

The Putney Road Link Road Scheme:

Why the Council should think again about building this link road

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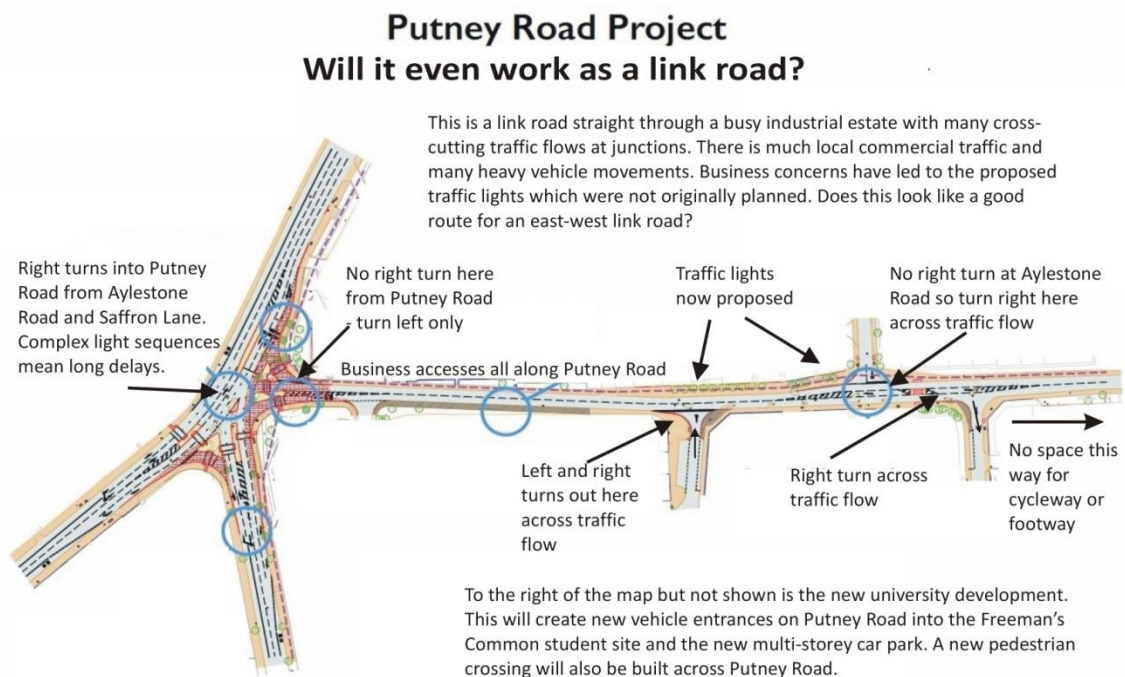
The Putney Road Link Road Scheme: Why the Council should think again about building this link road

1. Introduction

The Putney Road Link Road scheme will create a new junction where Putney Road West meets Aylestone Road/Saffron Lane, and create a link road running through to Welford Road/Victoria Park Road. Although it is intended to create a new local access to the business area, the main purpose of the scheme is the creation of the link road which at this stage will extend to the A6 London Road through Victoria Park Road. Although the council claims this scheme is not connected with a further scheme, linking Aylestone Road to Narborough Road through Evesham Road, it is self-evident that it is, and the council says this in the bid for the funding for this first stage. This further link will create a new orbital middle ring road which will divert large volumes of traffic from the area around Narborough Road through the link road and through Victoria Park Road and Clarendon Park.

2. Is Putney Road suitable for use as a link road?

The diagram below shows the design for Putney Road as a link road.



Putney Road is simply not suitable for use as a major through route, and the proposed design has major problems. Some are inherent in the business area: business accesses all

along the route; several road junctions in a short stretch of road; many heavy vehicle movements; and loading and unloading at businesses, but a severe problem is created by the design itself. All east-west traffic which wants to turn right at Aylestone Road has to turn across the west-east traffic flow at Freeman's Common Road. The reason for this is that the new road junction is optimised for traffic to and from Aylestone Road via a yet to be built link to Narborough Road.

