

Islip Residents Meeting
22nd August 2019
Islip Village Hall

The well attended meeting reviewed the Church Commissioners Housing Proposals for (Greater!) Islip, and hosted a No Expressway Group presentation from Professor David Rogers on the threat of the Expressway to Oxfordshire in general, and Islip in particular.

Below is a summary of the key points of the meeting, and a few links/potential actions that residents may wish to follow-up to stay informed of the situation with regard to these threats to our tranquil and historic Oxfordshire village.

1. The Church Commissioners latest housing proposal 'Land at Bletchingdon Road Islip' for 3,000 homes from Islip to the A34 can be viewed on the Parish Council website

<https://www.islip.org.uk/>

https://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/9bb488_7b4aec77160b44979c1ddcbd77b3f203.pdf

The proposal was submitted to the Joint Spatial Planning Authorities (JSPA) who are preparing the Oxfordshire 2050 Plan. This was in response to a call for Strategic Location Ideas to support the growth of Oxfordshire until 2050. As such it is a statement of intent, or a vision from the Church Commissioners of their wishes for land around Islip, rather than a finished proposal for development; it has not yet been through the planning process.

It should be noted that while Islip is currently protected from schemes such as this under the Green Belt protections within the Cherwell Local Plan, these protections may well be challenged in the near future - during the Expressway planning process, the revisions to the Cherwell Local Plan in the near future or indeed as a result of the outcome of the Oxfordshire 2050 Plan itself. We should not therefore be at all complacent about the current Green Belt protections enjoyed by the village.

The latest advice from Cherwell Planning Dept is that a Neighbourhood Plan could not be used to protect Islip from this development at this time. This is because the Green Belt within which Islip is located precludes the generation of a Neighbourhood Plan that specifies preferential housing locations (for example, limited development but only on the Oil Dump site).

The Parish Council is to write letters to the Church Commissioners, JSPA and local representatives objecting to the proposed development. A template will be made available together with a list of addresses, so that villages who so wish can register their views directly with the relevant people/bodies. This information will be posted to the Islip Parish Council website <https://www.islip.org.uk/> in due course.

Any residents wishing to become more informed and/or involved in fighting the Church Commissioners proposal; please email the Parish Council at clerkislippc@gmail.com

2. The No Expressway Group presentation delivered by Professor David Rogers can be found on the No Expressway Group website here

<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5b88fef25ffd20d4826a0432/t/5d613c058496cb000134cb57/1566653853060/IslipMeeting2019DR.pdf>

The No Expressway Group website (<https://www.noexpressway.org/>) and the presentation contain lots of information on the Expressway based on the likely location and housing impact of the Expressway route choices, and most importantly, the attendant junctions. It also contains information about how you can stay informed and have your say.

What was clear from the presentation is that development around Islip would likely be enabled by routing the Expressway up the A34 (due to the potential location of the closest junction at Oxford Parkway and the impact junctions have on development proposals within a 4km radius). Moreover, the massive increase in housing in Oxfordshire that would follow the Expressway, whatever route is selected, could not fail to have a large impact on planning decisions across the County. How else could the authorities facilitate the development of double the current number of homes within the county in the next 30 years?

The other point made by the presentation is that the Expressway will facilitate a huge transfer of freight traffic that currently traverses the country via the motorway network and the M25 to the Expressway. This will have an obvious detrimental impact on the local environment and public health at a time when climate concerns should be upper-most in planners minds, as should the completion of the East-West rail link.

The Parish Council has been unable to secure anybody to talk in favour of the expressway project at this time – Highways England are not talking direct to residents at this time, and Barry Wood, Conservative leader of Cherwell District Council, and Chairman of the Oxford Cambridge Arc Leaders Group has declined our invitations to speak so far due to his busy schedule.

Highways England have promised a public consultation in the Autumn of 2019, but no dates/venues have yet been provided.

3. A show of hands by the residents during the meeting confirmed the Parish Council's view of the Expressway proposals and as a result the Council will be joining the following groups opposed to the Expressway:

No Expressway Group (NEG) (<https://www.noexpressway.org/>) - a very useful group and website providing information, analysis and presentations against the Expressway.

No Expressway Alliance (<https://www.noexpresswayalliance.org/>) - an umbrella group of parish councils and other organisations across the arc that oppose the Expressway.

North and West Parishes Expressway Group (NAWPEG) - a local action group along the A34 devoted to fighting the Expressway

The Parish Council will also purchase a number of roadside posters promoting our support for the current Green Belt boundaries, (and opposition to the Expressway plans) for display on roadside entrances to, and exits from, the village in the coming weeks.

4. Islip Parish Council is already a member Oxford Green Belt, an organisation devoted to preserving the Green Belt, and will engage with them over these proposals.

5. Islip Parish Council has registered as a stakeholder with Highways England and encourages residents to register as individuals to stay informed of consultation dates.

Individuals can also register here -

<https://service.govdelivery.com/accounts/UKHIGHWAY/subscriber/new>

6. The Parish Council will provide a guide for residents as to how they can get stay informed and register their views on the Expressway via the Parish Council website

(<https://www.islip.org.uk/>)

The Parish Council will keep residents up to date and remind all that there is an Expressway/Housing update session during the first 30 mins of the monthly parish council meetings – at the Village Hall, at 7.30pm on the 2nd Tuesday of the month, which all are welcome to attend.

In summary, it is clear that the housing plans submitted by the Church Commissioners to the Oxfordshire 2050 authorities are a cynical attempt to exploit the expected planning relaxations within the Green Belt that will follow approval of the Expressway. And that the Expressway, wherever it is built, will create huge increases in housing, and freight movements across the county with environmental damage as a result. When the dates for the autumn 2019 consultations are announced we will have little time to act.

We therefore encourage all residents to follow the progress of these plans and to find out how you can have your voice heard via the Parish Council website (<https://www.islip.org.uk/>) and other protest websites e.g. No Expressway Group (<https://www.noexpressway.org/>)

Peter Collins

For and on behalf of Islip Parish Council

05/09/19

What you can do regarding the Expressway.

1. Stay informed

- i) Register to be a Stakeholder with Highways England so that you will be notified of the consultation dates and process

<https://service.govdelivery.com/accounts/UKHIGHWAY/subscriber/new>

Anyone can register for updates. After creating an account, please select updates for the Oxford to Cambridge expressway under the East of England road projects section.

- ii. Register with No Expressway Group to stay informed of their events, and analysis <https://www.noexpressway.org/how-you-can-help/#newsletter>

2. Have your voice heard

- i. Write to government representatives

Rt. Hon. Grant Shapps MP, Secretary of State for Transport and the Minister ultimately responsible for making the decision

grant.shapps@dft.gsi.gov.uk

Rt. Hon. John Howell M, local MP for Islip - howelljm@parliament.uk

Councillor Dan Sames, Oxford County Council, dan.sames@oxfordshire.gov.uk

& Cherwell DC - daniel.sames@cherwell-dc.gov.uk

Councillor David Hughes – Cherwell DC david.hughes@cherwell-dc.gov.uk

- ii. There are two petitions against the expressway

Cancel the Oxford to Cambridge Expressway - [UK Government and Parliament petition](#)

Cancel the Oxford to Cambridge Expressway - [change.org petition](#).

3. Spread the Word

The No Expressway site contains a variety of ways to get involved by spreading the word – <https://www.noexpressway.org/no-expressway/spread-the-word>

4. Provide Direct Support

Consider donating time and/or expertise or financially to support the efforts to fight these threats to our village. For example – Support the No Expressway Group – here <https://www.noexpressway.org/no-expressway/donate>

For and on behalf of Islip Parish Council
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What you can do regarding the Church Commissioners Plans for Islip

A summary of actions residents can take to stay informed and express their views on the Housing proposals.

1. Stay informed

The Parish Council hosts an Expressway/Housing update session during the first 30 mins of the monthly parish council meetings – at the Village Hall, at 7.30pm on the 2nd Tuesday of the month, which all are welcome to attend. Notes of this meeting are published each month in the Islip Parish Newsletter.

2. Have your voice heard

i) Write to government representatives

Rt. Hon. John Howell M, local MP for Islip - howelljm@parliament.uk

Councillor Dan Sames, Oxford County Council, dan.sames@oxfordshire.gov.uk
& Cherwell DC - daniel.sames@cherwell-dc.gov.uk

Councillor David Hughes – Cherwell DC david.hughes@cherwell-dc.gov.uk

ii) Write to Joint Spatial Planning Authorities – Oxford 2050 Plan

email to info@oxfordshireplan.org or by post to Oxfordshire Plan 2050,
Speedwell House, Speedwell Street, Oxford, OX1 1NE

iii) Write to the Church Commissioners

Joanna Loxton

Interim Head of Strategic Land Investment

Investment Division

Church Commissioners for England

Church House

Great Smith Street

London

SW1P 3AZ

joanna.loxton@churchofengland.org

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