

Hinksey & Osney ENVIRONMENT GROUP

Campaigning to modify the Oxford Flood Alleviation Scheme

Dear Residents of Hinksey, Osney, and surrounding areas,

With you, we live in the charming lace networks of streets of Osney and the neighbouring areas across the willows and millennial old flood meadows which “planners” wish to separate with a wide channel, spanned at Willow Walk by a vast 40m long and 7.4m wide bridge.

We are all in favour of flood control in Oxford. However, the rising costs of this 150 million pound scheme, which involves the felling of up to 2000 trees, recalls the worst of the ‘function over form’ mindset of brutalist modern architecture in an unproven effort to address floods which may not even work, as highlighted by the problems with the Jubilee River in Maidenhead, Windsor and Eton www.jubileeriver.co.uk.

Here, a very costly design was found to be inadequate and made flooding far worse downstream. See also “Lessons from Errors” on our website hinkseyandosney.org. This has more evidence and a petition which we invite you to sign, and a link to make comments on the revised planning application by 22nd January 2019.

We have also shared our concerns with the local and national press. We set out our case below.

Do get in touch with us via info@hinkseyandosney.org



Artists impression of new Willow Walk (or Road?)



We note:

This over engineered and expensive scheme **will ruin 133 acres of Greenbelt**. The scheme could destroy up to 2000 trees, a fact hidden by the reference in the proposal to 'groups of trees' being removed. **Many of the trees now under threat have a yellow blob of paint on the trunk, and our yellow SAVE WILLOW WALK signs on that route are to alert people to the scale the current scheme.**

The proposed 40m bridge over the 'channel' in Willow Walk will destroy a large section of the Walk. **Is this bridge the precursor for a road?**

The scheme's lack of maintenance beyond ten years means that the whole area which has been successfully grazed by horses and other large animals for centuries maintaining the biodiversity will become a waste land. The solid soil base will be removed and fences will not be allowed making animal grazing difficult.

The Botley Road warehouses were allowed because of the tree cover to the view from North Hinksey Lane. These trees and all the associated wildlife will now be removed.

The southerly part of the Seacourt Stream, the Bulstake and Hinksey streams, all currently part of the beauty of this area, could potentially become weed choked ditches once the water is diverted away into the newly excavated 'channel'.

Up to 250,000 tons of soil, silt and gravel are planned for extraction and removal via the surrounding roads. At 25 tons a truck, that is 20,000 journeys there and back. According to the Environmental Agency, the construction will take a total of three years, involving huge disruption to our roads, including a 15 month closure of Old Abingdon Road and Kennington Road, and major disruption around the A423 Southern By-pass.

Planning Blight has already removed the highly successful Old Manor House Riding School whose stables have been pulled down and become a housing estate.

We ask:

Has this sort of scheme been successfully implemented elsewhere in the UK and if so where?
Not at Maidenhead.

Does a revised up-to-date benefit/cost analysis take account of the increased costs and environmental damage from excavation of the channel?

Why have Freedom of Information requests about correspondence between local Councils and the University been blocked?

County Council and Oxford City Council have obtained a £6 million Housing Infrastructure grant for the Osney Industrial Estate redevelopment.

Has this scheme been designed to enable Oxford University to develop land they own into student housing?

It is not possible to use Compulsory Purchase Powers for a flood alleviation scheme if it is benefitting third party development land.

The Environment Agency has responded to Oxon CC questions and submitted a revised application. See MW.0028/18

The closing date for comments on the revised planning application, available at the Oxon County Council Offices in Speedwell Street, is **22 Jan 2019**

Please add your comments and sign our petition hinkseyandosney.org.

**Cheques may be made to the Ferry Hinksey Trust,
c/o 36 North Hinksey Village, Oxford, OX2 0NA.**

We propose:

Why not dredge and clear the rivers and streams, install bunds (barriers) north of the Botley Road, beside the river at Osney, around Osney Mead, alongside New Hinksey and at South Hinksey, install culverts at the Old Abingdon Road and then assess the further impact that may be needed?

After the 2007 flood, drainage ditches were dredged and two groups of three culverts were installed in the Willow walk causeway to improve water flow. However, many of the streams got into the state shown below, and local residents have campaigned for years to get them cleared and maintained; see <http://oxfordfloodalliance.org.uk/tag/hinksey-stream>. Why not concentrate on spending money on improving flood measures around Botley Road and Osney?