It gets worse when you look at the other end and Victoria Park Road. The first thing to note is that off the map will be the new university development adding 800 new rooms and 250 new parking spaces, making 1150 rooms and 550 parking spaces in total, all accessed through Putney Road and more new road junctions. The claimed new cycle facilities in this section will be painted lines on the road as there isn't space for anything else, and there is no space for continuous walkways either. Not very safe if you are not a car driver. Along Victoria Park Road, already heavily congested particularly at peak times, there are existing major delay points at the two pedestrian crossings outside WQE college, at the Queen's Road junction, and at the London Road junction. And where does the traffic go when it reaches there?

These roads are simply not capable of taking the volumes of traffic these schemes will divert on to them. The scheme will not work, it will just add more congestion to existing congestion but not solve anything.

3. Is the Putney Road scheme linked to an Evesham Road scheme?

We say it is. This is why:

The funding bid for Putney Road says it is

The City Mayor won't rule it out

The things the council claims for Putney Road can only happen with another link road

The design of the new junction is for traffic from a new link

The traffic modelling shows Putney Road doesn't work as a link road on its own.

Without Evesham Road, Putney Road doesn't make sense.

But it doesn't make sense with Evesham Road either.

4. Does the Putney Road scheme meet its objectives?

The two main objectives of the scheme are to improve local access to the business area, and to create a link road for through traffic. The creation of the link road is the main purpose of this road. To support the bid for funding the council did some traffic modelling. The traffic modelling covered the morning and evening peak hours for westbound and eastbound traffic. This is what the council's traffic modelling shows:

Did the scheme achieve the objective of improving local access to the business area?

Morning peak westbound	YES
Morning peak eastbound	YES
Evening peak westbound	YES
Evening peak eastbound	YES

Did the scheme achieve the objective of functioning as a link road?

Morning peak westbound	YES
Morning peak eastbound	NO
Evening peak westbound	NO
Evening peak eastbound	NO

At this basic functional level, the scheme achieves the objective of improving local access to the business area for all four modelled periods and traffic flows. It achieves the link road objective in only one of the four. In the bid for funding document the council notes this but has no explanation for it. ***Our explanation is that it shows there is neither need nor demand for a link road connecting Aylestone road and Welford Road. If there was, it would show in the traffic modelling.***

5. What are the outcomes from the Putney Road scheme?

The intended outcomes from this traffic scheme is improved efficiency in the use of the road network. Improved efficiency is measured largely in terms of reduced journey times, within which distance travelled is an important determinant. This is what the traffic modelling shows for the two objectives of the scheme:

Objective: improved local access to the business area from Aylestone Road

New local access reduces journey time
Average distance travelled remains the same

Objective: functioning as a link road between Aylestone Road and Welford Road

When used as a link road journey time increases
When used as a link road distance travelled increases

In improving local access to the business area, the scheme reduces journey time although the average distance travelled remains the same. This suggests that by improving local access the scheme is making a positive contribution to congestion reduction. However, the directly opposite picture emerges from the link road function. It only functioned as a link road in one of the four possible combinations, and when it did function this way, journey time increased and distance travelled increased. ***This means that when used as a link road,***

the road network becomes less efficient – precisely the opposite of what is claimed for the scheme.

6. Are the scheme outcomes positive?

A positive outcome in traffic modelling is measured by reductions in travel time. The extent to which the scheme achieves positive outcomes can be summarised for the two main objectives:

Positive outcomes from improving local access to the business area

Morning peak westbound	YES
Morning peak eastbound	YES
Evening peak westbound	YES
Evening peak eastbound	YES

Positive outcomes from functioning as a link road

Morning peak westbound	NO
Morning peak eastbound	NO
Evening peak westbound	NO
Evening peak eastbound	NO

There are no positive outcomes when it functions as a link road.

