

POINTS TO CONSIDER WHEN LOBBYING ABOUT ROUTE S2 – OXFORD CAMBRIDGE EXPRESSWAY

The decision about which Corridor is to be developed will be made in July so it is important to write to decision makers and influencers as soon as possible to put your views across as to why we don't want Route S2.

It is important when writing to Ministers, MPs and Councillors to use your own words and how you feel about it. Round robin e-mails will not be properly considered.

Here are some documents you may want to read with the background –

The CPRE Map shows approximately where the routes will go – the one affecting us is Route S2 – <http://www.beckley-and-stowood-pc.gov.uk/sites/default/files/CPRE%20CE%20Map%202C%20map-0817-proof4.pdf>

CPRE presentation the giving the background - <http://www.beckley-and-stowood-pc.gov.uk/sites/default/files/Michael%20Tyce%2C%20CPRE%20-%20Presentation%20slides.pdf>

Expressway Action Group web site - <https://www.expresswayactiongroup.com/>

Our responses to Highways England on-

Otmoor - The Environmental Impact of Route S2 - <http://www.beckley-and-stowood-pc.gov.uk/sites/default/files/Otmoor%20-%20The%20Environmental%20Impact%20of%20the%20S2%20Route%20-%20Submission%20to%20Highways%20England%20-%20Expressway%2010.4.18%20-%20final.pdf>

See <https://saveotmoor.org/> web site for more information

The Disadvantages of Route S2 - <http://www.beckley-and-stowood-pc.gov.uk/sites/default/files/Beckley%20and%20Stowood%20Case%20Against%20Route%20S2%20-%20Expressway%20Submission%2010.4.18.pdf>

The Advantages of Route S1 (Improving A34) - <http://www.beckley-and-stowood-pc.gov.uk/sites/default/files/Submission%20from%20Beckley%20and%20Stowood%20to%20Highways%20England%20on%20Oxford%20Cambridge%20Expressway%20-%20final%2010.4.18.pdf>

A Presentation by Highways England to the Oxfordshire Growth Board 27.3.18 - <http://www.beckley-and-stowood-pc.gov.uk/sites/default/files/HE%20Stakeholder%20Ref%20Group%20-%20Strategic%20Environment.pdf>

SUMMARY OF IMPORTANT POINTS

General Points on Route S2

1. Any proposed Southern Route and Route S2 will cut through the heart of Oxford's Green Belt, in contradiction of national and local planning policies and Government's recent support to continue to protect the Green Belt.
2. The Southern Routes, including Route S2 will cost over £400 million more than the Northern Route S1 improving the A34 option (NIC's own figures).

3. A Southern and Route S2 will leave the A34 through West Oxford unimproved and miss the opportunity for regeneration / pollution and noise reduction in that area.

4. A Southern route and Route S2 will cut through a pristine Flood Plain environment and key wildlife corridors: it would cause massive environmental damage – causing great harm to endangered flora and fauna in many SSSI and special sites including -

- Asham Meads
- Bernwood Forest
- Bernwood Meadow
- Brasenose Woods and Shotover Hill
- Otmoor
- Murcott Meadow
- Shabbington Wood
- Stanton Great Wood
- Sydlings Copse and College Pond
- Waterperry Wood
- Whitecross Green and Oriel Woods
- Woodeaton Wood

See map - <https://saveotmoor.org/more-info>

(<https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/SiteList.aspx?siteName=&countyCode=34&responsiblePerson=>)

5. Route S2 M40 Junction 6,7 or 8 will prevent designated Growth Towns of Witney, Banbury, Northampton etc. receiving the growth boost and advantages of the new Expressway. The current Oxfordshire Local plan designates Witney for further major housing development (Witney +13,000 homes). Any Southern Route would run on the 'wrong' side of Oxford for linking them to the Expressway.

6. A Southern and Route S2 would deliver much-needed housing growth later than a Northern option, which would link existing growth towns which already have town centres, infrastructure, schools, surgeries, employment zones etc.

7. The Northern option – Route S1 via A34 and Bicester is closely aligned with the new Oxford - Cambridge Rail link: access from Expressway to Rail stations would allow faster 'last-mile' access to Oxford / Didcot and other Knowledge Spine Towns, and reduce road traffic pressure and congestion on Oxford City. A Southern route would deny easy access to Oxford Parkway, Bicester & other stations, and generate MORE road traffic and city congestion and pressure on 'park & ride' services.

8. The Northern route along A34 would see junction improvements and improved flows all along the A34 to M40 at Junction 9, and especially at J9 itself, and would eliminate the daily traffic jams on the M40 there. It is the least worst route.

Otmoor

- A unique habitat of rare wetland and grazing floodplain in landlocked Oxfordshire, home to 1,000 acres of nature reserves

- RSPB reserve
- Sites of Special Scientific Interest,
- Uncrossed by any road since Roman times
- Thousands of visitors enjoy its special feeling of remoteness,
- Ancient fen with over sixty rare and protected species.

Otmoor RSPB Reserve

It is a haven for wildlife. Among the rare birds that nest/visit are:

- Turtle Dove (Red List species of conservation concern in the UK; and Biodiversity Action Plan species). These are in decline and numbers are halving every six years
- Bittern. Numbers dramatically declined and almost extinct in UK, but numbers slowly increasing but at very low levels. Present at Otmoor.
- Rare birds of prey - Hen Harrier and Marsh Harrier

There are many other rare and unusual birds that breed or visit here. Information about birds and animals seen (including harriers and bitterns) can be found here: <http://otmoorbirding.blogspot.co.uk>

Heritage

Route S2 would run very close to very important to a number of very important heritage sites including –

- Beckley Park, a triple moated Grade I listed hunting lodge with a number of other listed buildings and rare flora
- Shotover House and Park a Grade I listed building with listed buildings and monuments in the park
- A Roman Road crosses Otmoor

Housing

- The plan for the whole Oxford-Milton Keynes- Cambridge Arc is to build 1.000,000 additional homes
- The plan for Oxfordshire is to double the number of houses from 283,000 by over 320,000 to over 600,000 by 2050. There are 55,400 households in Oxford City, so this would mean buildings **6 more towns** the size of Oxford.
- All the land between Oxford and the villages of Beckley, SSJ and Forest Hill, which is currently in the Green Belt is likely to be built upon, if Route S2 goes ahead.
- The Green Belt around Oxford protects the individual identity of our villages and stops them being subsumed as part of greater Oxford – In the recent white paper the Government pledged to protect the Green Belt
- Otmoor is totally unsuitable for building on and would destroy protected species

Community

The 6-lane Expressway (motorway) on Route S2 would circumnavigate Shotover run between Beckley and SSJ, very close to the Horton Road and across Otmoor to Bicester consequences for local communities include -

- Damage to health

- Pollution from diesel and petrol and particulate matter from brakes and tyres causes lung, heart and skin diseases and exacerbates existing lung disease
 - The Noise would be unhealthy so near houses and would disrupt sleep and daily activity and is associated with rises in heart attack and stroke
- It would disrupt our lives and destroy our communities
- Vibration could damage existing buildings
- The visual impact would be considerable
 - A 6-lane Expressway under/across Shotover Hill
 - Between Beckley and SSJ probably below normal ground level with bridges over to connect current roads
 - A road across Otmoor would have to be raised so it could be seen for miles
- Congestion on local roads would become considerably worse