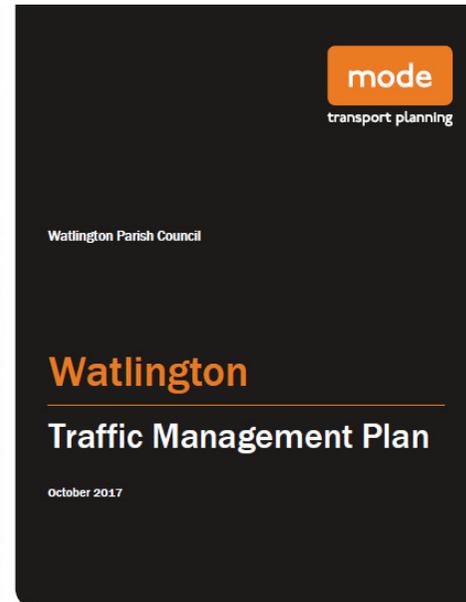
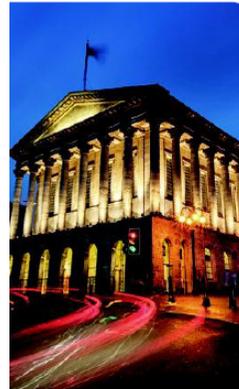


Objectives

- ▶ Introduction of traffic control measures to improve congestion and air quality within the town centre
 - ▶ Independent of a realignment of the B4009 (new edge road)
 - ▶ To focus on the 'here and now'
- ▶ Impact of the measures to be reassessed following the construction of the re-aligned B4009
- ▶ Identification of key issues regarding the re-aligned B4009
- ▶ Provision of improvements in pedestrian connectivity within the town centre

Process

- ▶ Residents were consulted to identify potential traffic control measures coordinated by the WNDP traffic group
- ▶ Review of potential options was carried out by mode transport planning
- ▶ An interim report was provided to allow feedback by a group of residents
- ▶ Finalisation of the report was carried out with technical input from WNDP regarding current planning policy



Key Considerations

- ▶ Measures should better manage the traffic that uses Watlington as a gateway to South Oxfordshire
- ▶ The report must consider Air Quality issues for the town centre
- ▶ Improvements in both traffic flow and traffic speed are important for residents
 - ▶ There is a desire for a 20mph limit from residents
- ▶ Measures introduced should act as a deterrent for through traffic to and from the M40: Particularly HGVs
- ▶ Traffic measures must consider key pinch-points within the town
- ▶ There is a strong desire from residents that some on-street parking is maintained as parking is limited in the town centre

Important Requirements/Deliverables

- ▶ The Traffic Management Plan was commissioned to test all options identified by the residents' traffic group and supported at the Roadshows in 2016.
 - ▶ Chicanes on the approaches to the town centre
 - ▶ Traffic lights (single and multiple coordinated systems)
 - ▶ Pedestrian operated crossings (note traffic bay build-outs around existing parking bays were considered to be a better option by mode transport planning)
 - ▶ 20mph speed limit
 - ▶ Improvements in signage
- ▶ To provide case studies that confirm the potential usage of the chosen traffic management options
- ▶ To provide intended costs for the schemes
- ▶ To provide a micro-simulation modelling proposal to test the functionality of the chosen options

Practical Measures

▶ Chicanes

- ▶ B480 Cuxham Road before the roundabout (as you approach Watlington)
- ▶ B480 Howe Road before the Ingham Lane S-Bend (as you approach Watlington)
- ▶ B4009 Shirburn Road
 - ▶ Location of the chicanes on the B4009 Shirburn Road is critical with the first positioned on the M40 side of the B4009/Station Road crossroads to discourage drivers from using Pyrton Lane as a rat-run
- ▶ All three sets of chicanes will stagger speeds from 50mph to 30mph and then to 20mph in the town centre
 - ▶ Regulated by Vehicle Activated Signs (VAS) to help inform the driver of their speed as they approach Watlington



Practical Measures

▶ Speed Humps

- ▶ The Traffic Management Plan advises that chicanes cannot be introduced on the B4009 Britwell Road
 - ▶ Due to the existing bend within the road layout
- ▶ Introduction of new and improved speed humps on B4009 Britwell Road to slow traffic to and from Benson
- ▶ The speed humps could be extended further along Brook Street to the Brook Street/Couching Street junction

▶ Re-organisation of existing on-street parking bays

- ▶ Move bay to opposite side of Couching Street at junction with Brook Street (from left to right side if driving towards the M40) - with double yellow lines introduced on the left-hand side