The negative impact of the link road function is greater than the traffic modelling figures imply because in the one period when it functioned as a link road, the morning peak westbound, it also functioned as a local access road which has a positive impact. The local access function will have created positive outcomes which are then eliminated by the negative outcomes from the link road function. To get the true extent of the negative outcomes the cancelled out positive outcomes need to be added to the existing negative ones.

The average benefit for the three travel periods in which there was only local access traffic is 17 hours saved on travel time for each period. This is the positive benefit from improved local access which is cancelled out when it works as a link road. This needs to be added to the increased travel time already recorded for that one period of link road function. On this basis the negative impact of the link road is the eliminated 17 hours benefit which would have occurred from local access, plus the 3 hours additional travel time shown in the traffic modelling for the one period of link road function, which makes a total negative contribution of 20 hours extra travel time when used as a link road. If this same pattern is repeated across all four periods, assuming it works as a link road in all four, all benefits of the scheme are eliminated altogether. Instead of a net benefit of 68 hours travel time saved, all of which are created by improved local access, the link road scheme if fully operational would create 80 additional travel time hours. As a rough guide, any claimed benefits for this scheme can be increased by 20 per cent, and then made negative, in order to get a true

measure of its impact. This means the link road part of the scheme is increasing journey times rather than shortening them, creating congestion rather than relieving it, and considerably increasing polluting emissions which reduce air quality, including additional CO2 emissions which have the greatest impact on climate change.

Put very simply, the more Putney Road functions as a link road, the greater will be the impact of the negative outcomes. This is what the traffic modelling clearly shows yet it remains unacknowledged by the council. Why is the council building this road when the evidence does not support it, and the consequences of building it are all negative?

7. Overall conclusions about outcomes and objectives

The objective of improving local access to the business area is supported by the evidence

The objective of creating a link road is not supported by the evidence

The scheme does not meet its objectives

All the positive outcomes from the scheme are created by improving access to the business area. There are no positive outcomes from the link road function. It only functioned as a link road in one period out of four, and when it did function as a link road journey times increased and distance travelled increased.

What this means is that all benefits claimed to be created by the scheme are created solely by improving local access to the business area. In traffic modelling all benefits are calculated from savings in journey time including reductions in congestion, air quality improvements, emissions reductions, and particularly any claimed CO2 reductions. But all savings in journey time were created by improving local access so all benefits were created this way too. When functioning as a link road journey times increased, which means all the benefits created by improving local access are reduced by the link road. ***The link road creates more congestion, increases emissions, reduces air quality, and increases CO2 emissions.***

If the scheme functioned as a link road in all four periods, then its negative impact would be substantially increased and the benefits from local access would be progressively stripped away and eventually eliminated altogether. The negative impact would increase because although there are two objectives there is only one road. The more it functions as a link road, the less capacity there is for local access, so the benefits from local access do not stay the same, they decline as link road use increases and the scheme as a whole becomes wholly negative.

The council's traffic modelling provides no support whatsoever for the creation of a link road. It actually supports what we say the impact of the link road will be – it will increase congestion, make traffic slower, will make journeys longer, will increase pollution, and will cause more CO2 to be emitted, the main cause of global warming and climate change. This link road is genuinely toxic.

All of the above conclusions arise from the traffic modelling, they are not our opinions or beliefs about the scheme, they are what the modelling shows when closely examined. The council were aware of at least some of the shortcomings of the scheme when they noted that the scheme 'operated in two modes depending on the time of day' and that 'the travel time benefits occurred in the evening peak' when there was 'very little 'through' traffic'. The two modes are local access mode and link road mode. In the evening peak the road only operated in local access mode, and that is when the claimed benefits are created. For some reason the council did not take this further and consider the implications for the link road scheme. We have done, and our conclusions are set out above.

