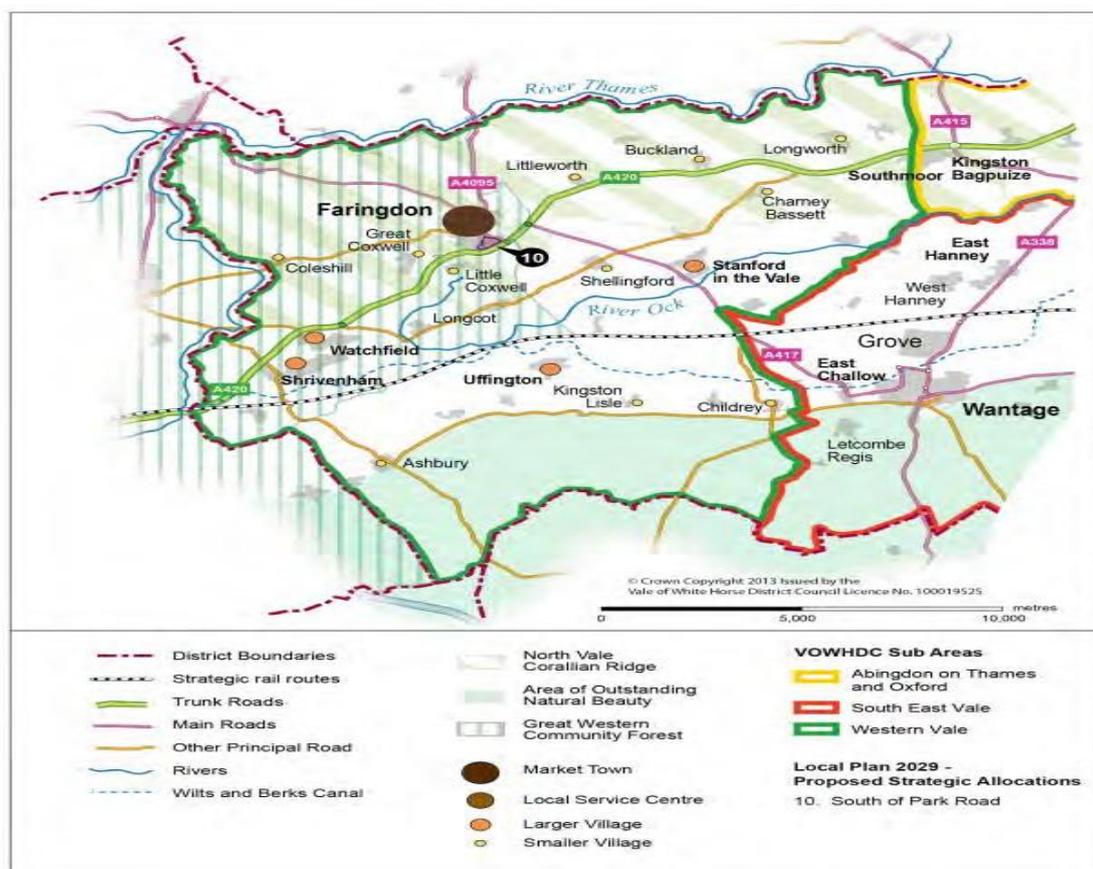


NECESSARY INFRASTRUCTURE REQUIREMENTS ON A419/A420/A415 LINK



ON BEHALF OF

WESTERN VALE VILLAGES CONSORTIUM OF
PARISH COUNCILS LISTED

AS A

REPRESENTATION TO THE VALE OF WHITE HORSE DISTRICT COUNCIL
EMERGING LOCAL PLAN TO 2031 BY REFERENCE TO ITS DETRIMENTAL
TRAFFIC AND ROAD SAFETY IMPACTS ON THE LOCAL HIGHWAY NETWORK
(A419/A420/A415 LINK)

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HIGHWAY DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT, TRAFFIC ENGINEERING AND TRANSPORT PLANNING.

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Western Vale Villages Consortium of Parish Councils ("WVV")

Wanborough PC

Bourton PC

Bishopstone PC

Ashbury PC

Compton Beauchamp Parish Meeting

Longcot PC

Watchfield PC

Shrivenham PC

And a number of other councils along the A420 associated with WVV, namely.