▶ Build-out parking bays with dropped kerb crossing at 2 locations

- ▶ After garage on left side of Couching Street if driving towards M40
- ▶ Before the junction of Love Lane and B4009 if driving towards M40

▶ Existing Zebra crossings will be maintained

Practical Measures

▶ Improvements to High Street

- ▶ No Entry sign 'except for access' by the Town Hall in both directions leading onto High St with 7.5tonne weight restriction signage
- ▶ 20mph speed limit for High Street (as for all major roads within Watlington)
- ▶ Proposal for shared space improvements to provide priority for pedestrians

▶ Improvements in signage

- ▶ At all pinch points warning of 'oncoming traffic in the middle of the road'
- ▶ To state very clearly state the location of the new/improved speed humps
- ▶ Priority sign positioning at Town Hall junctions

Practical Measures

- ▶ **20 mph speed limit**
 - ▶ Reduces congestion
 - ▶ Improves air quality
 - ▶ Improves the environment for other road users
 - ▶ Makes it safer for pedestrians
- ▶ **Smart Traffic Lights (Initial suggestion from a second agency)**
 - ▶ Potential introduction of traffic lights at 2-3 locations
 - ▶ Love Lane/B4009 Shirburn Road T-Junction
 - ▶ B480 Brook Street/B4009 Couching Street T-Junction
 - ▶ Potentially on Cuxham Road beyond the roundabout



HGVs

- ▶ Watlington is at the centre of a 7.5tonne Weight Restriction Zone (WRZ)
- ▶ HGVs are authorised within the zone if they are making a delivery or collection - for example to the Co-Op or Industrial Estate
- ▶ HGVs over 7.5tonnes are NOT authorised to travel through the zone if they are only using it as a through route
- ▶ Some types of HGV are exempt from the weight restriction - for example agricultural vehicles, cranes and cement mixers
- ▶ Enforcement of the weight restriction is the responsibility of Thames Valley Police and the County Council Trading Standards Officers
- ▶ Improved enforcement of the WRZ is needed

How will the re-aligned B4009 be paid for ?

The estimated cost is between £10-15m. There are several sources of funding :

- ▶ The developers will pay a share of the cost
- ▶ Section 106 Agreements - these payments are negotiated between SODC and developers and can be used to provide new infrastructure
- ▶ Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) - this is a levy on new development and is set by SODC. The levy is set at the rate of £170.73 per square metre per house. On a new house which has 20sq m of floor space this amounts to approx. £3400. This sum is shared between OCC, SODC and Watlington Parish Council
- ▶ Homes England (formerly the Homes and Communities Agency - HCA) will meet part of the cost if the development at Chalgrove Airfield goes ahead
- ▶ There are other sources of Government funding which could be available if needed

Air Quality

- ▶ The centre of Watlington has been designated as an Air Quality Management Area since 2009 because annual pollution levels exceed EU and UK air quality objectives
- ▶ The main pollutants are nitrogen dioxide and small particulates. These pollutants are mainly generated by traffic and do not disperse quickly in Watlington because of the 'pinch point' by the Town Hall and the 'canyon' effect of the buildings on either side of the main route through the town
- ▶ Air pollution is known to contribute to premature deaths and is linked to diseases such as cancer, stroke, heart diseases, asthma and chronic bronchitis
- ▶ Long term exposure to air pollution also has a harmful effect on children's health
- ▶ SODC has produced an Air Quality Action Plan and a Low Emissions Strategy to improve air quality across the District. No improvements have been made in Watlington to date but there is likely to be a trial in 2018 of strategies to improve the flow of traffic through the town centre. This is likely to include the removal of some on-street parking
- ▶ The Traffic Management Plan (mode transport planning October 2017) concludes that the proposed introduction of the re-aligned B4009 around the town is the most effective way to reduce traffic volumes in the town centre and improve air quality

