

## Speech by Cllr Liam Walker – A40 Barnard Gate Junctions Proposal

Thank you, Chair.

As many will know I have long championed improvements to the Barnard Gate junction as when sadly there are incidents at this location there is a negative impact with traffic issues to villages like Hanborough and Freeland.

I want to begin by saying that I absolutely welcome Oxfordshire County Council's recognition that action is needed at the A40 Barnard Gate junctions. This location has been a concern for local residents and road users for a long time, and it's right that it's being addressed as part of the Council's Vision Zero programme.

I also want to acknowledge and welcome the inclusion of extra signage towards Cuckoo Lane in the proposal. This is something we raised during our site visit, as it's vital that we encourage more drivers to use that safer junction when joining the A40. It's good to see that feedback being reflected in these plans.

That said, while I'm pleased to see progress, I remain concerned that the proposal to prohibit right turns out of the Barnard Gate junctions doesn't go far enough to deal with the wider safety issues along this stretch of road.

The right turn into South Leigh from Witney remains a major problem — and it's not being addressed here. There's still no designated space for vehicles to safely make that manoeuvre, and that continues to pose a real danger.

As you will know, £100,000 was allocated in the most recent County Council budget to support safety improvements at this location. That funding must be used wisely — not on short-term fixes or temporary barriers, but to deliver meaningful, long-lasting improvements that genuinely make the road safer.

Looking ahead, I would also urge that future decisions are based on more comprehensive traffic data. The recent traffic survey covered only a 12-hour period, which simply doesn't provide a full picture of how this road is used across different days and times. Collecting data over a longer period would help ensure we base decisions on robust evidence and fully understand the risks and behaviours at play.

So while I do welcome this as a positive step forward — and I want to see something happen here — we must ensure this isn't just a sticking plaster. Let's use this opportunity, and the funding available, to get it right and deliver a lasting solution that genuinely improves safety for everyone using this stretch of the A40.

Thank you.