8. Will the scheme reduce rat-running?

Rat-running is essentially the use of smaller/side roads to find shorter or faster routes to a destination, and typically occurs when main roads are heavily congested. At peak hours Clarendon Park Road, Avenue Road, and Knighton Park Road are used to avoid congestion on: the A6 London Road, particularly leading to the junction with Victoria Park Road; the B568 Victoria Park Road, which has extensive queuing traffic at peak hours; and the congested A5199 Welford Road. Any scheme which leads to increased traffic on any of these roads will also lead to increased rat-running.

An important point to note is that the Putney link road scheme was neither designed nor intended to reduce rat-running, and none of the objectives are related to it. In fact, the funding bid states, *'Initial modelling has suggested that there may be increased traffic on orbital routes that feed into the new link road. It will be necessary to ensure that traffic uses the most appropriate routes and that rat-running through inappropriate residential streets is avoided.'* The only orbital route feeding the link road is Victoria Park Road therefore the area subject to rat-running is Clarendon Park on the roads identified above.

At a later stage the council changed its mind and claimed rat-running will be reduced. 200 fewer vehicles on Clarendon Park Road in the morning peak with 100 more on Victoria Park Road, and 50 fewer on Clarendon Park Road in the evening but no more on Victoria Park Road. They also implied a reduction in traffic on Knighton Lane East. The evidence hadn't changed because no more traffic modelling was done so it is not clear how these claims could be made. When we asked for the detailed evidence of these claims the council said there wasn't any. On this basis these claims can only be considered as unsubstantiated assertions which have been introduced to try to make the scheme appear more acceptable. *Rat-running can only be reduced by the link road function of the scheme and would only be reduced if the link road offered a faster route. The evidence shows this is not the case. Journey times are increased by the link road, so it can have no beneficial impact on rat-running.*

Leaving to one side the mystery of the disappearing 150 cars the additional congestion at Mayfield Road and on Victoria Park Road will create additional rat-running through Clarendon Park, not less. And the claims about Knighton Lane East and other smaller roads off Welford Road are simply fanciful. Link road journey times are longer and slower. When

measured on a map there are hardly any journeys which are shorter using the link road, and many are considerably longer. And the further away from the Welford Road/Putney Road junction as a start point, the greater the disadvantage in the distance travelled. The only journeys found to be very slightly shorter were from the end of Putney Road to King Power, and to Boundary Road. Any other journey using the link road is a longer distance to travel.

Any claims about shorter and faster journeys are simply incorrect, and any claims that rat-running will be reduced for the residents of Clarendon Park are simply assertions to make the scheme appear attractive. They are highly misleading and should never have been made.

9. How good is the traffic modelling?

We are obliged to use the results of the traffic modelling for three reasons. First, it is the data the council used in support of the scheme when bidding for the funding. Second, it is the only direct information available about the performance and impact of the scheme. Third, it is used to justify the building of the road. However, in the light of the central importance of the modelling data in terms of bid and impact, we also looked closely at the integrity of the modelling and the extent to which it satisfied the recommended professional standards to guarantee accurate results.

Very briefly, there are two tests which traffic models need to satisfy: a *calibration* test and a *validation* test, both of which are specified by the Department of Transport. The calibration test is based on the accuracy of count point data. A count point is a specific place where actual traffic has been observed and counted. To test accuracy the actual count of traffic is compared with what the model predicts for traffic at the same point. A perfect result would be when the count and the predication are the same.

The validation test is similar but tests the accuracy of predicting known journey times between different count points. Again, a perfect result would be when the actual journey time and the predicted journey time were the same.

The standard 'pass rate' for modelling is that for both tests an 85% threshold must be reached. The more a model falls below 85%, the less likely it is to be fit for purpose and deliver accurate results.

