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**SOUTH OXFORDSHIRE LOCAL PLAN 2011 - 2034**  
**SECOND PUBLICATION VERSION (JANUARY 2019)**  
**RESPONSE ON BEHALF OF MR. AND MRS. WILSON**

**Introduction**

On behalf Mrs. and Mrs. Wilson, the residents of [REDACTED], we object to the continued inclusion of a safeguarding proposal for a bypass for Southern Abingdon (Abingdon Southern Bypass) in the draft Local Plan.

This response has been written by Barton Willmore and transport consultancy Motion and relates to those policies, paragraphs and appendices of the South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011-2034 (Second Public Version) which refer to the Abingdon Southern Bypass), namely:

- Policy TRANS3
- Paragraphs 7.21/7.22
- Appendix 5 (Page 266: SODC Safeguarding Maps - A bypass for Southern Abingdon)

For the reasons given in this response we request that the safeguarding proposal for the Abingdon Southern Bypass, and all references to it, be deleted from the draft Local Plan.

To summarise the objections:

- (i) There is no funding for the bypass and it is considered very unlikely that funding will be secured in the future. This is because of the scale of development which would be required (i.e. equivalent to the entire allocation for South Oxfordshire in one location).
- (ii) A bypass in this location could result in the loss of or harm to local amenities.
- (iii) The building of a bypass within the safeguarded area could result in significant adverse effects upon the built and natural environment, including the bypass having to traverse large areas within Flood Zone 2 and 3.
- (iv) The technical complexity of completing the bypass (i.e. cutting across functional flood plain; being raised above the 1 in and 100 year flood level; requiring 5 river crossings including a new crossing of the river Thames; and crossing a flooded gravel works now a reservoir) would increase the cost of the scheme compared with at-grade schemes in areas without significant constraint and call into its question its viability and the viability of any development scheme which would be associated with it.
- (v) The above objections are reinforced through the current consultation being undertaken by Oxfordshire County Council on improving transport for Didcot and the surrounding area which will direct funding for transport schemes in the area to the A34 / Didcot / Culham / A4074 corridor. This change in the direction of growth and infrastructure delivery would, in effect,



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create an alternative route to the A415 to the south of Abingdon thereby providing a bypass of Abingdon to the south with respect to through traffic; and facilitate the delivery of and connect major planned and committed developments including over 10,000 new homes at Didcot and Culham science park.

## **No Long-Term Prospect for Implementation**

### **- LTP4**

The current Local Transport Plan produced by Oxfordshire County Council (LTP4) covers the period 2015-2031 and is supported by a series of Area Transport Strategies (ATS). Abingdon doesn't sit in any of them although it is referred to in the Science Vale Area ATS (Vol 8 Part ii).

The bypass proposal is not identified as a scheme for implementation during the period covered by LTP4. Instead the Abingdon Southern Bypass is given a non-specific timescale and identified under Proposal SV4, which relates to safeguarding and states:

***"Proposal SV4 - to support safeguarding of land through the local plan process to enable delivery of strategic pieces of infrastructure considered likely to be required in the future, and beyond this plan period."***

And Proposal SV4.2, which states:

***"SV4.2 Safeguarding and protecting the ability to provide a South Abingdon road if significant additional development is allocated to the south of the town in the future. This will provide a direct link from west Abingdon to the A415 to the east and relieve congestion in Abingdon town centre."***

LTP4 also provides associated text with Proposal SV4 which states:

***"40. We will support South Oxfordshire and the Vale of the White Horse District Councils in safeguarding land for schemes in areas where it is possible that significant development may occur in the future."***

It would not appear that there is any other reference to the Abingdon Southern Bypass in LTP4 or justification for it.

The lack of detailed reason in LTP4 as to why OCC supports the safeguarding proposal is of great concern. Although Proposal SV4.2 states that the bypass is safeguarded because it is possible that significant development may occur in the future, we strongly disagree with this premise for safeguarding this particular bypass and consider that there should be more detailed reasoning for the bypass in the LTP.

We also call into question whether the bypass will be required in the next plan, or even the one after that (see below).

