

Oxford-Cambridge Expressway

In recent months, more detailed information has become available on government plans for the development of the 'Oxford-Cambridge Arc', with a stated aim of helping bring growth and greater prosperity to the area identified as 'England's Economic Heartland'.

The following projects are under consideration:

An Oxford to Cambridge Rail Link

The western section, from Oxford to Bedford, would mainly involve upgrading and reinstating existing rail alignments but the Eastern section, from Bedford to Cambridge, will involve construction of new rail lines. It is expected that the new Oxford to Cambridge rail link will become fully operational in the mid-2020s.

An Oxford to Cambridge Expressway

This will involve significant construction of new roads through rural areas in the western section from Oxford to Milton Keynes, the M1 and Bedford. If the Expressway goes ahead, it will be accompanied by plans to open up large tracts of land for housing development.

Highways England have already been engaged in detailed planning for a route since 2017 and last year they identified two preferred corridors, through which the Expressway would run, from a number of options.

A northerly B1 Corridor runs from the west of the City of Oxford close to Bicester and beyond, while a southerly B3 Corridor runs from the east of the City of Oxford and its southern boundary is a few miles to the north of the village of Chearsley.

The two corridors are identified on the Highways England map on the back page.

Highways England have advised that they will announce further information on their preferred corridor and route during this autumn and put their proposals out for public consultation.

‘East of Oakley’

It recently became known that, among the areas considered by the planners for major housing development adjacent to the new Expressway, an area called ‘East of Oakley’ has been identified with the potential to accommodate nearly 65,000 new homes, again just a few miles from the village of Chearsley.

The plans for the Oxford-Cambridge Expressway, accompanied by a massive development of new housing, will have major implications for our community.

The Parish Council has already passed on the information it has managed to obtain on the progress of planning of these major infrastructure projects to the community and is keen to protect the interest of the residents of Chearsley as best it can.

You may wish to do your own research on the progress of these plans, and we can recommend accessing the following websites, representing a number of campaigning groups and government bodies, to obtain more detailed information:

The No Expressway Group

<https://www.noexpressway.org/>

The No Expressway Alliance

<https://www.noexpresswayalliance.org/>

The Expressway Action Group

<https://www.expresswayactiongroup.com/>

National Infrastructure Commission

<https://www.nic.org.uk/our-work/growth-arc/>

Highways England

<http://assets.highwaysengland.co.uk/roads/road-projects/>

[Oxford+to+Cambridge+expressway/Oxford+to+Cambridge+Expressway+Corridor+overview+booklet.pdf](http://assets.highwaysengland.co.uk/roads/road-projects/Oxford+to+Cambridge+expressway/Oxford+to+Cambridge+Expressway+Corridor+overview+booklet.pdf)

England’s Economic Heartland

<http://www.englandseconomicheartland.com/Pages/home.aspx>

The Parish Council will also be holding an Oxford-Cambridge Expressway village meeting:

Monday 9th September

The Village Hall

7.30 pm – 9.30 pm

Professor David Rogers of the 'No Expressway Group' has already accepted our invitation to make a presentation to our meeting and we will also be asking other speakers to join us to present the case 'for' the Expressway in order that we can hear all sides of the argument .

The Parish Council will also be carrying out a formal consultation with our community in the weeks ahead.

We would ask all Chearsley residents to answer the questions on the enclosed form and return it to Councillor, John Howard.

Either by email jnh@dbmc.co.uk
or delivered to Great Barn, School Lane, Chearsley

Alternatively, find the the link on:

Chearsley BlogSpot

www.chearsleyblogspot.com

Chearsley Parish Council website

www.chearsleypc.org.uk

Please return your completed form no later than Friday 13th September

This deadline has been set to enable the Parish Council to consider the responses at their next meeting on Monday 16th September and, if possible, develop its public position on the Oxford Expressway project, to inform all future representations it makes to relevant local and national bodies.

Thank you in anticipation

Preferred corridor and common corridors (indicative only)