In examining the modelling data, we identified errors in the calculations which we corrected. The council figures are shown below under the column 'original', and our corrected figures are under the 'corrected' column heading. The standard criteria are the criteria used which determine whether a model passes. When faced with unacceptably low passes the council substituted less rigorous criteria, the 'extended criteria' in the tables below which effectively lower the underlying pass mark, in order to come closer to the required 85% score. We have included all these calculations in the table below, but it needs to be said that we have been unable to find any reference in Department for Transport literature which states that substituting less rigorous criteria is an acceptable professional practice.

10. Testing the Traffic Model

Needs to achieve 85% to avoid inaccurate or misleading results

Table 1: Calibration Test Results

	Meet standard criteria		Meet extended criteria	
	Original	Corrected	Original	Corrected
AM Peak	68%	54%	75%	75%
PM Peak	71%	64%	82%	71%

Table 2: Validation Test Results

	Meet standard criteria		Meet extended criteria	
	Original	Corrected	Original	Corrected
AM Peak	71%	71%	79%	79%
PM Peak	64%	64%	86%	86%

Yellow highlight = pass

The two tables above show the results for the two modelled traffic periods. To pass the two tests every cell should be over 85% (although the extended criteria strictly should not even appear). Even using the uncorrected figures none of the cells are even close to 85%, and when corrected fall away further. When the test is relaxed in the extended criteria only one meets the 85% threshold. The shortfalls are not marginal, they are significantly high, especially for the calibration test which is a test of the basic accuracy of the traffic count. The importance of this will be explored further below but an initial conclusion is that the extent to which the modelling fails to satisfy these basic tests means that the results of the are highly likely to be inaccurate and misleading. ***On this basis there can only be a very low level of confidence in the results of the traffic modelling, and the council is effectively 'flying blind' in proposing this link road development. It can have no informed idea of the impact this link road will have when built and forming part of the road network.***

In addition to these two standard tests we were advised that for small area analysis specific local accuracy was highly important. In view of the failures in the calibration test we looked more closely at count point accuracy across the 12 most important count point used for this road scheme. A minimum of 10 of the 12 count points should meet the criteria.

11. Count Point Accuracy

For the morning peak 4 of 12 counts met the calibration criteria. The largest errors were:

	Actual	Modelled	Difference
8. A6 London Road south outbound	720	335	-53%
6. Welford Road south outbound	574	964	+68%
10. B6416 East Park Road north inbound	248	73	-71%

For the evening peak 8 of 12 counts met the calibration criteria. The two largest errors were:

10. B6416 East Park Road north inbound	314	96	-69%
10. B6416 East Park Road south outbound	251	170	-32%

What can be seen above are extremely high levels of count point inaccuracy, and these are the count points closest to the link road scheme. Of the different points, count point 10 is especially important.

Errors at Count Point 10 Mayfield Road

Morning peak

	Actual	Modelled	Difference
10. B6416 East Park Road north inbound	248	73	-71%
10. B6416 East Park Road south outbound	547	431	-21%

