

Fritwell Parish Council response to:

Application Number 18/00825/HYBRID

Fritwell Parish Council supplementary comments on the above application as it relates to additional documents:

1. TN035 - Reassessment of the Impacts of Heyford Park and Associated Mitigation on Local Villages.
2. Figure 6.2b – Pedestrian and Cycle Connections.

Traffic through Fritwell – Ref: TN035

- North Street is used to enable traffic, via the Somerton road, to reach the Western end of the Heyford Park development through the village of Somerton. This worsens when there are problems on the M40 or the A43 at Baynards Green. Fritwell becomes a “rat-run” detour. We do believe as the community in Heyford Park expands and business use of the site increases this will exacerbate this problem. We are encouraged that there is recognition that there will be increased traffic through Fritwell in general and our understanding of the modelling suggests that this will be the case, and we are grateful to be considered for a share of S106 funding to ameliorate the traffic issues. However, we do not believe this study models any worse case scenarios where snarls can (and do) occur at the M40 Junction 10 and the Baynards Green roundabout – these are two areas which are of concern because of the historic incidence of accidents and traffic issues (source: SABRE).
- We believe that the proposed new traffic scheme on the Fewcott Road at the B430 will encourage traffic to find alternative routes, i.e. Water Lane or Raghouse Lane or traffic will simply turn left onto the Fewcott Road and travel via Fritwell to reach the Banbury road thus avoiding the M40 and Baynards Green roundabouts. This already happens and will no doubt be made worse by the proposed Ardley junction restructuring and signalisation. We were disappointed to note that the Technical Note (TN035) discounted any effects of this junction change which will potentially re-route traffic to “routes of least resistance” during busy times particularly along roads aforementioned which are barely suitable for light traffic, let alone construction or business traffic. We strongly recommend consideration be given that these single-track country lanes be assigned a 7.5 tonne weight limit to general commercial traffic (with the exception of farm vehicles). We refer to the following extract from TN305 - statement *“It should be noted that the signalisation of the B430 / Ardley Road junction is not included within the DS1(sic Do Something) scenario as mitigation at this junction location was agreed with OCC after the initial SATURN modelling was undertaken. It has been agreed with OCC that the exclusion of mitigation at this location from the model is unlikely to materially impact on the assessment being undertaken within this note”*. Fritwell Parish Council disagrees with this statement.

- Fritwell has 17 New Homes, currently unoccupied/under development that will likely become occupied this year. Planning permission for a further 28 homes has been granted in outline. This will add further congestion on the roads in Fritwell well before the 2031-time horizon in this assessment.
- While Fritwell Parish Council is supportive of the Heyford Park Development and the regeneration and jobs it will bring to the locality, we do consider that the attendant traffic problems (both during construction of this new phase and when in full operation) have not been fully evaluated. We consider the Bus Gate at Middleton Stoney will simply move traffic congestion and volumes to some of the surrounding villages, particularly Somerton, Ardley and Fewcott with implications for Fritwell as a neighbouring village. To this point, we would request a commitment by CDC to monitor the evolving traffic situation and be prepared to support further mitigation measures in these villages as they become necessary.

Footpaths and Cycleways - Figure 6.2b Pedestrian and Cycle Connections and Composite Perimeter Plan

- Many walkers from Fritwell currently use Raghouse Lane up to the perimeter fence of the airbase and the linked footpath 349/13 to the west. Currently this footpath leads along the margins of fields; a rural walk with woodland and bushes between the footpath and the security fence for the airfield.
- Fig.6.2b suggests that this footpath is incorporated into the Heritage Trail along the edge of the airfield. We have been unable to find details of the exact nature of the Heritage Trail; whether it is fenced in any way and fully accessible along the northern edge of the site. The Parish Council is concerned that as part of the Heritage Trail, the current rural footpath will not be freely accessible from (the continuation of) Raghouse Lane. It is hoped that plans do not include any fencing or hard surfacing of the footpath or removal of woodland and natural areas. We would like to see rural paths staying “rural”, in keeping with the surrounding countryside.
- The Parish Council welcomes the proposed Aves Ditch path to the East of the airfield shown on the Perimeter Plan, and the 2 potential links marked on Fig.6.2b. However, we would ask that a link from the Raghouse Lane path should be available, increasing connectivity and enabling Fritwell walkers to more easily use this route to reach the new settlement at Heyford Park.

We urge Cherwell District Council and Heyford Park planners to consider our comments on transport and connectivity and would welcome the opportunity to discuss or clarify the points raised.

Fritwell Parish Council 29/07/2020