

I wish to object to the building of the A417 'Missing Link' on the grounds that no road extension should be built, that if it is built that it should be as close to the line of the current road as is possible, and that if it is built, along any route, that far more evidence is provided that the existing villages along the route will not suffer construction period traffic during the construction phase. Labelling the road 'the missing link' presupposes that its construction is inevitable. It isn't.

The Road should not be built at all

The cost of the road is indefensible at any time, but never more so than in the period where there are so many competing demands for scarce resources as we recover from the pandemic. Housing, education, and health and national priorities, not road construction. If we are going to be spending money on our national infrastructure then spend it repairing existing roads, or in improving public transport.

Road construction is counter to the national drive to reduce carbon emissions. All the evidence shows that increasing road construction increases car usage. Diesel car sales won't be banned until 2030, and those that on the road in 2030 will stay on the road for another 10-15 years. That's another 25 years of increased carbon emissions as a direct result of this road's construction.

The Government's own National Planning Policy Framework Commits to protecting AONB's and gives assurances that 'planning permission should be refused for major developments in these designated areas except in exceptional circumstances. The traffic situation on the A417 does not constitute exceptional circumstances.

The problems that do exist on the A417 have been created by the construction of other roads over the years that have hastened more traffic onto this part of the A417. Building another road here, simply hastens the traffic onto the next bottleneck that will then be labelled 'the missing link'. Each new piece of road simply creates the next problem.

The Road should follow Route Option 12

The current proposed route (Option 30) will create significant environmental damage in the Cotswold Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. It diverges massively from the existing route through the AONB. Populations of wild deer, hares, and a variety of flora will be irrecoverably damaged needlessly. Keeping as far as possible to the existing line of the A417 will reduce this impact. The advantages of Option 30 given by the published materials are not advantages of Option 30. Many, if not all, could equally apply to Option 12 and the Highways Department has failed to evidence why Option 30 is preferable.

Surrounding villages cannot cope with construction traffic

The Highways Department has failed to provide robust evidence as to how villages neighbouring the construction site will be protected from construction and general overflow traffic during the construction period. Our village of Cowley has narrow country lanes and damage to property and Health and Safety risk to residents and the general public who regularly walk the lanes will be massively increased during the construction period. The highways Department will be directly responsible for this.