Evening peak

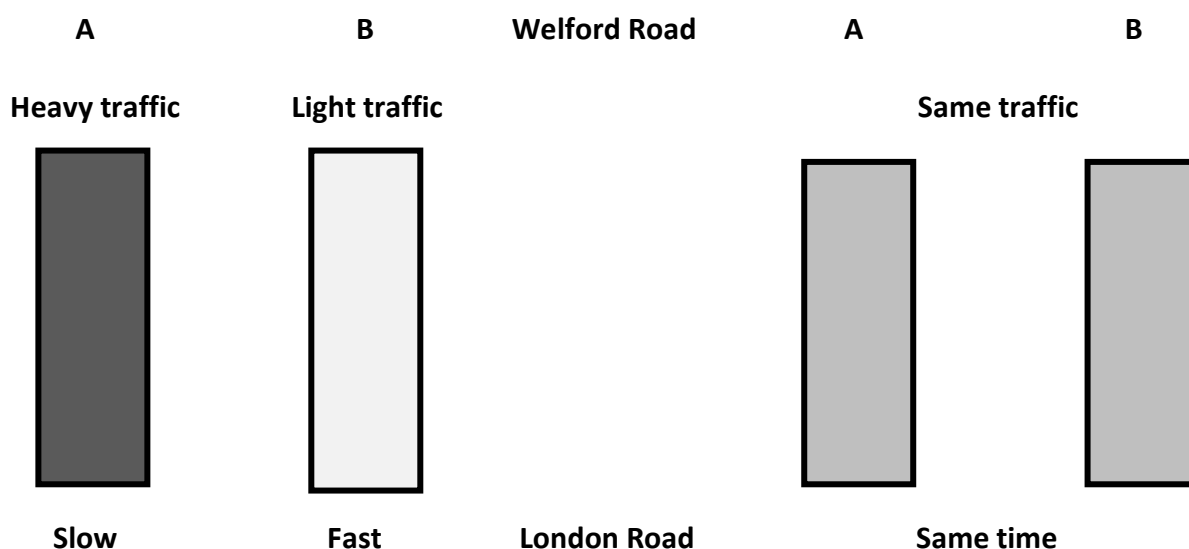
10. B6416 East Park Road north inbound	314	96	-69%
10. B6416 East Park Road south outbound	251	170	-32%
Total	1360	770	-43%

Count point 10 is in Mayfield Road which feeds traffic through to Victoria Park Road, especially in the morning peak period. The route from East Park Road through Mayfield Road and then Victoria Park Road to Welford Road is a recognised existing morning peak time orbital traffic route, marked by heavy existing congestion. Yet the traffic modelling at that point is wildly inaccurate, grossly under-estimating the traffic flow through Mayfield Road. Put very simply, the roads are already full, but the model says there is spare capacity because it is counting wrongly. The significance of this can be understood by looking at the key principle of traffic modelling.

Basic Principle of Traffic Modelling (Wardrop's principle of traffic equilibrium)

"Traffic arranges itself onto a congested network in such a way that the cost of travel on all routes used between an origin-destination pair is equal to the minimum cost of travel, and that all other possible routes which are unused have a greater or equal cost." What this means in modelling practice can be illustrated below:

How Traffic Modelling Works



The diagram shows two roads connecting Welford Road and London Road. To the left road A has heavy traffic and is slow with a long journey time, and road B has light traffic so is faster with a shorter journey time. According to the equilibrium principle quoted above in real life traffic would re-distribute itself until the position to the right of the diagram is achieved where for both roads the costs (time) of travel is equal. This is the principle which traffic modelling uses to allocate traffic to different roads when assessing the impact of changes to the road network, through new roads opening, for example.

In the case of count point 10, which is on a feeder route linked to Victoria Park Road, the traffic model is underestimating the amount of existing traffic, sometimes by 70% and by over 40% overall. So instead of recognising that Victoria Park Road looks like road A to the left, it measures it as if it had the traffic flow of Road B to the left, fast and with spare capacity. Accordingly, the model will allocate extra traffic from other routes on to Victoria Park Road until it looks like the roads to the right of the diagram, *to the model*. In real life, though, it doesn't look anything like this, because the model is predicting traffic inaccurately. In real life there isn't the spare capacity on Victoria Park Road during the peak hours, so the claimed diversion of vehicles from Clarendon Park Road, for example, simply will not happen, because the alternative, via Victoria Park Road, is a longer slower route, and additional traffic would make it even slower.

The most likely outcome is that additional traffic will feed into Victoria Park Road, but it will be extra orbital traffic from East Park Road through Mayfield Road. There will be additional congestion on Victoria Park Road, and on London Road at the Mayfield road roundabout and the impact of this will be the opposite of what the council claim. Rather than diverting traffic from Clarendon Park Road it will lead to increased traffic on all the roads through Clarendon Park which run parallel to Victoria Park Road as traffic seeks less congested routes. The claims for reduced traffic on local roads and reductions in rat-running are most likely artefacts of the modelling, if they exist, and arise from the inaccuracies seen above.

