

Wokingham roads consultation

Dear Clive

I am writing to urge you to extend the time allowed for consultation on your road plans, to improve the content on the website to allow clear overall visibility of the plans and to advertise it more widely so the public can engage.

The extensive plans to change roads and junctions in Wokingham Borough could pose considerable difficulties to all those who need to use a van or car to earn a living, to deliver items to homes and shops to keep us supplied, to get children to school, to get people to surgeries and hospitals, to allow mobility to the disabled and to give easy access to emergency vehicles when needed.

I welcome the provision of more and better cycleways away from main roads, and good walking routes also away from main roads. As someone who does a lot of walking in the local area I feel well catered for, with plenty of footpaths allowing me to get away from traffic. I support more greenways to schools so more children can choose to cycle or walk in relative safety away from main roads.

The area has experienced a fast pace of housing development which outstripped the capacity of the road network. Most new homes are lived in by people who need a car to get to work, to undertake the weekly shop or to go out in the evening. The Council was in the business of catching up with the shortage of roadspace by putting in much needed bypasses and better highways for motor vehicles, leaving other routes freer for pedestrian and cycle priority. This current plan seems to want to damage the main road routes, adding to potential conflict at junctions between pedestrians and vehicles, and creating traffic jams which will cause more motorist and van driver frustration. Changing successful junctions like the Woosehill roundabout which usually flows well is particularly worrying. Reducing main road capacity is a bad idea when we are short of capacity to start with.

The Consultation has been insufficiently advertised and is too short a time period when many people are away on holiday. The technology also does not make it easy to see what is planned in all parts of the Borough. It looks like an expensive and worrying plan which will worsen people's experience of the Borough, frustrate visitors and make normal lives more vexatious. I suggest the Council thinks again and goes back to a system of incremental improvement with a balanced approach which allows vehicle users principal routes to get around whilst providing more safe routes for cyclists and pedestrians. The main A and B roads should be strategic local routes to allow business to flourish and to permit all those who need to use a car because of distance or disability to do so easily.

At a time when the Council is worried about having enough money for crucial priorities in social care and education this potentially large expenditure

looks badly judged.

Yours sincerely

The Rt Hon Sir John Redwood MP, D.Phil, FCSI

Member of Parliament for Wokingham

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