

Witney TAC Report by Oxfordshire County Council

January 2024

Place Planning Team Update

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1. A40/B4022 Shores Green, Access to Witney (Major Project)

Please direct any queries to a40corridor@oxfordshire.gov.uk.

Please see webpage [A40 Access to Witney | Oxfordshire County Council](#)

The project has now entered the **detailed design phase** to progress on the existing preliminary design, and a build contractor will be engaged to develop delivery plans. The Project team is working with stakeholders in ensuring that the Access to Witney Scheme can continue through to construction.

Planning permission for the Scheme was granted by the County Planning Authority on 15 July 2023. Owing to the evolution of the Scheme design, the Council has submitted a further planning application to make some design variations to the Scheme (to replace a proposed shared-use path with a footway, to merge two balancing ponds into one, to re-align a drainage ditch, to extend the highway boundary and to make amendments to the landscaping scheme to include additional planting). This application is expected to be determined in early 2024.

At the Cabinet meeting of 23 May 2023, Oxfordshire County Council's cabinet members gave authority to make and advertise the **Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO)** and Side Road Order (SRO) for the Scheme. If confirmed by the Secretary of State for Transport, these orders will enable the council to make highway alterations and improvements and acquire the land necessary to construct the scheme. Following the making of the Orders there was an objection period, which ran until 8 September 2023. During this time, five objections to the Orders were made, and, as a result, the Secretary of State for Transport has decided to hold a Public Inquiry to determine whether the Orders should be confirmed. Formal notification of the Public Inquiry will be given by the Department for Transport in due course but it is expected to be held in the Spring 2024. As part of the preparation for the Public Inquiry, the council is required to submit a document known as a Statement of Case, which sets out the council's case for the confirmation of the Orders. This document and its appendices can now be accessed on the Council webpage [Access to Witney Compulsory purchase order \(CPO\) & side road order \(SRO\) | Oxfordshire County Council](#).

The CPO provides for all land needed to deliver and construct the scheme. Parties impacted have been contacted about the impact of the scheme on their land interest and the council is committed to seeking to acquire all of the interests that it requires for the scheme through private negotiation wherever possible. If the objections are withdrawn prior to the **Public Inquiry**, the Secretary of State may decide to cancel the Public Inquiry, which would be notified formally in due course. Any party wishing to attend the Public Inquiry is entitled to do so. The Public Inquiry will be heard by an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State, and

the Inspector will control the Inquiry, including making any decisions on who may speak at the Inquiry. Once the inquiry closes, the Inspector will write a report to the Secretary of State recommending whether or not the Orders should be confirmed. The Secretary of State will consider the Orders and make a determination on whether or not they should be confirmed.

2. Burford Road Signal Crossing (Stage: Delivery by development site)

This signals are now operational.

3. Witney bus stop improvements (Stage: Implementation - funded).

Improvement works at the bus stops were completed in October 2023.

- High Street, north direction
- Staple Hall, Newland, southeast direction
- Thorney Leys, Curbridge Road, both directions

Each features contrasting colours to assist visually impaired passengers and sedum living roofs.

4. High Street and Market Square – Short Term Measures (Stage: Implementation - funded)

At the time of writing (22/12/2023) the works to install the two buildouts at the traffic restriction points at High Street and Market Square are still progressing. The Welch Way/High Street build out has been completed but there have been challenges in the materials supply chain for the Corn Street / Market Square build out. It is anticipated that the materials will be delivered on 7 January and works completing by the 9 January 2024. OCC are escalating disappointment in the way these works have progressed.

5. High Street and Market Square Active Travel 3 (Stage: Design and implementation - funded)

The High Street and Market Square Enhancement scheme consultation closed 3 October 2023. The results from our informal community engagement are now published in the [Witney High Street engagement report](#). Supporting documents and an overview of the scheme can be found on [Let's Talk Oxfordshire](#).

The results show that most respondents support the scheme objectives and the most requested improvements for the High Street designs are better footway surfacing, more trees, more plants/gardens and more seating.

Timescales:

Activity	Date
Autumn 2023	Community engagement
Winter 2023	Preliminary design
Spring 2024	Public consultation to review design proposals
Summer 2024	Final design option agreed
Autumn 2024	Construction start
Spring 2025	Construction finish

Webpage: [Witney High Street and Market Square enhancements scheme](#)

Email: witneyhighstreet@oxfordshire.gov.uk.

6. Bridge Street Area Options Appraisal Report (stage: Investigation/ feasibility)

Officers have finalised the Bridge Street/West End Link Options Assessment report from consultants Pell Frischmann. This work includes the transport impact across the area of the

Local Plan housing allocations at North Witney and East Witney and reviews the merit of the proposed West End Link Road given the adoption of the Oxfordshire Local Transport and Connectivity Plan policy document in 2022.

Engagement and publication of the report is now being planned. All Councillors for Witney from Witney Town Council, West Oxfordshire District Council and Oxfordshire County Council have been invited to an online briefing in late January. This will be followed by stakeholder engagement initially with the developers of North Witney SDA. Public consultation is being planned for April subject to any pre-election period.

Following the engagement, the county will confirm its position on the preferred scheme through the forthcoming Witney Area Travel Plan, a subsidiary document to the Oxfordshire Local Transport and Connectivity Plan, which will be subject to public consultation in its own right.

7. Bus Service changes:

Following a BSIP+ award from Government, service 64 has been reintroduced between Witney, Carterton and Swindon. Four journeys per day on Mondays to Saturdays operate between Carterton and Swindon, with two continuing to/from Witney. This service is operated by Pulhams Coaches. Some changes to the initial timetable were made in January to take account of punctuality issues and concerns raised by Burford School.

8. Parking Consultation 2018

The minutes of Witney Traffic Advisory Committee meeting 13th June 2023 refer to this issue of a parking permit scheme for Corn Street and a previous consultation with residents. This information was supplied to WTC via email 3 October 2023.

Items which status has not changed since last meeting:

9. Windrush Place S106 Active Travel Schemes

Design work is due to commence around March 2024. Detail discussed at September 2023 meeting.

10. Traffic Lights on Woodford Way

This scheme remains unfunded. Detail discussed at September 2023 meeting.

11. Introduce 'Keep Clear' markings at the dropped kerb crossing points on Harvest Way

This scheme has been added to the lining programme. Detail discussed at September 2023 meeting.

12. Pedestrian Crossing/zebra crossing at West End

This scheme remains unfunded but will be considered for the Road Safety Budget for 2024/2025 when more is known about this fund. Detail discussed at September 2023 meeting.

Traffic & Road Safety Report

13. Lining Planned Works

Lining works are now complete for financial year 23/24. We are currently in the process of compiling the programme for 24/25. If there are any specific sites that you feel need to be on this programme, then your input would be appreciated.

14. Traffic and Road Safety Current Project/s

'The Leys' Traffic Calming

Works for this scheme are planned to start on the 25th March 2024, for one week. We are currently liaising with WTC, regarding their projects as to provide the best results. At the moment, there is little impact other than deliveries to the work which can be resolved at a local level.

15. Highways and Drainage, Area Ops Team

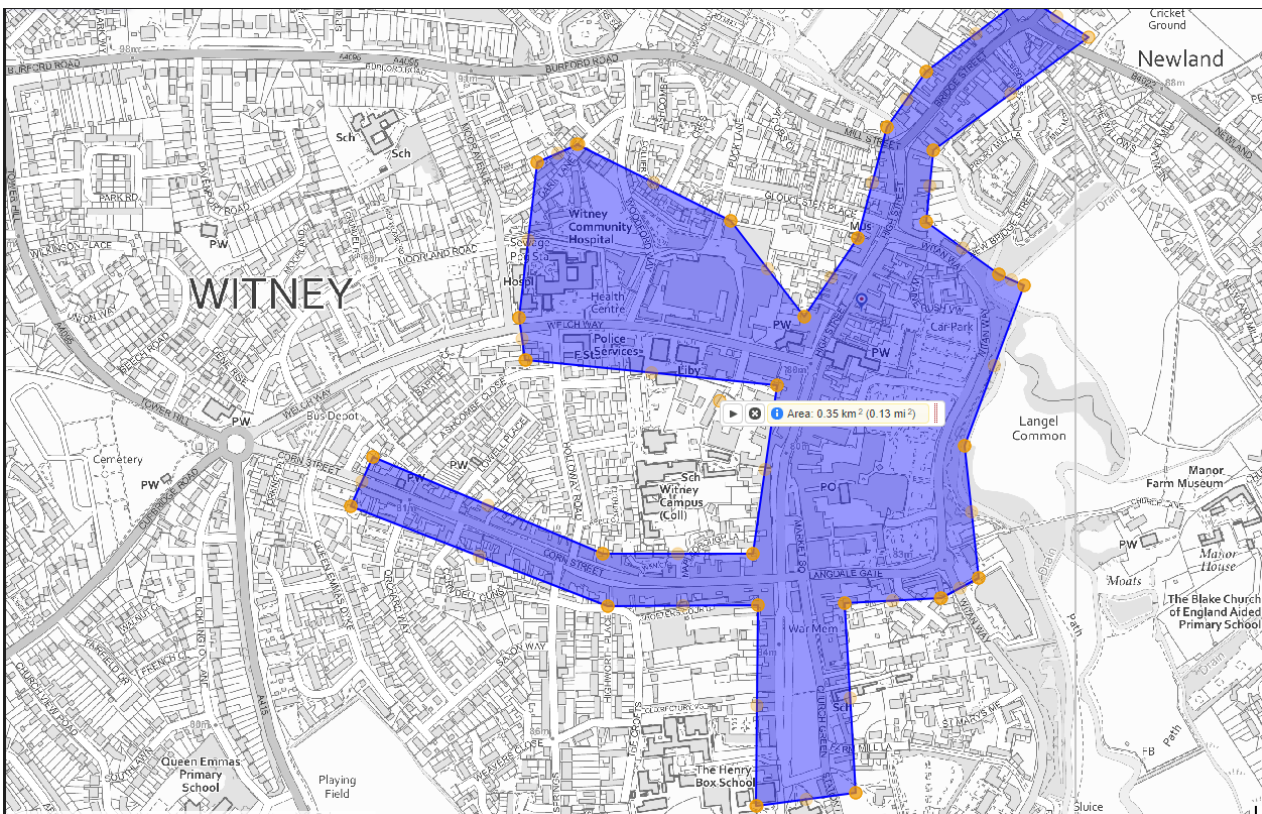
Planned Works

The above was copied from an interactive and continually updated map of the major maintenance programmes is always available on the County Council's website, via following the link; [Map \(highway-iams.uk\)](http://highway-iams.uk)

Update from West Oxfordshire District Council:

16. UKSPF funded signage and wayfinding project

The Witney Town Partnership, which includes a variety of key stakeholders, had identified that some signage and wayfinding tools in the town were inaccurate and/or not fit for purpose. The partnership are proposing to use the UK Shared Prosperity Fund to pay for any refurb or replacement signs. In November, the group carried out an audit of the existing signage and in December, the group discussed the findings of the audit and started mapping out potential new/replacement sign locations, styles and listing which locations in the town the signs should point to.



The partnership will seek approval from Oxfordshire County Council for any new assets that are to be positioned on the highway. Once agreed, the ownership of the assets will be transferred to the Town Council, and they will be responsible for ongoing maintenance.

As Oxfordshire County Council have a maintenance budget for traffic signs, the partnership will focus on improving the pedestrian signage within the town centre. However, the results of the audit will be shared with the Traffic & Road Safety Team at the County Council so that any relevant updates can be written into their maintenance schedule.

Currently (02.01.2024), the only traffic signs scheduled for improvement are those located in the District Council owned car parks; Woolgate and Woodford Way. The terms and conditions will be updated for all District Council owned car parks, and new directional signage will be added to the Woolgate car park.

Please direct any queries to emma.phillips@westoxon.gov.uk