Also of concern is the emphasis that OCC places on supporting what the two LPAs (SODC and VWHDC) want in relation to safeguarded proposals. This appears to be leading to confusion as to what each LPA actually wants in terms of safeguarding schemes. In this regard, it is noted that Policy TRANS1 (ii) states that the LPA will "***support measures identified in the Local Transport Plan for the District***". This appears to be the opposite of what is stated in the LTP.

## - **Oxfordshire Infrastructure Strategy (OxIS)**

The current version of the OxIS includes the "Abingdon Bypass" on a "wish list" of infrastructure schemes within "Corridor 2 - Knowledge Spine South". However, the multi-criteria assessment score of the ABS is low and a review of the assessment criteria suggests that it should, in fact, be lower than shown. Combined with an aspiration of raising £650M to pay for the infrastructure "wish list" in Corridor 2 alone, it is extremely unlikely that funding will be made available for the ABS within the OxIS lifespan which is up to 2040. This extends past this local plan period and a long way into the next.

Without justification being given for the proposed safeguarding, Motion transport consultants on behalf of Mr. and Mrs. Wilson and the residents of Culham have objected to the ABS line and requested its removal. The reason for this particular request is that its continuing inclusion on a plan in this strategy could give rise to an element of ambiguity into OxIS. This could undermine the otherwise strength of clarity it requires to sustainably manage and steer the delivery of new homes and jobs and resist development proposals in unsustainable locations.

Two questions therefore arise: is it possible that the bypass will be required in the current Plan or the next?; and can both LPAs provide detailed justification or support for the bypass? If the answer is no to either of these questions then there is a strong argument for the safeguarding proposal to be removed both from the LTP and from the Local Plan (and in due course from the VWH Local Plan).

## - **Local Plan Evidence Base**

Of relevance to this particular matter, of the background reports prepared by the LPA in relation to the Local Plan, the following is noted:

- (i) Transport Topic Paper (October 2017): Paragraph 3.3 refers to the proposed safeguarding of the bypass and Paragraph 3.4 explains that:

***"It should be recognised that securing funding for more detailed development and delivery of these schemes is complex, and that the delivery of these schemes have wider strategic benefits. Evidence base work has also shown that certain key schemes, such as the proposed new Thames road crossing, have wider strategic impacts that need careful consideration. The district will therefore continue to work positively with the County Council and others to understand the benefits and impacts of these schemes and how and when they can be brought forward."***

However, Table 3 (commentary in relation to Policy TRANS3) acknowledges that:

***"There is a need to safeguard land to enable the delivery of key transport infrastructure that will support development within the Local Plan 2033 and beyond. This will be important to ensure that any proposals for development do not prejudice the future delivery of these schemes."***

***The schemes included for safeguarding of land to protect their future delivery are based on evidence work undertaken to date, including where relevant consistency with Local Transport Plan 4 adopted in 2015. The council will continue to work with others, particularly the County Council, on development of evidence base work to support the Local Plan at the next stage. This will inform the final schemes to be safeguarded at the Local Plan submission consultation stage (Regulation 19 Stage)."***

- (ii) South Oxfordshire District Council Local Plan Evaluation of Transport Impacts: Stage 1 - Development Scenarios Oxfordshire County Council (March 2017): No references are made to the Abingdon Southern Bypass.

- (iii) South Oxfordshire District Council Infrastructure Delivery Plan - Stage 1 (March 2017), the IDP Part A Report (October 2017) and the IDP Part B Report (Infrastructure Delivery Schedule) (October 2017): No references are made to the Abingdon Southern Bypass.