Traffic Volume Figures

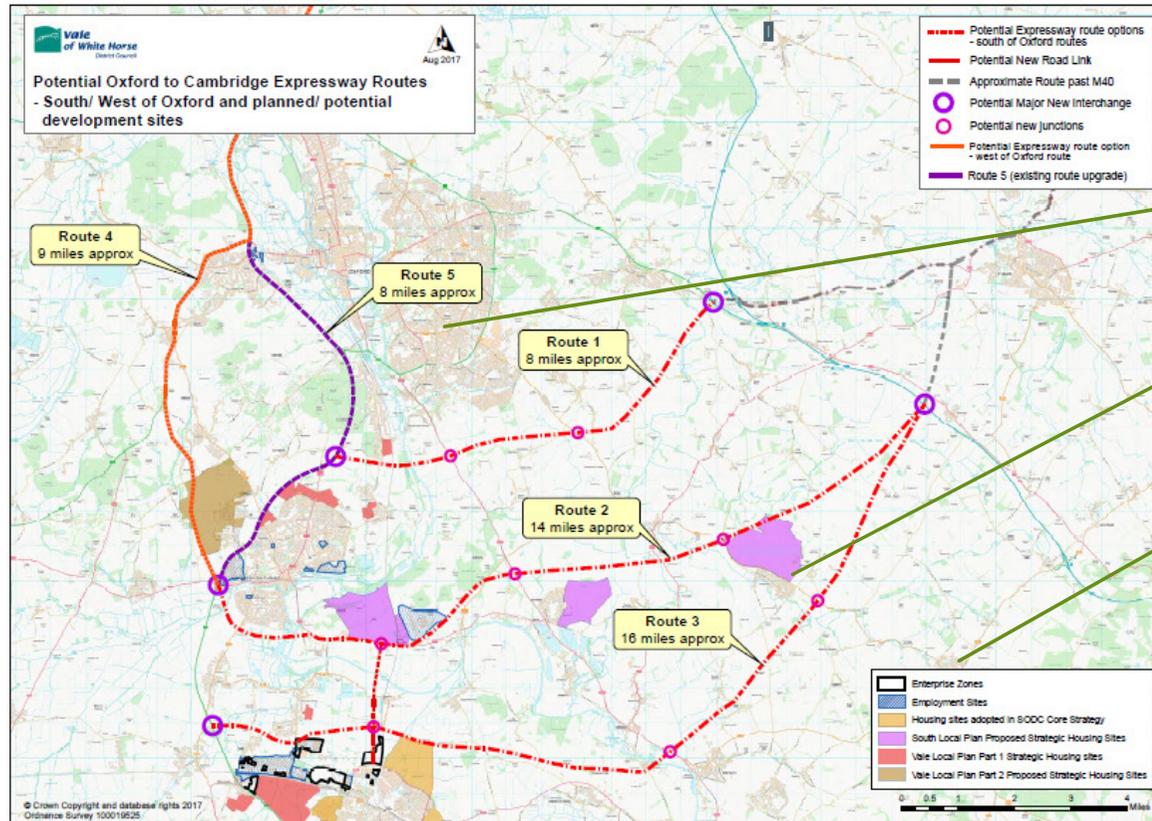
- ▶ County Council figures show that in 2016 the average two-way traffic each day on Watlington roads was as follows:
 - ▶ Shirburn Road = 9,900
 - ▶ Howe Road = 3,400
 - ▶ Britwell Road = 5,000
 - ▶ Cuxham Road = 2,600
- ▶ Through traffic is estimated to be about 85% in the morning peak period and 82% in the evening peak. (Survey by TPP September 2014)
- ▶ The most effective way to reduce through traffic in the town centre is to re-align the B4009. This is proposed in the Watlington Neighbourhood Development Plan. This could reduce through traffic using Shirburn Street/Couching Street by 61% in the morning peak and 68% in the evening peak. (mode Traffic Management Plan October 2017)
- ▶ Figures produced by AECOM for the HCA (now Homes England) show that by 2033 two way traffic between Watlington and the M40 is likely to increase by 39% in the morning peak period and by 43% in the evening peak. These estimates are based on a 15% growth in the area, excluding development at Chalgrove airfield but adding known planning approvals up to May 2016. (HCA Chalgrove Airfield Briefing Pack January 2017)

A Pedestrian Friendly Watlington

A scheme to make the centre of Watlington much more attractive could be introduced once the re-aligned B4009 is in use. The scheme could be based on a model developed by Dorset County Council to improve the environment of rural towns and villages. This approach has been used successfully in several parts of the country and could include:

- ▶ Removing some tarmac and introducing new materials to surface the roads around the Town Hall to improve the character of the area
- ▶ To create areas of 'shared space' which give priority to pedestrians instead of traffic
- ▶ Restricting vehicular access to the High Street except for essential deliveries, residents and blue badge holders
- ▶ Widening pavements where possible to make Watlington a safer and nicer place to walk around
- ▶ Creating more opportunities to use outdoor spaces for seating and planting trees and flowers
- ▶ Improving the setting of the town's historic buildings and ending the domination of traffic by encouraging drivers to change their behaviour and become more aware of their surroundings within the town

Oxford Cambridge Expressway



Oxford

Chalgrove

Watlington

This new motorway has been proposed by the National Infrastructure Commission to link Oxford with Milton Keynes and Cambridge along a 'knowledge spine' to promote economic growth. Oxfordshire County Council, many Oxfordshire parishes and environment groups, including the CPRE, are calling for a public inquiry into the proposal. The map shows potential routes South/West of Oxford published by Vale of White Horse District Council in August 2017.