The inaccuracies on the modelling are almost certainly why the results of the modelling at a local level are counter-intuitive. They do not fit with the experience of the local road network amongst people who are exposed to it on a daily basis.

In summary, based on the detailed examination of the traffic modelling we came to two conclusions:

The traffic model fails by a wide margin to satisfy the standard tests designed to ensure accuracy of results. Therefore:

It is not safe to assume that any of the results of the traffic model provide an accurate representation of the impact of the Putney Link Road scheme.

12. Conclusions about the scheme and concluding comments

We have been greatly hampered in our ability to look into the finer details of the scheme as our requests for additional information have been declined - information which would have revealed the extent of the local impact. The only information made available has been that which the council is required to make public by the funding body as a condition of making the bid, and all of that has not been revealed. In this regard, and others, we will detail below our reservations about the integrity of the consultation process and the quality of the information which has been used to inform residents about this scheme.

In using the traffic modelling data to which we have had access we have arrived some substantive conclusions which we can summarise as follows:

There is no evidence to support either need or demand for a link road.

The scheme does not function as a link road, except for one period out of four.

It follows that the scheme fails to meet its core objective.

When it does function as a link road it makes the road network less efficient and all outcomes from the link road function are negative.

The scheme can have no benefit in reducing rat-running. The evidence shows the link road increases journey times meaning rat-running to avoid congestion will increase.

All the claimed benefits from the scheme are created by improving local access from Aylestone Road.

The traffic modelling fails to meet required standards and the results are highly likely to be inaccurate and misleading.

To proceed with this scheme as planned is, in our view, highly irresponsible. The council have said 'If it becomes clear that the scheme will not meet its objectives, then the scheme

will be reviewed.’ The council’s own data shows that the link road scheme does not meet its objectives, therefore it should be critically reviewed, and, in our view, it should not proceed. If the council proceeds with this link road scheme in disregard of the evidence against it, the council will need to explain why, and produce other evidence to support their decision. It is not acceptable that large amounts of public money should be used on a scheme which has no benefits and negative consequences for many.

13. The conduct of the bid and the consultation

The decision to bid for funding and the development of the bid proposal was kept remarkably quiet. Not a single councillor from the three wards affected nor any member of the public knew of the bid until the funding was announced. Others who would support the scheme were consulted and several wrote letters of support including the University of Leicester and the local MP. It is difficult to escape the conclusion that this was a deliberate strategy to avoid opposition developing before the funding was secured. It says little for open or consultative local government.

The council was obliged by the conditions of the bid to post publicly the full bid submission in the interests of open government. The council failed to do this. It published part of the bid document, although made no public reference to this posting. Attempts to secure the remaining documents met with delay and obstruction and the requirement for full public access were never fully complied with. Straight-forward request for information were rejected or met with denials that such information existed.

A map showing a link from Aylestone Road through Putney Road to the A6 London Road was first shown to the public and Castle Ward councillors at the November 2017 Castle Community Meeting. Not surprisingly this map created a considerable reaction as it was the first anyone knew of the full intention of the scheme. Subsequent attempts to obtain a copy of this map were met with denials that such a map existed or had been shown to the meeting, even though all those attending the meeting had seen it and could confirm its existence. From that point on the council said Putney Road simply linked the Aylestone and Welford roads.

Requests for details of traffic numbers using the new Putney Road link, Clarendon Park Road, and Victoria Park Road in order to be able to assess impact from the scheme were denied. The council claimed that this information did not exist. Yet in the consultation the council was able to give precise figures of changes to the number of vehicles using existing roads. How it could do this without having the baseline figures which were requested is unknown to us. The council in effect said it did not know how many vehicles would use the new link road, nor did it know what the impact on other roads would be. If the information did exist why were we denied access to it? If it didn’t exist, how could they make the claims they were making? Throughout the process it became clear that the council would not release information about the basis of the scheme which should have been available for the public to form an informed view of the proposals. It was difficult to avoid feeling that something was being deliberately hidden – a clue to this can be seen in what the available traffic data did actually show. It showed the scheme did not work and the link road created

a series of negative outcomes. The only reason we had access to this data is that the council was obliged to publish it.