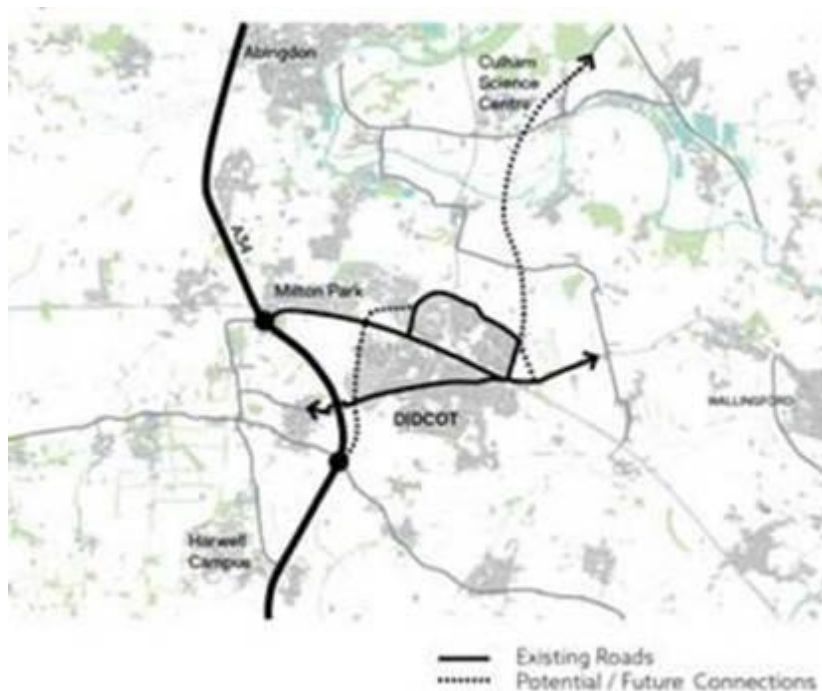
These background documents to the Local Plan further emphasise that there is no requirement for the bypass in the Plan period; securing funding would be 'complex' and, indeed, lead to the conclusion that the final scheme does not have to include the Abingdon Southern Bypass.

#### - **Change in Emphasis: New Direction of Transport Planning**

In addition, since the bypass was first presented as an idea - either by OCC, VWHDC or SODC - there have been significant changes in the locations of major development sites being proposed in the Vale and South Oxfordshire (particularly the Science Vale), including the strategic infrastructure and roads to support them. This includes the preference for progressing a Thames Crossing connecting Didcot - Culham Science Park - Oxford and then on to the Oxford - Cambridge corridor improvements.

With regard to the documentation published for the Didcot Garden Town, combined by knowledge of other development proposals and sites in Oxfordshire and Cambridgeshire, it would seem that providing a minor east - west link south of Abingdon is out of kilter with the strategic planning of the wider area, which is based on developing lines of north - south movement between the main emerging regeneration and development centres which are aligned on a north south access between Didcot and Oxford.

