Chilgrove Drive to be a precondition before any further development is permitted.

We see that the cycle path from Heyford Park to Heyford Station has been dropped in favour of a cycle path to Bicester. LHPC would like to see this reinstated. The station car park is near to capacity and we do not want to see an overspill of cars onto Station Road. It would encourage a more sustainable way to travel and it would enable local children to travel to the Heyford Park Free School independently and safely.

It is necessary to have routing agreements under Section S106 to restrict all HGVs for both construction and occupation through the Chilgrove Drive junction and onto the most direct route to the M40. What enforcement will be put in place to distinguish HGVs associated with Heyford Park from those passing through Lower Heyford via Chilgrove Drive to Bicester/M40?

We see from the supporting documentation that the routing of the Aves Ditch PROW is being reviewed. We are unclear what this means. It is important that both the Aves Ditch and Portway PROWs are reinstated as soon as possible. This is already overdue as it was agreed as part of the original consent.

The film areas will need strict conditions on night time use in order to avoid noise and light pollution.

We also want to see adequate screening on the southern perimeter. The map shows a thin line of landscape buffer to the south of the parcel 16 housing site. This should be made thick enough to protect Caulcott from noise and light pollution. The Sports Park and its 18m high lighting in the new location should also have a landscape buffer to protect Caulcott and the wider landscape from noise and light pollution.

No development on any phase should be undertaken until a scheme for disposal of surface water and its maintenance have been submitted to ensure that there is no extra surface water run off flooding down Gallos Brook into Caulcott. An S106 contribution should be made towards Caulcott's overstretched sewage plant.

Summary

LHPC objects to this application on traffic grounds. The S106 funding at present would be insufficient to provide the traffic calming that is urgently needed in Lower Heyford and Caulcott. We would like to see an amount that is more proportionate to the very severe impact the Heyford Park Masterplan will have on our parish. This is amply demonstrated by our traffic data and the forecasts. We also need to be assured that it will be able to finance effective traffic calming schemes in Lower Heyford and Caulcott.