Faringdon Town Council

Uffington PC

Buckland PC

Great Coxwell PC

Hinton Waldrist PC

Littleworth Parish Meeting

Kingston Bagpuize PC

Buckland PC

Fyfield and Tubney PC

Fernham Parish Meeting

Frilford Parish Meeting

Hatford Parish Meeting

Little Coxwell PC

Pusey Parish Meeting

And with the valued support of CPRE Oxon

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Bob Hindhaugh Associates Ltd have been appointed to prepare a short report on behalf of Western Vale Villages ("WVV") Consortium of Parish Councils and others Parish Councils associated with it to demonstrate to the Vale of White Horse District Council ("VWHDC") that all significant development in this area with direct traffic links onto the A420 will have a detrimental and adverse traffic effect on the A420 Swindon to Oxford link road. The report will also highlight the necessary infrastructure improvements that would be required as a minimum to maintain safe passage on this route.

1.2 I have held scoping discussions with WVV, prior to preparing this document. The format of this report and its processes are considered accurate and applicable. For consistency and continuity, the background documents used in preparation of this report are the Transport Route Congestion Assessment (TRC) prepared in April/May 2013 which considered the significantly high transport implications the Local Plan development proposals will have on the local highway network which and demonstrated quite clearly how the levels of accessibility by sustainable modes of transport are inadequate and do not help to reduce new trips by car in line with current policy. This document TRC along with the Statement of Common Ground Document (SOCG) dated April 2014, which was fully agreed and signed by Swindon Borough Council (SBC), Oxfordshire County Council (OxCC), Vale of White Horse District Council (VWHDC) and the Western Vale Villages (WVV) also highlights key areas of concern on the A420 and a number of improvements where suggested as part of any emerging local plans. The SOCG is attached as Appendix 2 of this report.

1.3 Local Plan developments (and other applied for developments in the area) will materially affect current traffic conditions and will significantly increase the levels of peak time congestion residents already endure; and that the proposals set out in the VWHDC local plan part 1, do not accord with national planning policy and guidance relating to cumulative traffic caused by development and the 'severe' traffic impact the proposed developments will generate. Another key factor of any future planned development is the transport sustainability of any proposed development and is considered as a fundamental issue which is clearly set out and defined in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). I would also recommend that my Route Congestion Report is submitted alongside this supplementary document as it provides detailed technical information on all aspects of the associated traffic problems on the A420 in its current form.

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This report provides a breakdown of key traffic management concerns on the A419(T) - A420 – A415 Transport Route Corridor and in section 5, a 'Wish List' of necessary improvements and actions that may reduce further impact on delays and congestion;

1.4 The effects of traffic on other local roads that have a direct link to the A420 have also been considered. However, to compile a robust case, detailed consideration of the cross boundary vehicle trips as part of the emerging Swindon Borough Council Local Plan, particularly sites on the Eastern side of Swindon have also been considered as this development traffic represents a realistic case in terms of the traffic situation and its impact. This is a view supported by OxCC Highways Department in a draft paper prepared for a joint Authority meeting of SBC, OxCC, VWHDC and WVV on 17 March 2014.

2.0 DESCRIPTION OF LOCAL ROADS AND OF THE ROUTE A419/A420 /A415 AFFECTED BY PLANNED DEVELOPMENT

2.1 AREA LOCATION

2.2 The highway link under consideration in this report is from the A419 (T) -/A420 White Hart roundabout along the length of the A420 until it meets with the Junction of the A415 (A ***point to be noted is that the A419 (T) is within the Wiltshire boundary area. However, it does have a significant role to play in the cross boundary traffic flow levels on the A420 Swindon to Oxford link***). A plan of this route is shown in **Appendix 1** of this report. As part of the assessment, other junctions which are already experiencing congestion and stress have also been reviewed and analysed.

3.0 LOCAL POLICY

3.1 At a local level, the content, scope and methodology of any Transport Assessment (TA) or Transport Statement (TS) must be discussed and agreed with the relevant local authority ensuring it seeks to achieve improvements to the highway network and provide sustainable transport patterns which limits the traffic impact on the local network in accordance with the Council's own adopted and relevant policies.

3.2 Any well drafted emerging local plan up to 2031 should set out fully the 'Soundness and ability of the plan to be delivered', particularly in its relation to the Accessibility, Traffic, Transport and Infrastructure Requirements necessary to support the development proposals around the district. I am not aware of any detailed Transport Assessment available from the Council on which to analyse or indeed provide a more rebuttal based response to the plan in line with the following key areas.