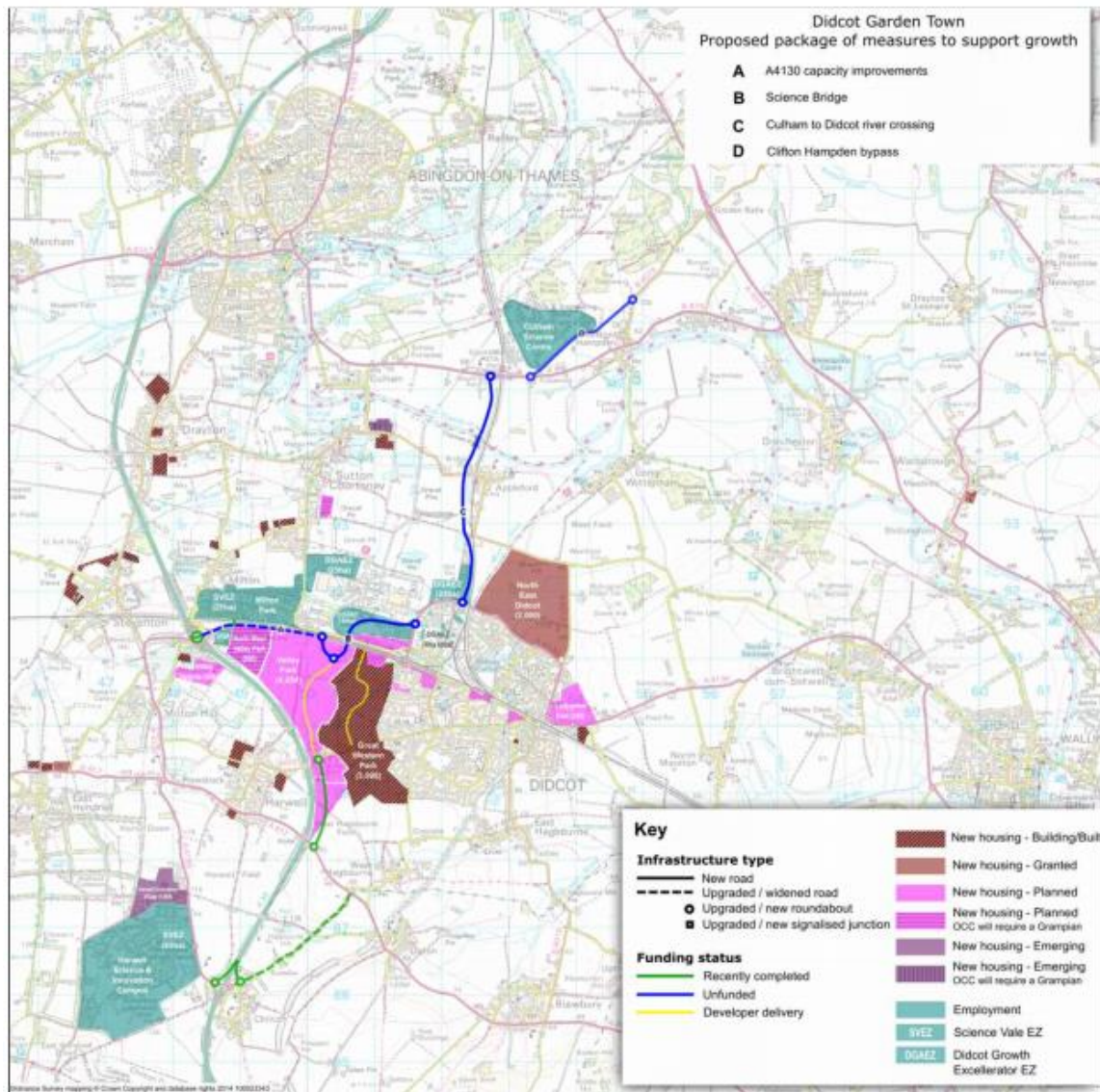
The plan below taken from the Didcot Garden Town proposals shows the movement desires in South Oxfordshire and reinforces that Abingdon is likely to become increasingly "side-tracked".



This change in the direction of growth and infrastructure delivery is further reinforced in the current consultation being undertaken by OCC on improving transport for Didcot and the surrounding area.

The extract from the consultation provided below shows OCC's intention to create an improved highway link between the A34 at Didcot and the A4074 to the east of Abingdon. The highway link would:

- (i) Create an alternative route to the A415 to the south of Abingdon thereby providing a bypass of Abingdon to the south with respect to through traffic; and
- (ii) Facilitate the delivery of and connect major planned and committed developments including over 10,000 new homes at Didcot and Culham science park.



In view of this, the following immediate conclusions are reached:

- (i) With the increasing momentum behind the Oxford - Culham science park - Didcot movement corridor and the scale of development and other investment sources (including from Network rail) the desired new Thames Crossing at Appleford would better serve the axis than a southern Abingdon Bypass.
- (ii) Given the travel desire lines arising from the Oxford - Culham science park - Didcot axis, it is expected that the number of through journeys at Abingdon (i.e. those which would benefit from the Southern Bypass) would reduce if a crossing were provided at Appleford as there would be a more direct route for this demand. This would significantly reduce traffic demand in Abingdon and negate the need for a bypass at Abingdon.

- (iii) The scale of development along the Oxford - Didcot corridor is likely to attract the level of investment needed to provide a new crossing at Appleford. This would be directly from new development, investment from other infrastructure providers such as Network Rail and inward investment.
- (iv) Investment in infrastructure is a finite resource. Given the focus on the Oxford - Culham science park - Didcot axis and the need to invest in improving direct connectivity between these centres, promoting a major piece of transport infrastructure nearby but not directly related to movement in the corridor would reduce the amount of investment which would otherwise be available to support the delivery of infrastructure where the focus of major development.

Given that the road has no strategic purpose; that there is no development planned for the south of Abingdon; and there are different options available for alleviating congestion within Abingdon itself: there is no requirement for the bypass and therefore no justification for safeguarding land for the bypass.

