



The countryside charity
Oxfordshire

Campaigning to protect our rural county

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RIGHTS OF WAY CONSULTANT

THE OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL (DIDCOT TO CULHAM THAMES BRIDGE) SCHEME 2022

THE OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL (DIDCOT GARDEN TOWN HIGHWAYS INFRASTRUCTURE - A4130 IMPROVEMENT (MILTON GATE TO COLLETT ROUNDABOUT), A4197 DIDCOT TO CULHAM LINK ROAD, AND A415 CLIFTON HAMPDEN BYPASS) (SIDE ROADS) ORDER 2022

PROOF OF EVIDENCE

- 0.1 My name is Nicholas John Moon and I am CPRE's Rights of Way Consultant for South Oxfordshire.
- 0.2 Notwithstanding CPRE Oxfordshire's opposition to the principle of this ill-conceived road scheme, we wish to object to provisions of the side roads order in order to mitigate its effects on the public rights of way network should it go ahead.
- 0.3 CPRE's objection to the above-named side roads order relates to two specific proposals as follows:-
- 1) The proposed extinguishment of Appleford, Bridleway No.3 and its replacement by a roadside cycle track alongside the new road.
 - 2) The proposed extinguishment of Clifton Hampden, Footpath No.6 between the northern boundary of the new road and its junction with Footpath No.3 and its replacement by a roadside footway alongside the new road.

Appleford, Bridleway No.3

- 1.1 Most of Appleford BR3 currently follows a relatively quiet private road from the edge of Didcot to Appleford Crossing and as such provides a pleasant route for horseriders, cyclists and walkers. Unfortunately, however, the line of the proposed new road would largely obliterate this route and so the scheme proposes to replace it with a roadside cycle track and footway. As the new road would be likely to carry a significant number of HGVs, this cycle track would be likely to be noisy and so

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using it would no longer be a pleasant experience and there is the risk that a nervous horse might be startled and react badly.

- 1.2 We therefore submit that an alternative route is needed for the bridleway which is both convenient and relatively pleasant to use and provides a greater degree of safety for horseriders and we believe this could be done by diverting the bridleway alongside the Didcot-Oxford railway line. This would have the advantages of being relatively direct and having an open view on the east side, however the land to the west is used, of being relatively quiet (except when there is a passing train) and of having a minimal effect on the land between the new road and the railway however it is used as it would simply require a 5-metre-wide strip of land alongside the railway fence.

Clifton Hampden, Footpath No.6

- 2.1 Clifton Hampden FP6 is a well-used footpath forming part of a footpath route from Abingdon to Clifton Hampden as well as various circular walks from Clifton Hampden in the surrounding countryside. The affected section currently follows the south side of a hedge along the edge of an arable field and is left uncultivated. Its line is intersected at an angle by the line of the new road and the scheme proposes its extinguishment from the point it crosses the new road eastwards to the point where it meets FP3 at right angles. Walkers would be expected to use the roadside footway alongside the new road to the point where FP3 crosses the road.
- 2.2 CPRE wishes to object to this proposal as it would detract from the enjoyment of walking FP6 by replacing a field-edge path with a roadside footway and thus unnecessarily urbanising this section of whatever route walkers are taking. It would particularly affect families with children who would have to ensure that their children walked in a disciplined fashion rather than allow them to run free.
- 2.3 While we had initially suggested that FP6 be left on its current line so that walkers crossed the road and continued on the south side, we now understand that associated earthworks would prevent this and so we suggest instead that the path be diverted to run outside the road's northern fence until it meets FP3. This would be more pleasant as it would be quieter and further away from the road, it would have a more rural character and would allow children to run free except if they have to cross the new road on FP3. Such a diversion would also mean that walkers linking with the northern section of FP3 need not join the road at all. Those linking with the southern section of FP3 or FP5 to the east would merely have to cross the new road and not walk along its footway.