The consultation failed to satisfy any of the conditions laid down for the content and conduct of consultations. The information made available to the public for the consultation was highly partial. It was partial in that there was so little information that nobody could have established an informed view of the scheme. It was partial also in that the little information that was provided resembled marketing material intended to promote the scheme, rather than material setting out the objectives and impacts the scheme would have locally from which local people could arrive at informed conclusions. Assertions were made with no evidence to support them. It appeared that either the council didn't know the difference between assertion and evidence, or it had no intention of supplying the latter if it had any.

The council claimed throughout the consultation that there was no connection between this scheme and Evesham Road, that there were no proposals to remove the Mayfield Road roundabout, and that parking on Victoria Park Road would remain unchanged. It is self-evident to all who have looked at this that the first claim is simply untrue, and we will have to wait to see how this claim and the others withstand the test of time. If there is no connection with Evesham Road, the Putney link road doesn't make any sense at all. However, there appear to be changes taking place in what the council says. Rather than there being a line on a map and no plans, according to the City Mayor the Evesham Road scheme could be debated "if it were able ever to be funded." It looks like there now is a plan, but not yet any funding, which is not dissimilar to Putney Road a year ago.

It is hardly surprising that the response to the consultation was low – there was little information which told anyone anything. Nothing in the way of evidence was made available for people to assess, yet there was evidence available as we have demonstrated above. A further reason for the low response lies in the timing of the first drop-in exhibition in Clarendon Park. This session took place before the main leafleting of Clarendon Park had happened. People simply didn't know about it, so it is hardly surprising that there was low attendance or response.

Rather than acting impartially, the council actively intervened to influence the outcome of the consultation, and in doing so damaged its integrity. It released favourable assertions about the scheme to supporters of the scheme which was then used publicly to justify it. Specifically, it claimed that the scheme would save 250,000 HGV miles a year. This was then used to claim there would be fewer HGVs on the roads. On learning of this we made three requests for explanations of how this figure was calculated. We particularly wanted to know how time savings were converted to miles travelled, how two hours data was converted to a year, and how HGV miles were identified when the traffic modelling cannot identify HGVs. No full explanation was ever provided despite very detailed requests. What did become clear is that the claim was nothing to do with HGVs but that a figure for HGVs was derived from non-HGV data. So why manufacture a figure for HGVs? Claims about HGVs are emotive and likely to influence public views. People genuinely believed that the scheme would reduce the number of HGVs on the roads, but this was simply not true. Based on the council's data we could offer a counter claim with exactly the same validity as the council's

claim. Based on the link road creating negative outcomes, as detailed above, when fully operational the Putney Road scheme will increase HGV miles by 307,962 miles a year. However, we would not use this figure to argue against the scheme as it is as meaningless as the council's own claim. But equally valid.

Looking across the conduct of the bid and the consultation it is hard not to conclude that the council has not acted in good faith throughout the whole process. They were intent on railroading this scheme through, and that's what they did. On only one matter has it been possible to identify that they acted in good faith. Before the consultation started the council said it would build this link road regardless of what the consultation showed. And now it is doing exactly that. So, despite the council's own evidence showing the overwhelmingly negative impacts of this link road, and only 25% of consultation responses supporting it, the council is still going to build it. Those who support rational and evidence-based decision making can only ask, 'How did the council get to the point where evidence and rationality are simply over-ridden in making key decisions about projects which will have major impacts on the people of the city?' There is something badly wrong for this to be happening.