### **No Long-Term Prospect for Funding**

As can be deduced from the draft Local Plan, there is no funding in place from either Central or Local Government for the proposed bypass. This position is reinforced through the current consultation being undertaken by OCC on improving transport for Didcot and the surrounding area which, as shown above, will direct funding for transport schemes in the area to the A34 / Didcot / Culham / A4074 corridor. Instead, the construction of the bypass would be reliant upon private sector funding through additional (residential) development to the south of Abingdon.

In addition, to it being unlikely that the proposed bypass would be required during the Plan period, we would question whether the bypass is capable of being delivered with private sector funding in the longer term.

Previous cost estimates given by VWHDC in its Local Plan Topic Paper 6 (Transport and Accessibility) indicated that the bypass could cost in the region of £20 million. We consider those estimates to be very conservative. Instead, we have estimated that the cost of the bypass to be more likely to be in the region of £35 million, which is the estimate given in the Abingdon Integrated Transport and Land Use Study Stage 3 Final Report (Preferred Strategy, May 2001). This is because of construction requirements for bridge crossings for the bypass (i.e. 5 crossings of rivers and other watercourses).

We consider for the following reasons that it is very unlikely that a bypass could be funded by development in and around Abingdon, even in the longer term (i.e. post 2034):

- (i) There are a significant number of environmental constraints relating to land to the south of Abingdon which, as a result, will limit the amount of new housing which would be required to fund the bypass from S106 / CIL contributions.
- (ii) As the VWH Core Strategy Preferred Options January 2009 (now superseded) indicated, land to the south of Abingdon - if it was to be allocated in the next Local Plan - only has the potential to deliver approximately 2,070 new dwellings. Indeed, we consider that this could be a generous assumption of development capacity.

Based on 2,070 dwellings and a S106/CIL contribution per dwelling of £2,000 for the bypass, we estimate that the total contribution towards the bypass from development to the East and West of Drayton Road could be in the region of £4.15 million. This, however, is less than 12% of the total cost of the bypass. Indeed, this contribution could be further eroded if the LPA also sought contributions for other S106/CIL related works, such as a contribution towards the restoration of the Wilts and Berks Canal south of Abingdon.

- (iii) Unlike in the case of the delivery of the south facing slips on the A34 at Lodge Hill which has received significant Government funding through the LEP, OCC's historic position (as identified in LTP3) is that the Abingdon Southern Bypass is unlikely to attract government funding because it is not strategic infrastructure. Consequently, it is also unlikely that any future development to the south of the town would receive 'subsides' towards the cost of delivering the bypass.
- (iv) It is unlikely that development elsewhere in South Oxfordshire or in the Vale during the current or next Plan periods could make up the shortfall in the total cost of the bypass.

To meet the £35 million cost of the bypass would require the allocation of approximately 17,500 new dwellings during a Plan period. This also assumes a 'roof tax' of £2,000 and each and every new development making the same level of contribution to the bypass. That said, even if that number of new dwellings were allocated we doubt that each development could afford to make such a contribution because it is more than likely that other major developments would require their own transport infrastructure, which could not therefore be counted towards a bypass for Abingdon. The other alternative would be to increase the 'roof tax' contribution, however, this could then lead to long term development proposals becoming unviable. In view of this, we call into question whether a £35 million bypass would be good value for money in terms of seeking to alleviate traffic congestion and whether, instead, a lower cost solution could be identified which is more effective.

In view of this, it is highly questionable as to whether or not the bypass could be funded and built for a very considerable period of time (i.e. within the current Plan period, the next one or the one after that).

### **Environmental Effects**

In addition to the above concerns, it is also considered that the construction of an Abingdon Southern Bypass within the safeguarding land shown in Appendix 5 will, even if it is constructed during the next Plan period, result in significant adverse effects to the local environment and to the amenity local residents.

The proposed safeguarding line will also be a material consideration for at least the next 15 years which will affect planning decisions in and around the south of Abingdon, and not only in the Vale but also in South Oxfordshire.

If the safeguarding line were to remain in Policy TRANS3 and, therefore, afforded the same status as other Local Plan policies and also treated as a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.

