

Meeting	Full Council
Date	16 th April 2024
Report Title	Cold Harbour Junction/Turnpike
Agenda Reference	Agenda Item 13
Author	Councillor J Fuller

Councillors Recommendation

Summary

The Turnpike/Coldharbour junction is over capacity at weekday peak times, morning and evening. This results in queuing and slow-moving traffic from Broadbush in Blunsdon down to the A4311 Cricklade Road junction. This discussion document examines the history, the current situation, and possible remediation.

Definitions

A419 - M4 junction 15 towards Cirencester, Stroud, and M5 junction 13
B4019 – Highworth to Blunsdon
A4198 – Thamesdown Drive
A4311 – Cricklade Road
B4534 - From the junction with the A419 northbound slip road towards Lady Lane

History

The original junction between the A419 and Cricklade Road was a simple “Y” junction. The A419 continued south along Hyde Road and Ermine Street through Stratton while the other branch of the “Y” continued into Swindon. There were several serious accidents at the junction leading to a call for modifications on the grounds of road safety. The modification comprised a large roundabout with a petrol station on the north-eastern side. Unfortunately, the morning peak traffic flow saw vehicle queuing southbound from the Cricklade direction, correspondingly there was queuing traffic northbound during the evening peak. In the early 2000s, the Highways Agency was tasked to provide a junction design to speed the flow of traffic on the A419 without any consideration as to the effects on adjacent roads. Local opinion was that the solution was a flyover junction or a “hamburger” type roundabout. However, the consultants engaged by the Highways Agency came up with the somewhat counter-intuitive design seen on the ground today. Both Swindon Borough Council and Blunsdon Parish Council objected to the design but subsequently withdrew their objections. When the plan was presented at the start, the consultants assured the council that their computer simulation showed a maximum of six cars waiting at the traffic lights. Clearly, this has been overtaken by developments at Tadpole Farm and in Blunsdon with the Broadbush, Sam's Lane/Burytown and Kingsdown developments.

Current Situation

At peak times in the morning and evening the junction is over capacity. Clearly, the junction was designed before the construction of Tadpole Village, developments in Blunsdon along Broadbush, Burytown and Kingsdown. Traffic is also running through Blunsdon village, along Sam's Lane, High Street and [Ermine](#) Street, so that it has the priority right turn at the Cold Harbour mini roundabout. This then backs up traffic in Broadbush through the chicane. At the



junction of the B4019 and the B4534, at peak times, traffic can wait for several cycles of the traffic lights because as the lanes go from dual to single and nothing can move.

Remediation

1. Carry out metro counts on approach roads to obtain definitive peak time data.
2. Based on real time data, examine the possibility of re-phasing the traffic signals.
3. In the medium term, consider the possibility of dualling the B4534 from the bridge over the A419 to the junction with the northbound slip-road onto the A419.

This would ease congestion at the flyover where, at peak times, traffic waits through several cycles of the lights because the double lane on the bridge morphs into a single lane towards Swindon. Similarly, the north bound section of Thamesdown Drive goes from two lanes down to one on the approach to the flyover. It is an open question as to why traffic engineers persist with the two lanes into one, as it just moves congestion a few hundred metres further on.

J Fuller
30 March 2024