

A40 'should be dual

carriageway'

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by Dawn Doherty

The British Road Federation is pressing for the A40 to be made into a dual carriageway.

In a report published this week, the BRF says the road should be upgraded along its entire length from Oxford to Ross-on-Wye to combat traffic congestion.

The Department of Transport is planning to make some parts of the A40 dual Carriageway, but the BRF says this is not Chough.

Under the Government proposals the Oxfordshire section of the A40 would be dual carriageway from Oxford to about five miles west of Witney, said BRF spokesman Mr Richard Diment.

But in taking into account existing traffic flows on the road and the expected increase in traffic of up to 35 per cent over the next ten years, the federation felt the improvement

proposals were justified.

The A40 is one of six major trunk roads which the federation's report says should be upgraded to dual carriageways. It highlights the A40 as an important strategic east-west route and an alternative route to south Wales.

The report also puts forward new roads it says must be built to meet increasing traffic demand in the next ten years, including a home counties orbital road running 30 to 40 miles from London, which would skirt the Oxfordshire-Buckinghamshire border.

BRF has called for a long-term programme of spending on roads to ensure Britain's road network is able to cope with increasing traffic.

Mr Diment said: "Our great fear is of the chaos that is looming if nothing is done."

M40 line 'would ruin village'

Over 1,000 residents from Wheatley have signed a petition aimed at stopping the M40 extension going through their village.

The petition was submitted to the public inquiry into the extension at Rodney House, Bicester. Wheatley parish council says it has the backing of Holton Parish Council over the issue. Wheatley residents say the proposal to convert the 4,40 running through the village into a motorway would mean the route would pass just south of Wheatley Park Secondary

School.

'Intolerable'

Mr Gareth Morris, chairman of Wheatley Parish Council, told the inquiry: "The pollution from the envisaged traffic flow would prove a danger to the health of the school's population as well as to their IQ.

"It would also cause an intolerable increase in noise levels for the village's 3,500 residents."

Wheatley Parish Council is in favour of the Department of Transport's published route, which takes the M40

extension to the east of Otmoor and Bernwood Forest.

But the Thornley Bernwood Association has argued against the published route on conservation grounds. It wants the M40 extension to run as near to Oxford as possible and the conversion of the A40 through Wheatley is the main option.

Mr Morris added: We support the published route as it avoids major centres of population.

"It is not as long as other routes and not as costly and causes less damage and disturbance to the environment."

Wheatley Parish Council believes that the village could not support housing and industry if a route near Oxford was chosen, it would also mean the Green Belt near Oxford would be breached.

The Rev Michael Farthing, Vicar of Wheatley, Forest Hill and Stanton St John, said that a motorway would divide the village of Stanton St John and could damage the church there.

He added that the B4027 Islip road could become a death trap. It was already busy and would become worse if the motorway was built nearby.