### **Loss of or Harm to Local Amenities**

#### **- Public Rights of Way and The Thames Path**

The safeguarding line crosses a number of public rights of way and the Thames Path. The likely effect will be to disrupt otherwise rural walking routes. In this regard, the River Thames, to the south of Abingdon, is a key recreational and commercial resource. The Thames Path is used for informal recreation by numerous local stakeholders and visitors to Abingdon from the wider area. The waterway is well used for rowing (for example, by Abingdon Rowing Club and Abingdon School) and by recreational boat users. It is also well used by anglers.

#### **- The River Thames**

The proposal would have a significant impact on the setting of the River Thames during both the construction of the bypass and associated bridge and in the long term as a result of the operation of the bypass. Key impacts would include landscape and visual impacts, and noise and dust

generation. There is the potential for impacts on water quality particularly during the construction phase but also during the long-term operational phase as a result of the discharge of contaminated run-off. These impacts would have a significant adverse effect on the use of the Thames Path and the waterway by recreational users.

#### - **Air Quality**

It is also considered that development on land east and west of Drayton Road, Abingdon could worsen air quality in central Abingdon which is designated an Air Quality Management Area.

#### - **Effect on Existing Sport, Recreation and Leisure Facilities**

The safeguarding line of the bypass also passes through the Abingdon Southern Town Park. Without an assessment of the environmental effects of the proposed bypass (and its alternatives), it is not yet confirmed as to whether or not the bypass will result in harmful noise disturbance to people using the Park.

The proposed route of the bypass also passes through land used by the Abingdon Rugby Club. Depending on the route finally chosen, the Rugby Club could find itself in a position whereby it cannot use all the pitches it currently uses; or be able to plan for its long term future on its current site. Depending on the degree of disturbance caused by routing a bypass in this particular location, the Club might face difficulties in staying long-term in its present location. In addition, it is understood that the Rugby Club is located upon reclaimed ground which, if built upon by a road could add to the expense of its construction.

#### **Effect on the Built Environment**

The safeguarding line of the bypass passes directly next to the Conservation Area at Culham which, if the bypass was built here, would result in a significant adverse visual impact on the existing village scene, which includes the village church, the village green and the houses which are located around the green.

Indeed, a number of buildings are located in close proximity to the safeguarded land, including the former Waggon and Horses Public House. In addition, the safeguarding line also passes immediately next to the grounds of listed buildings in Culham (i.e. Culham House) and the grounds of other buildings located within the Culham Conservation Area. The Sustainability Appraisal (September 2017) acknowledges (at Appendix Q / page 55) that the Abingdon Southern Bypass would be within 500m of a Conservation Area.

The safeguarded land also runs straight through a Scheduled Ancient Monument (Sutton Wick settlement site). This is a national, statutory heritage designation.

Consideration would also need to be given as to whether or not the route of the bypass, for example in relation to land to the south of the Tesco superstore contains areas of archaeological significance.

The building of a bypass in this location would also adversely affect views of St. Helens Church in Abingdon.

#### **Landscape and Visual Effects**

The Sustainability Appraisal (September 2017) concludes (at Appendix Q / page 51) that given the scale of development in relation to an Abingdon Southern Bypass "**significant negative effects are also anticipated in relation to landscape**".

A Landscape and Visual Statement has also been prepared by Barton Willmore (see attached).



This statement was prepared in response to the safeguarding line identified in the VWH Local Plan to 2029 and provides a preliminary strategic overview of the proposed Abingdon Southern Bypass route and its potential landscape and visual effects.

That Statement - although relating to the previous depiction of the safeguarding route - is still of relevance to the revised safeguarding line in that it concludes that development on the proposed route could adversely affect particular sensitive receptors.

The proposed crossing of the River Thames and its effect on an enclosed parkland landscape to the north of Culham Conservation Area could result in significant adverse effects on the character of the area.

In addition, the mature woodland and historic small scale field pattern surrounding Stonehill is also sensitive to the proposed bypass. Any development within these more sensitive areas could undermine and adversely affect their existing characteristics including the setting of listed buildings and Culham Conservation Area.

The Statement recommends that a more detailed assessment of the landscape and visual effects is required, including the identification of alternative route options before land is safeguarded. Alternative options could include realignment of the proposed route further away from Culham Conservation Area and Stonehill House.