Chalgrove Airfield

- ▶ The airfield at Chalgrove is owned by the Government but is leased until the 2060s to Martin Baker, an international company specialising in ejector seats for aircraft. The Board of Directors reached a decision recently not to accept the latest offer from the Government to release land at the airfield for proposed new housing
- ▶ The development is being promoted by Homes England (formerly called the Homes and Communities Agency) as part of the Government's plans for housing. The organisation has been given additional funding in the latest Budget as well as increased powers to ensure that new house building is accelerated
- ▶ Homes England has issued a statement confirming that it intends to pursue development of the airfield site and will be submitting an outline planning application to SODC this spring
- ▶ The airfield is included in the emerging SODC Local Plan as a strategic development site for 3000 new homes

Traffic Improvements in Watlington Parish

Howe Hill

- ▶ There is a proposal to reduce the speed limit from 40mph to 30mph in line with speed restrictions in other residential parts of the parish.

Christmas Common

- ▶ Monitoring of traffic speed has been carried out over a period of time by Thames Valley Police, Oxfordshire County Council and the local voluntary Speed Watch team.
- ▶ Vehicle speeds have been found to be well in excess of the 30 mph limit, especially at peak periods.
- ▶ A proposal for traffic calming strategies was put forward at the Parish Council Outreach Meeting in 2016 and supported by local residents.

Greenfield

- ▶ Traffic calming measures are needed to reduce speeding
- ▶ Improved enforcement of the 30mph speed limit is needed

Re-aligned B4009: Parameters

Discussions have been held between the County Council and the traffic engineers working with the developers of sites along the route to agree the parameters for the road. These are likely to include:

- ▶ A carriageway width of a minimum of 6.5 metres to match the existing B4009
- ▶ An increased width at bends to enable two buses or HGVs to pass each other
- ▶ Kerbing along the whole route
- ▶ Tree planting and verges to both sides of the road
- ▶ A 3 metre pedestrian/cycleway path alongside the road with safe crossing points
- ▶ Provision for a bridleway and safe crossing for horse riders
- ▶ No private driveways to have direct access onto the road
- ▶ Drainage to meet sustainable standards
- ▶ A speed limit of 30mph along its full length
- ▶ Street lighting at all junctions but sensitive to the rural context

Parking

- ▶ Parking is a 'hot topic' in Watlington. The town's historic centre does not have enough parking space to meet the needs of residents, visitors, local shops and businesses. A 20% increase in the number of homes can only make this worse.
- ▶ Some changes are needed but should take account of the following:
- ▶ On-street parking meets the needs of some residents and visitors. It also protects pedestrians on narrow pavements and reduces water spray from passing vehicles
- ▶ On-street parking contributes to traffic congestion but also slows down the flow of traffic through the town centre
- ▶ The Hill Road Car Park is free to users and is partly funded by contributions from local businesses. At busy times it is sometimes difficult to find a parking space
- ▶ The parking areas at the Pavilion and St. Leonard's Church are under used by shoppers and people working in Watlington
- ▶ The parking area at the Pavilion is not large enough to meet the needs of sports groups using the playing field - especially on match days
- ▶ The parking area at St Leonard's Church will change when the development of two new homes is completed on the church hall site
- ▶ Pressure on town centre parking is likely to increase as more people come to live in Watlington and the surrounding area

Public Transport

- ▶ The use of private cars is high in South Oxfordshire because public transport in rural areas is inadequate to meet the community's needs. In Watlington, public transport is provided by bus services. These were subsidised over the years by Oxfordshire County Council but, as subsidies were removed, services have been reduced to a skeleton service.
- ▶ As the population of Watlington and the surrounding area grows there is likely to be more demand for public transport and housing development will provide some initial funding. This could contribute to:
 - ▶ A restored hourly T1 service to Oxford via Chalgrove
 - ▶ A service to the M40 bus stops at the Lewknor Bus Interchange
 - ▶ Support for increasing the service to Wallingford
 - ▶ A service to Thame on more than one day a week
 - ▶ A new service to Henley

Indicative Route for Re-aligned B4009