- **Ensure that public and other transport links effectively allow people to get to places of work;**
- **Reduce the need to travel;**
- **Maintain and enhance existing transport infrastructure; and**
- **Provide travel choices.**

3.3 In my professional opinion the VWHDC Local Plan does not clearly demonstrate fully, how the following general policies in relation to transport and new developments are to be secured. It does however make strong

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cross references to the Oxfordshire Local Transport Plan and the NPPF. However Oxfordshire Local Transport Plan 4 (LTP4) is not yet in circulation although The County Council do recognise The A420 is the principal route between Swindon and Oxford and that it is an important strategic link in the Oxfordshire road hierarchy. It will have its own strategy as part of Local Transport Plan 4, which will be consulted on in the New Year. Therefore on this issue alone the Local Plan fails as there are no specific measures identified in it considering proposals for any new development. In the absence of LTP4 and detailed highway analysis on the A420, how can the Council have full regard to the following key aims of any well-defined transport strategy:

- **The requirement to reduce the need to travel, especially by car;**
- **To ensure that the development is accessible by a variety of means of transport;**
- **The need to minimise the effects of traffic generation; and,**
- **The need to produce a Travel Plan.**

It is also stated that public transport facilities will be improved wherever the opportunity arises, and that new development will only be allowed where it can be well served by public transport or improves public transport services.

3.4 VALE OF WHITE HORSE DISTRICT COUNCIL (VWHDC)/OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL (OCC) LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN 2012-2031

3.5 It has been stated previously, that it is broadly accepted by the Western Vale Villages (WVV) consortium of Parish Councils together with other Parish Council's and interested organisations, that to ensure growth, economic development and stability in the area, some development in the Vale area needs to take place. What is of major concern to the WVV and the other affected local parish council's is the proportion of development identified and allocated in this predominantly rural area.

3.6 If, residential development as set out in this emerging local plan development was restricted to a reasonable limit of between 10% and 15% of the current village sizes, then in principle, there would be no major objections as this would stimulate growth in these areas at a representative level whilst still supporting local amenities. There are many anomalies and sweeping statements contained within this plan which were highlighted within the RCS.

3.8 Both VWHDC as the Local Planning Authority and Oxfordshire County Council as the Local Highway Authority, have responsibility for the delivery and implementation of the Local Transport Plan ("LTP"). In line with national and regional policy objectives. The LTP is integral to this process as it follows a similar theme for continuity, in that it promotes policies and measures to achieve improvements particularly for alternative modes

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of travel within the Council's geographical area and is a key strategy to which to align the Local Plan and generally for the basis of the traffic and transportation elements and foundations within the local plan.

3.9 PRINCIPLES OF THE OXFORDSHIRE TRANSPORT STRATEGY AND ITS CONNECTION WITH SWINDON BOROUGH COUNCIL TRAFFIC IMPLICATIONS

3.10 The transport strategy for the future development aims of any emerging Local Plan provides the means to achieve the identified policy objectives by optimising the opportunity for access to/from any allocated site either now or in the future by non-car modes. This approach is in full accordance with all local, regional and national policies. It is considered that the approach for this Development Plan must be cohesive with good connectivity to/from the centre of Oxford, other major conurbations and the surrounding area, for all modes of transport, motorised and non-motorised. These measures should be very real and very deliverable from any of these site allocations and would comply fully with the underlying principles set out in the VWHDC Local Development and Transport Plan.

3.11 SUMMARY

3.12 Provision for safe access into and throughout the Western Vale Villages area namely, the A420, A415 and the A417 B4000 will be extremely congested for all road users unless some major highway improvements are undertaken at key locations along the route to sustain growth but limit congestion.

1. The development plan does not adopt the fully sustainable approach it seeks to project and which is specifically highlighted in both local and national policy as being necessary within the planning process.
2. Its emerging potential developments are not located close to town centres, efficient public transport facilities. Thus many in the surrounding residential areas will almost certainly need to travel by private car (this view is also expressed within the Local Plan) as this route is quite clearly an extensively used commuter route. The traffic impact of the proposed developments close to or impacting on this corridor will not conserve energy nor help limit the emission of greenhouse gases. On the contrary, the impact of additional significant traffic flows will only further degenerate air quality.
3. The location of the proposed developments will NOT promote sustainability by reducing the number of car trips on this link as there is no promotion of sustainable modes of travel such as walking, cycling, and the use of public transport as public transport services in this area are

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particularly poor. There is no mention of the effective use of Travel Plans. A full highway assessment should be carried out before sites are put forward for allocation rather than afterwards; and

4. The level of car parking throughout the development proposals needs to be balanced to ensure a demonstrable level of restraint, and thus promote alternatives to car use.

3.13 Furthermore, good pedestrian and cycle linkages to a number of locations, facilities and public transport services must ensure that the development is sustainable as required by national and local policy.

4.0 LOCAL PLAN DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS AND COMMITTED DEVELOPMENT AFFECTING THE HIGHWAY LINK A419/A420 WHITE HART ROUNDABOUT – A415.

4.1 The initial RCS assessment carried out in 2013, is based on discussions with WVV and a number of other Parish Councils each of which has major traffic and congestion concerns about the extent of the development proposals on this congested link and the access roads to/from specific villages as identified within the RCS report. The RCS work demonstrated that this road will be operating over capacity and does not conform with current national policy relating to link capacity.

Below is the VWHDC description of their view on providing **Core Policy 7: Providing Supporting Infrastructure and Services**. The locations of strategic allocated sites demonstrate the lack of any credible sustainable transport measures will only worsen the situation significantly for residents and current regular users of this road as part of their everyday business requirements.

4.2 Core Policy 7: Providing Supporting Infrastructure and Services

4.3 All new development will be required to provide for the necessary on-site and, where appropriate, off-site infrastructure requirements arising from the proposal. Infrastructure requirements will be delivered directly by the developer and /or through an appropriate financial contribution prior to, or in conjunction with, new development. In ensuring the timely delivery of infrastructure requirements, development proposals must demonstrate that full regard has been paid to the Infrastructure Delivery Plan and all other relevant policies of this plan.

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4.4 If infrastructure requirements could render the development unviable, proposals for major development should be supported by an independent viability assessment on terms agreed by the relevant parties including the Council and County Council, and funded by the developer. This will involve an open book approach. Where viability constraints are demonstrated by evidence, the Council will:

- i. prioritise the developer contributions sought with regard to the IDP (i.e. first priority to Essential Infrastructure and second priority to Place Shaping Infrastructure), and/ or
- ii. use an appropriate mechanism to defer part of the developer contributions requirement to a later date, and/ or
- iii. as a last resort, refuse planning permission if the development would be unsustainable without inclusion of the unfunded infrastructure requirements.

4.5 The Council's Delivering Infrastructure Strategy will include both a CIL Charging Schedule and a Supplementary Planning Document for Section 106 and Section 278 legal agreements that will provide more detail about its approach to securing developer contributions. Upon adoption of the CIL Charging Schedule, CIL will be used to pool developer contributions towards a wide range of new and improved infrastructure necessary to deliver new development. Where not covered by the CIL Charging Schedule, infrastructure and services, including provision for their maintenance, should be delivered directly by the developer through the development management process and in accordance with The Regulation 122 Tests*.

4.6 Planning conditions and planning obligations will be sought to mitigate the direct impact(s) of development, secure its implementation, control phasing where necessary, and secure contributions towards the delivery of the necessary infrastructure.

4.7 Core Policy 33: Promoting Sustainable Transport and Accessibility

4.8 Supporting sustainable transport and accessibility safeguarding of land for strategic highway improvements within the Western Vale Sub-Area. The Evaluation of Transport Impacts (ETI) Study that has been prepared to inform the Vale Local Plan of the traffic issues associated with the A420 and other strategic roads within the County. It however, place a greater emphasis on capacity issues on the A34 and M40. What is not clear, is where other strategic routes are experiencing congestion problems what level of traffic transfers to other routes such as A420

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4.9 The Local Plan 2031 Part 1 has quite rightly identified some capacity issues on the A420, but it is subjective and unsupported by any evidence to state it is likely to occur later in the plan period. Oxfordshire County Council already recognise the A420 is experiencing congestion issues and following intervention by WVV is now going to allocate resources into a full technical route study to identify what improvements are required as part of its LTP4 process. However, the LTP work will not commence fully until next year (2015). This impact is partly as a result of the development proposed in the sub-area and will particularly affect junctions accessing Faringdon and Shrivenham, but a greater highway capacity concern is due to the potential Eastern Villages development proposals in Swindon close to the Oxfordshire boundary and the cross boundary traffic flows are of a major concern.

4.10 Oxfordshire County Council is working with partners including the Vale of White Horse District Council and Swindon Borough Council to develop a Route Strategy for the A420 (between the A419 and A34) as part of the work to update the Local Transport Plan (LTP). The strategy will help to ensure this important and strategic route continues to operate with minimal congestion and to avoid rat runs on minor roads. The ETI has identified that revised junctions are needed on the A420 at both Faringdon and Shrivenham. For this reason, land is safeguarded at these locations to ensure these necessary upgrades can be delivered alongside the planned growth at these settlements in accordance with Core Policy 21.

4.11 VWHDC Local Plan - Core Policy 33: Promoting Sustainable Transport and Accessibility

4.12 I have highlighted the key elements of this policy that are critical to the effective traffic impact management on the A420 link. The council have confirmed it will work with Oxfordshire County Council and others to develop their sustainable aims as set out below:

- i). actively seek to deliver the transport infrastructure and measures which improve movement in the Science Vale UK area as identified in the County Council's Local Transport Plan's (LTP), Science Vale UK Area Strategy and the Science Vale UK Integrated Transport Package, in partnership with South Oxfordshire District Council.
- ii). actively seek to ensure that the impacts of new development on the strategic and local road network are adequately mitigated for
- iii). support measures identified in Oxfordshire County Council's LTP including the relevant local area strategies for the district

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- iv). support improvements for accessing Oxford
- v). ensure that transport improvements are designed to minimise effects on the amenities of the surrounding area
- vi). encourage the use of sustainable modes of transport and support measures that enable a modal shift to public transport, cycling and walking in the district.
- vii). promote and support improvements to the transport network that increase safety, improve air quality and/or make our towns and villages more attractive
- viii). ensure adequate parking is delivered on new developments in accordance with Oxfordshire County Council's published standards
- ix). all developments that generate significant amounts of movement must be supported by an appropriate transport assessment or statement and travel plan that is agreed by Oxfordshire County Council, and
- x). promote electronic communications allowing businesses and residents to operate throughout the district and to provide services and information that reduce the need to travel.

4.13 As previously mentioned this emerging policy relies on the Oxfordshire Local Transport Plan (LTP4) and in particular the LTP policy **TR4** which provides the transport sustainability issues, measures and method of delivery supporting alternative modes of transport to help reduce the reliance of private car use within the County. I have covered the specific issues relating to pedestrian, cycling and public transport aims and provided a view on mobility impaired road users. The needs of those with mobility impairment are an important component of emerging development plans.

4.14 SUMMARY

4.15 In summary the emerging VWHDC Local Plan has no real cohesion to it, it makes generalised statements unsupported by evidence and fundamentally it completely fails to recognise in any detail or any substance or have any regard to effective, sustainable, travel measures and provision. It is all 'if', 'but' and 'maybe' generic sweeping statements and in my opinion does not comply with either the NPPF or indeed its own core policy 33 or the recently approved Local Transport Plan Policy TR4 which is troubling. Furthermore, contained within the Local Plan appendices pages 47-57 Western Vale Sub-Area, it briefly highlights some measures, but has no budget or costs applied to it. It will rely solely on developers demonstrating what they feel is required rather than the authority spelling it out. This is a major development plan for the district for the next 15 years. The plan safeguards land for highway improvements therefore, the authority should at this stage be specifying exactly what is required and then it becomes formally adopted policy to which developers have to abide by.

5.0 HIGHWAYS IMPROVEMENTS FOR CONSIDERATION - A420 LINK, BETWEEN OXFORD AND SWINDON AS A RESULT OF THE LOCAL PLAN ALLOCATIONS

5.1 It is now widely accepted that the A420 Swindon –Oxford strategic link road is experiencing a consistently high level of traffic flows which results in long periods of congestion. Following positive discussions between SBC, OxCC, VWHDC and the WVV earlier this year a SOCG was prepared which highlights many of the outstanding highway issues concerning the A420 link and serves as a very useful starting point recognising an initial package of measures to be implemented should the SBC local plan be approved. Research has been carried out with reference to the Governments recent announcement on infrastructure investment and the A420 is not included within the list of improvements. With this in mind, the list of improvements outlined below by WVV is considered to be an absolute minimum in coming to terms with the additional traffic impact the proposed local plan allocations will generate.

5.2 Below is a list of existing issues and concerns currently affecting the A420 link between Swindon and Oxford. All of these key issues will be further exacerbated by any significant increase in vehicular numbers along its length, especially during peak times. This section clearly highlights some of the existing issues that cause further delays and disruption to the free flow of traffic when travelling on this route. It is anticipated that as part of

any development site delivery, the local Highway Authority would actively seek to rectify some of these concerns, together with other major route scheme investigations prior to the local plan becoming an adopted document.

5.3 The following in bold is a '**wish list**' of highway maintenance and junction improvements along the route to provide safer traffic management for all road users and is requested by WVV consortium to be provided through developer and other public sector funding/Grants

1. **Provide cycleway links from side roads allowing cyclists to gain safe passage onto the A420 particularly near to existing conurbations**
2. There are several unregulated but signed crossing places for pedestrians, wishing to cross over the A420 when walking along a public right of way that crosses the road. **These hazardous crossing places must be better signed with a required reduction in speed on their approach.**
3. The average carriageway width varies between 7.3 and 8.0 metres with a maximum of 10 metres at the odd location and as such speed limits fluctuate between 50 / 60 mph along most of the A420 with small sections of 30 / 40 mph. Overall for the majority of its length the A420 has a speed limit of 50 mph or higher. **Review and implement a revised speed management plan for the A420 for consistency and safety along the route**
4. An area of particular concern is that, on the approach to the roundabouts at Faringdon and Watchfield, instead of advising motorists to slow down, the speed limit increases to the national speed limit (60mph), which therefore is advising motorists of a higher speed just before the hazard of an approaching RAB. **All approach speeds towards roundabouts to be reviewed as above in Point 3.**
5. There is a large number of the chevrons signs along the A420 indicating that along this route there are continuing concerns with regard to speeding traffic and incidents. Some of these chevrons are yellow backed. Others on severe bends are dirty and faded and without any yellow backing which would highlight the signage in the dark enhancing road safety along the route. **Replace and renew all worn out signs.**
6. Road signing along vast lengths of the A420 is not in accordance with standards for road markings and are in poor condition. This is very concerning as most of the A420 does not have a system of street lighting, footways, cycle ways and remains a clear way. I would suspect that due to the high levels of traffic using the route the road markings are continually being eroded and that there may be no money

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in the highway maintenance budget to keep up with required works. **Repaint and enhance all the road lining and replace old signs with new current signage**

7. Heavy peak time traffic movements along this section of the A420 take the afternoon peak time traffic movements past beyond 1830hrs. The volume and high level of traffic is consistent with the heavy reliance of the motor vehicle as highlighted within the draft local plan. **Heavy peak time and non-peak time traffic movements are evident at all the junctions. WVV would like to see significant improvements at the following junctions to enhance safety, ease capacity and access problems.**

- **Townsend Road, west of Shrivenham (roundabout provision)**
- **B4508 Roundabout at Watchfield**
- **A420 slip road to Great Coxwell (roundabout junction provision)**
- **A420/A417 roundabout to Faringdon. Potential for peak time traffic signal control**
- **A420/A415 roundabout, as above consider peak time traffic signal control**

As well as looking at the above mentioned junctions, traffic and speed management solutions should be provided to roads running parallel to the A420 to prevent rat running are as follows;

- **B4507 Swindon-Wantage**
- **B4508 East of Shrivenham**
- **B4000 South of Shrivenham**

As the A420 becomes increasingly more congested, these routes will become more attractive alternative routes to employment sites at Science Vale (Wantage and Didcot) and this should be discouraged.

8. The A420 appears to have a reasonable bus service. However due to the limited bus stops and pedestrian links to surrounding villages, the existing bus services are very under used with most buses virtually empty in each direction of travel to either Swindon or indeed Oxford. This could be greatly improved by the following measures

- **Improved bus connections and facilities along the route, including walk/cycle links, cycle parking, high quality shelters and real time passenger information is required.**
- **Improved service provision, particularly in the peak times.**

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- **Local Plan Policy 21 sets out that land alongside the A420 has been safeguarded for infrastructure improvements. To assist with free flow traffic, provide off road bus layby's, this will remove obstructions to the free flow of traffic and provide a safe area for the setting down and picking up of passengers using the No 66 service.**

9. Park Road, Faringdon has queuing vehicles heading south towards the RAB (junction with the A420) at peak times. I have witnessed some vehicles wanting to gain access towards Swindon actually drive along the centre of Park Road towards the relatively high flows of oncoming traffic heading into Faringdon. There are proposals for both large housing and commercial developments at this location. For this road to operate safely and efficiently without increasing journey times for existing users, there will need to be major infrastructure improvements at this location.

Widen the Park Road to allow a safer access and egress from the roundabout. To prevent excessive queues, investigate the provision off-peak time traffic signals at the roundabout, giving priority to traffic on the A420 as previously mentioned

10. The condition of parts of the A420 is very poor on sections of the road and has been signed with skid warning and hump warning signs. **A full carriageway maintenance scheme along the route to improve the safety of travelling vehicles.** The recent improvements in the surface West of the Watchfield roundabout has been well accomplished with modest disruption to traffic.

11. Turning right out of Great Coxwell, Coxwell Road onto the A420, turning right is difficult with high waiting times.

Provide a roundabout junction, giving all road users safer entry and exit onto the network

12. Turning right out of Townsend Road onto A420 is very difficult with high waiting times. There are also queuing issues along Townsend Road and Cley fields.

To overcome this problem, as above provide a roundabout to provide a safer solution.

13. At the Police HQ signals there is "No Right Turn" ban heading east towards Swindon. This forces all traffic past the Police HQ and around the Sainsbury's RAB.

14. Sainsbury's Gable Cross 5 arm RAB junction with Sainsbury's / Thorn Hill Road / Horstmann Close / A420 with a Toucan Crossing and is a real concern especially at peak times and backs up from the 5 arm White Hart roundabout (RAB) junction with A4312 (Oxford Road) / Erwin Street / A419 / Merlin Way / A420 up to the Toucan crossing in both directions.

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15. At the Sainsbury's 5 arm RAB, there is an approach speed of 40 mph with multiple turning movements in all directions. Queuing off Thorn Hill Road is especially difficult for an HGV turning right towards Swindon. An HGV may have to wait several minutes especially during peak times before there is a gap in the traffic to enable this right turn movement. When the Toucan crossing signals turn red, this allows a turning movement to take place. This clearly demonstrates the volume of traffic that a HGV is facing at peak times when exiting Thorn Hill Road onto the A420. The industrial estate off Thorn Hill Road is proposing to increase in size therefore increasing HGV movements at this location.

Points 13, 14 and 15 are out with the geographical area of VWHDC. However, these junctions have been identified for further analysis and clearly itemised within the SOCG agreement between SBC, OxCC and VWHDC and will be included in the impending route assessment.

5.4 SUMMARY:

5.5 The A420 between the A415 and A419 has numerous design flaws, defects and hazards and does not fully comply with the design standards contained within DMRB. Any increase in vehicular movements along its length will add to the problems highlighted above and placing all road users at risk of incident. Any new developments seeking requiring the A420 for access should consider all of the above mentioned highway improvements and contribute to fully mitigate their direct impact. There should be no exceptions as the A420 is operating at capacity at peak and includes many defects and hazards. Many of the suggested improvements are already outlined within the attached statement of common ground.

5.6 Local authorities should consider a full maintenance scheme bring the carriageway A420 up to better standard before even considering any future development that would increase vehicular movements along this length. The VWHDC infrastructure plan does not go into sufficient detail with regards to accommodate the impact of further developments as well as maintaining the existing road surface, signing and lining along this length will have. The Council are relying on developer led TA's as a mechanism to secure funding, rather than specify their requirements to improve this strategic link which to me is the wrong procedure.

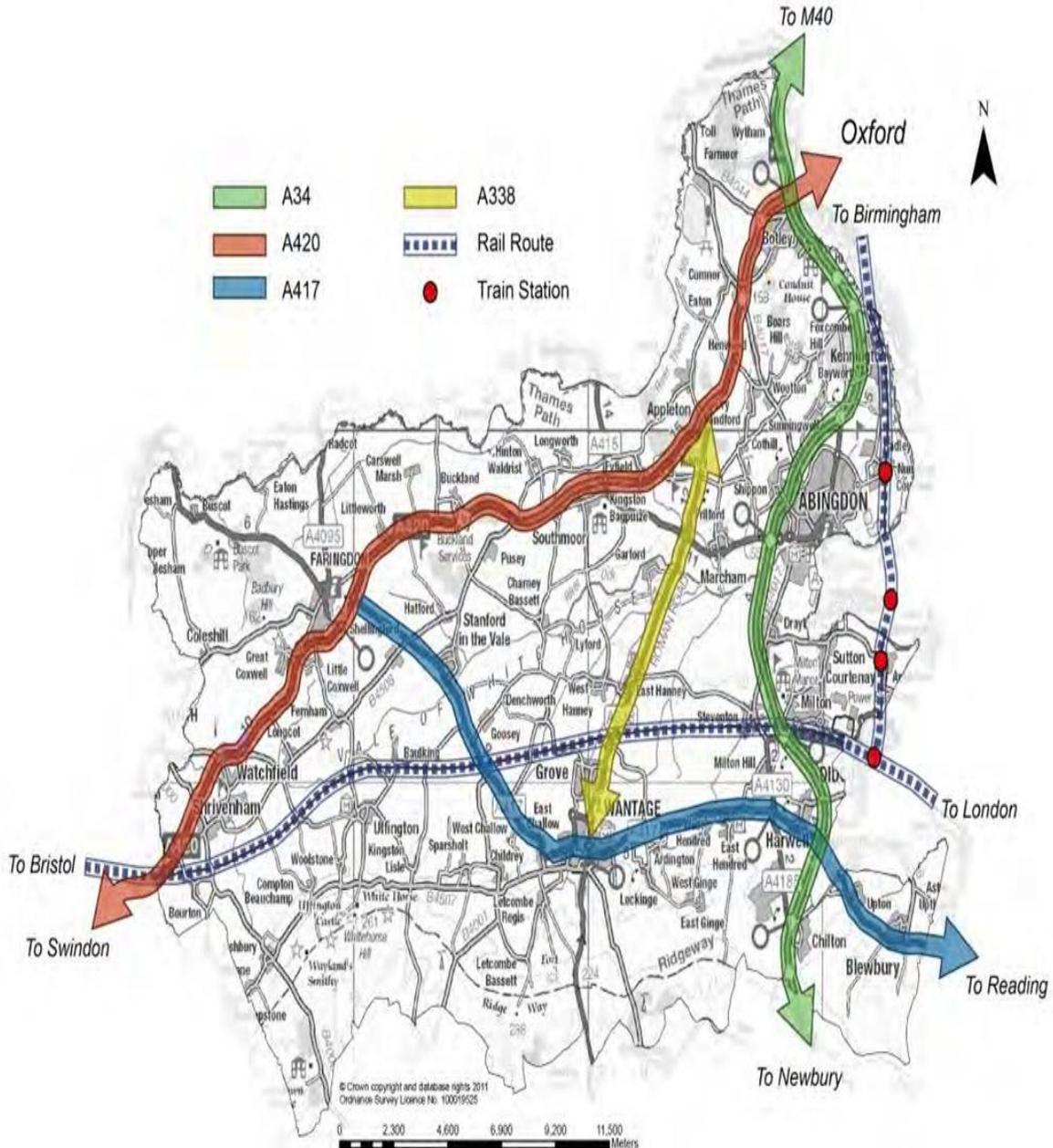
5.7 The WVV would like to see the suggested list of improvements highlighted in bold above implemented fully as a mechanism to improving journey times, safety and providing a good reliable bus service as a very realistic alternative to the private car.

6.0 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 These development proposals do not strike any balance in terms of delivery. They do not fully encourage the use of sustainable modes of transport via new pedestrian/cycleway links or adequate public transport provision. This emerging Local Plan is amplified by its complete lack of strategic thinking when developing such an important document and does not in my view evenly distribute development across the council's geographical area. There is a number of brownfield sites that could be utilised and help preserve the rural concepts of the Vale area. This area is not a highly sustainable location and the VWHDC clearly accepts that this is a congested route about which it should have already expressed major concerns. Some of the proposed development sites are not near or adjacent to the local centres and therefore fail to create good accessibility opportunities by sustainable modes such as walking, cycling and public transport.

6.2 In conclusion, in its current form the emerging Local Plan is in contravention of many of its existing policies appertaining to transport assessment and sustainable travel. It fails to comply with the Government's flagship National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). It will also fail to deliver any quality development at the heart of Oxfordshire and the opportunity for access by sustainable modes is both non-realistic and unachievable in the Vale. It is reasonable to conclude that there are some significant transport or highway related reasons why the proposed development should not be permitted through the Local Plan EIP process without significant infrastructure provision. The local residents of the West Vale Villages Consortium, CPRE and the other Parish Councils should respectfully ask the Inspector at the forthcoming Examination in Public to find the current plan unsound for the reasons advanced in this report.

APPENDIX 1 – ROUTE LOCATION PLAN



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APPENDIX 2 – STATEMENT OF COMMON GROUND