## **Effect on the Natural Environment**

### **- Ecological Effects**

The safeguarding line cuts through the Ock Meadows Nature Reserve. As a result, it is considered that the ecology and the rural character of the Ock Valley Corridor could be harmed by the construction of a road.

It is noted that the Sustainability Appraisal (September 2017) concludes (at Appendix Q / page 48/49) that the impact of the Abingdon Southern Bypass on ecology is 'uncertain'. We would, therefore, question this conclusion as - without further assessment being undertaken - it might underplay the significance of this effect.

### **- Best and Most Versatile Agricultural Land**

The Sustainability Appraisal (September 2017) concludes (at Appendix Q / page 51) that the development of an Abingdon Southern Bypass would "**result in the loss of the best and most versatile agricultural land (Grade 2)**".

In addition, based on evidence provided in the VWH Core Strategy Preferred Options at Appendix 2a (i.e. in relation to the potential for development on land east of Drayton Road), development in the location of the bypass safeguarding could result in the loss of Grade 2 agricultural land. Grade 2 land is defined as the "best and most versatile" (BMV).

## **Flood Risk**

The safeguarded route of the bypass would result in the loss of land that is currently used for flood management to the east of the River Thames and to the south of Abingdon. The loss of this land could result in an increase in flood risk to properties both within Abingdon and downstream at the villages of Culham and Sutton Courtenay.

In particular, the proposals would affect land to the west of the village of Culham which is identified on the Environment Agency flood maps for planning as being within Flood Zones 2 and 3. This is acknowledged by the Sustainability Appraisal (September 2017) at Appendix Q / page 58/59), which concludes that the proposed bypass "**could result in an increased flood risk within the 1 to 100 year floodplain**".

Cutting through functional flood plain, to avoid exacerbated flood risk the road would need to be raised above 1 in 100 year flood level plus an allowance for climate change. Embankments and structures provided to achieve this would need to be designed to allow the conveyance of flood waters across the flood plain to prevent the road acting as a dam and increasing the risk of flooding to existing properties to the south of Abingdon. The EA advise that bridge abutments should be kept outside the 1 in 100 year plus climate change extent.

In addition, it is noted that the Sustainability Appraisal (SA) Report for the VWH Local Plan has previously stated that Abingdon is at risk of flooding, likely to be exacerbated by climate change and Figure 6.7 confirms that the safeguarded land for the bypass lies within flood zones 2 and 3.

It is unclear as to whether the flood risk implications of a bypass have been evaluated in the Local Plan. In order to maintain safe passage during times of flood it is anticipated that a bypass would need to be elevated considerably, which would increase its adverse effects on landscape and views and on the setting of nearby heritage assets such as listed buildings.

### Listed Building Effects (Stonehill Farm)

It is also noted that because of the way in which the safeguarding line is drawn, and because of the presence of a new and nearby housing development to the north (see circled area in the Image below), we also have concerns that further pressure will be put on the line having to go through or very close by listed Stonehill Farm, which is listed. At the very least, the line could be pushed close to the listed building so that it could potentially adversely affect its setting.



### Other Consequences of Promoting an Inappropriate Bypass Proposal

There has been no consideration of the potential effect that a bypass could have - compared with non-bypass options - on encouraging motorists to use this route who might otherwise use other roads for their existing journeys.

For example, the future bypass could potentially increase traffic flow along the A415 increasing the environmental impact on the village of Culham; and impact on traffic lights at Clifton Hampden (i.e. effectively relocating a traffic problem from the Vale to South Oxfordshire). These are further shortcomings of the draft Local Plan in not assessing the proposed bypass and its likely effects, regardless of whether the bypass is intended to be built before or after 2034.

In addition, as stated above, to be able to fund a bypass, there would need to be an allocation in the vicinity in the region of 17,500 dwellings.

- (i) Firstly, we very much doubt that there is land to the south of Abingdon to accommodate such development within acceptable environmental limits - particularly given that a large area of land is safeguarded for a reservoir to the southwest of the town.
- (ii) Secondly, VWHDC has not made any such allocation.
- (iii) Thirdly, the if the VWHDC or SODC were to pursue such a scale of enabling development at Abingdon then it would need to look elsewhere around the town and that would require the release of a significant amount of land from the Green Belt, possibly over 500 hectares. Aside from whether such a proposal would be realistic and deliverable in technical terms, such a proposal would be very contentious indeed the minds of local residents.