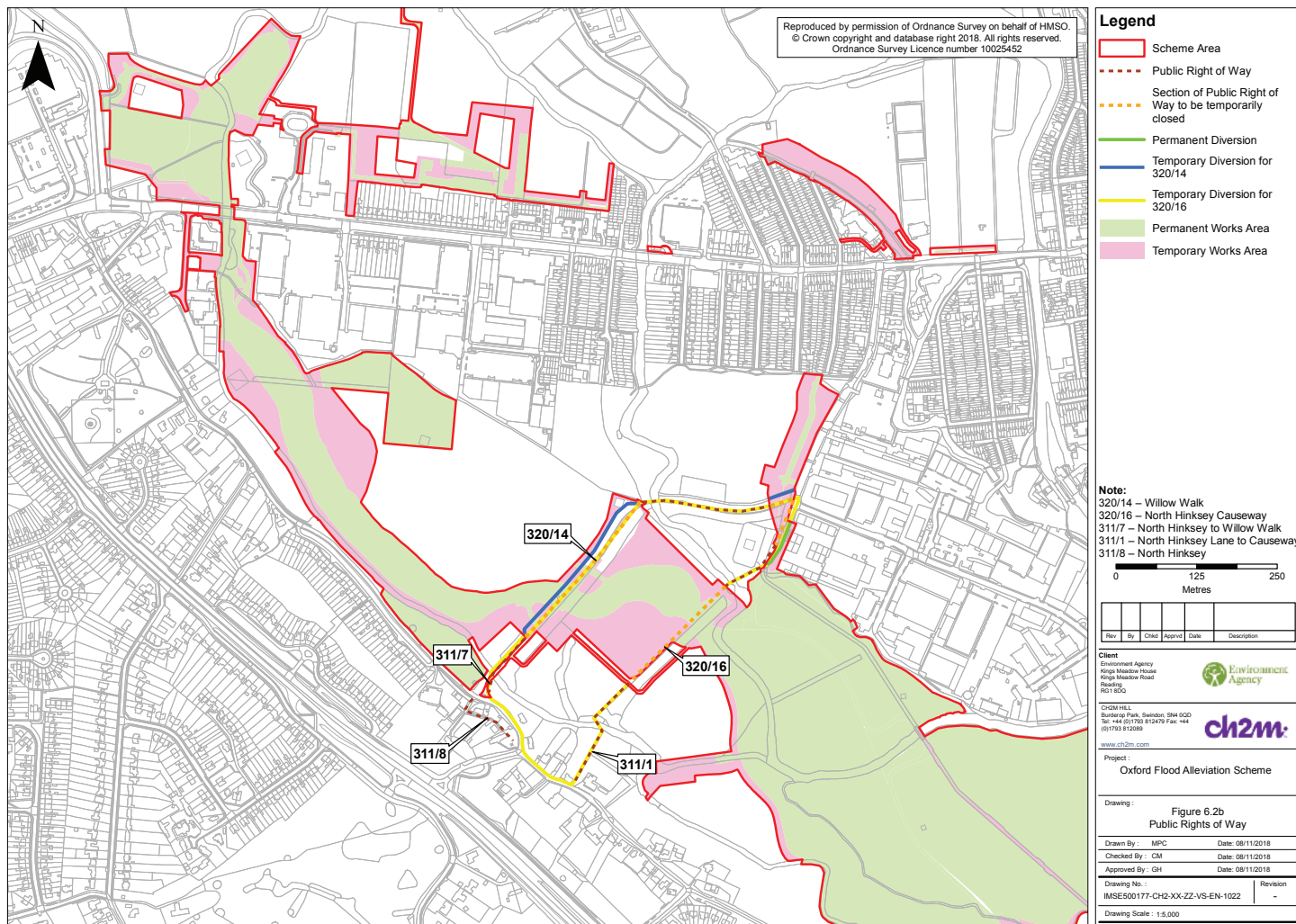


We propose that the Secretary of State for the Environment require the Environment Agency to carry out a pilot scheme to dredge the watercourses in West Oxford before giving any permission for the over engineered Oxford Flood Alleviation Scheme.



We want a Flood Alleviation Scheme that effectively reduces the flood risk to the dwellings and businesses affected, NOT one that paves the way for potential inappropriate development with associated environmental damage.

We local residents have lived in the area for years and feel responsible for the environment we have cared for, better than people working on maps and computers elsewhere.



 Environment Agency

GILLESPIES

We know it from the inside. That's why we can help you get it right.