## **Blight**

Despite the draft Local Plan only stating that the line of the Abingdon Southern Bypass is safeguarded during the Plan period - with no indication given as to when it might be required, blight is expected to occur in relation to land and property owners located along the full length of the safeguarding line - both in South Oxfordshire and in the Vale of White Horse.

Those with land and properties along the safeguarded route are likely to be faced by years of uncertainty as to whether or not their land will be built on for a bypass (the need for which and its delivery are yet to be confirmed).

Property owners on the route are likely to be especially blighted where the safeguarded route passes close to or through their properties or grounds. In such cases, blight will relate to a diminution in value to such properties and landholdings as a result in the long term disruption caused by the proposed bypass.

Blight is also likely to manifest itself because owners' land will have to remain largely as it is. This is because any plans landowners might have for the long term use of their land may be refused by the LPA (SODC or VWHDC) on the grounds that it might prejudice the long term proposal for a bypass which might never come forward.

## **Soundness**

Policy TRANS3 is unsound in relation to the identification of a proposal for the safeguarding of land for an Abingdon Southern Bypass for the following reasons:

- (i) The proposed safeguarding of land for an Abingdon Southern Bypass is not the result of an objectively assessed infrastructure requirement.
- (ii) The LPA has not justified the proposal for an Abingdon Southern Bypass as being the most appropriate strategy for the solution of perceived traffic congestion on the south side of Abingdon. In addition, no consideration has been given (or reference made) to the assessment of alternatives to a Southern Bypass to alleviate perceived traffic congestion problems.

- (iii) The Policy is not effective because it is not deliverable during the Local Plan period; and it has not been demonstrated that is deliverable or the best option for construction post 2034. This is because:
- (a) The proposed bypass is only the subject of a vague safeguarding corridor which hasn't been assessed against reasonable alternatives, which could be more effective in terms of alleviating traffic congestion and less expensive and damaging to the local environment and amenities of residents.
  - (b) The proposed bypass is highly likely to be dependent on funding from development projects (post 2034). Its delivery is, therefore, very much in doubt because of the very limited availability of developable land opportunities in and around Abingdon of the scale required to support such a large-scale and expensive road building project.
- (iv) The LPA has not demonstrated how an Abingdon Southern Bypass will deliver sustainable development in the long term (i.e. post 2034). Due to the considerable presence of environmental constraints to the south of Abingdon, a bypass in this location will not release and sustain a significant amount of long term residential development opportunities which could be judged to be sustainable or capable of meeting the long term development requirements of Abingdon and the surrounding area.

We also concerned about the ambiguity of the wording of Policy TRANS1 because part (ii) offers support to measures identified in the LTP for the District. With regard to the safeguarding of the Abingdon Southern Bypass in Policy TRANS3, we do not consider there to be sufficient evidence provided by the LPA to confirm if the LPA actually supports the maintenance of the bypass safeguarding; or whether it is simply including the proposal because it is in the LTP.

### **Request**

It is requested that the reference to a bypass for Southern Abingdon be deleted from Policy TRANS3. In addition, it is requested that the LPA discuss the inclusion of the bypass safeguarding in the next LTP and - based on the arguments made above - request that the bypass safeguarding is removed.

However, if the LPA chooses not to accept this recommendation then, at the very least, alternatives to the proposed safeguarding line should be considered and assessed before the Local Plan is ready for submission to the Secretary of State.

### **Alternative Proposal (if deletion of TRANS3 is not accepted)**

Should it not be possible for the change to be made, Mr. and Mrs. Wilson - two of the residents who are most adversely affected by the bypass proposal - otherwise request that further consideration is given to the line of the safeguarding. This is in relation to that part of the safeguarded line that runs through South Oxfordshire.

On the relevant map in Appendix 5, rather than show a broad corridor that runs at the rear of their home, Culham House, a more focussed and narrower corridor should be shown which could still accommodate a bypass. This in the opinion of Mr. and Mrs. Wilson would give rise to fewer negative impacts on their property but still be capable of delivering a bypass road.

An indication of the revised bypass line is shown on the following plan:

