

TRANSPORT DECISIONS COMMITTEE– 11 FEBRUARY 2010

THORNHILL PARK & RIDE EXPANSION

Report by Head of Transport

Introduction

1. Oxford's Park & Ride facilities have, for many years, played a significant and integral role in the transport strategy for Oxford. They form part of a consistent and sustained approach to the city's transport strategy and help to ensure that transport problems have not hindered growth or threatened Oxford's unique character and environment.
2. There is increasing pressure at all five Park & Ride sites with Seacourt regularly filling up and Peartree and Water Eaton occasionally reaching capacity. However, Thornhill experiences the greatest pressure, with the car park being full almost every weekday by around 9:30am.
3. Officers have been progressing a scheme to tackle the capacity issue at Thornhill. This report seeks permission for officers to progress the scheme further.

Background information

4. Initially, the scope for expanding both Thornhill and Seacourt was investigated. However, due to complex issues at Seacourt and with limited resources, both staff and budget, expansion plans for Seacourt are not currently being progressed.
5. Thornhill Park & Ride is located within the Oxford Green Belt and any expansion would also be in the Green Belt. Planning Policy Guidance note 13, 'Transport', sets out the criteria for the assessment of Park & Ride development in Green Belts, including extensions to existing sites. Annex E states that Park & Ride development is "not inappropriate" provided certain tests are met. These tests include a requirement for a thorough assessment of other potential sites; that the proposal would not seriously compromise the purposes of including land in the green belt and that the proposal is contained within the Local Transport Plan. Over a period of months, officers have been working to address these tests and this information would help form part of the justification to be submitted with the planning application.
6. It is acknowledged that the existing Park & Ride car parks on the edge of Oxford cannot expand indefinitely. Work has therefore continued on developing alternatives such as remote Park & Ride car parks and encouraging increased use of public transport to Oxford from closer to home. The "Premium Routes" initiative has helped to increase bus patronage. Efforts

will also be made to ensure that the existing Park & Ride sites are used more efficiently.

7. Thornhill, like many of Oxford's Park & Ride sites, have multiple destinations such as the City Centre, Headington, hospitals, London, and airports. This makes determining the current and future demand at Thornhill a complex matter.
8. Oxfordshire County Council commissioned its transport planning consultants, Halcrow, to assess current and future demand for additional park & ride provision to the east of Oxford. For the purpose of the demand assessment work, it was assumed that this additional demand was at Thornhill. The demand assessment modelling they undertook shows there is currently an unmet demand for an additional 303 parking spaces at Thornhill, which rises to 540 if demand to 2026 is taken into account. An extension of 540 spaces would bring the total car park capacity to 1400. Annex 1 contains the executive summary from the demand assessment report.
9. While not the primary purpose of Thornhill Park & Ride, its use for London trips has always been permitted. While this use was not part of the original concept for Park & Ride, it has grown over a long period and is now an important feature of the Thornhill facility and benefits many residents of Oxfordshire and reduces car travel to London. As far back as July 1999, Oxford City Council's Highways and Traffic Committee was informed that 25-30% of the use of Thornhill car park was by London-bound users. City members decided to accept this use on the basis that Thornhill was a general public transport interchange as well as a Park & Ride car park. Subsequently the County Council allowed coaches to enter the car park. Previously coaches only served the bus stops on the A40. However, people could still park at Thornhill and walk across to these stops. On road safety grounds it is considered preferable to facilitate these services on the Park & Ride site
10. Although this use increases the demand for spaces at Thornhill, there are potential carbon savings, reduced congestion and sustainability benefits associated with coach travel to London and the airports. It is accepted, however, that this element of use requires more proactive management and this is addressed later in the report.

Key Stakeholder Consultations

11. A main stakeholder consultation was conducted in February 2008 seeking comments on the Potential Sites Report. A summary of this report and the sites assessed can be found at Annex 2.
12. It should be noted that the letters from stakeholders on the Potential Sites report covered both Thornhill and Seacourt. However, for reasons already mentioned, references to Seacourt have been removed from the report.

13. Whilst some respondents questioned the sustainability of continued Park & Ride provision, particularly in respect of the coach services to London, most largely agreed with the assessment of the potential sites and no additional sites were suggested for investigation.
14. CPRE, Natural England, Oxford Green Belt Network and Oxford Preservation Trust had concerns regarding the impact further development would have on the Green Belt. Oxford Preservation Trust commented further that potential sites should be considered along with landscaping and screening measures. CPRE, South Oxfordshire District Council and the Highways Agency were also concerned that Park & Ride use could encourage more car use.
15. Oxford City Council and both major bus operators, Oxford Bus Company and Stagecoach, were in support of further expansion at Thornhill. Oxford City Council also stated that the adopted Local Plan and emerging LDF Core Strategy, supported the principle of capacity improvements.
16. Following this consultation the report was amended to remove references to Seacourt and greater detail was added. This report will help form part of the planning application.
17. Although the consultation was carried out some time ago, the facts remain unaltered and therefore it is not deemed necessary to repeat the consultation exercise. The planning application process will include further consultation.

Management of Thornhill P&R Site

18. Parking for cars at Thornhill is currently free, whatever the destination; London, Airports, Oxford centre and the local area. The only restriction is a 72 hour maximum stay.
19. It is considered that the use of Thornhill for destinations other than Oxford is beneficial as it provides a valuable service for Oxfordshire residents and helps to reduce traffic travelling through South Oxfordshire and on neighbouring authorities' roads.
20. Park & Ride sites cannot be expanded indefinitely, even though they are key to Oxfordshire's Transport Strategy. The county council's strategy is to provide people with a choice of sustainable means of getting to their destination whenever possible. Measures such as charging targeted at London and Airport use will help to control demand for spaces and maintain a balance between core use for travel to Oxford and trips to London.
21. Mechanisms to enable charging to take place will need further evaluation but would need to be built into any proposals.
22. Without a commitment to managing demand through the introduction of a charging regime at Thornhill, targeted at maintaining core use, it is considered likely that this could cause problems when seeking planning permission for further expansion in the green belt.

Private Land Acquisition

23. The option of purchasing the land currently leased at Thornhill is not being pursued. The cost of buying the land would increase the project capital costs significantly. Shotover Estate, the landowner, is also not keen to sell and going through a Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) process would cause delay and add further costs to the project.
24. The proposal is to extend the current lease agreement the county council has with Shotover Estate. Preliminary discussions have indicated that the Estate is happy in principle with this approach.

The Local Transport Plan

25. The second Local Transport Plan included in its programme a new terminal building at Thornhill Park & Ride to provide high-quality facilities for inter-urban coaches and the Park and Ride bus service. The LTP also aimed to *'...ensure that sufficient capacity exists to meet growing demand...It is anticipated that some expansion of the existing sites will take place during the current plan period'*. The expansion would help to deliver these current LTP proposals.
26. An expanded Park & Ride would continue to contribute towards the new objectives agreed by the county council's Cabinet in September 2009 for LTP3. This scheme should contribute to several of the high priority objectives for investment in several settlement types. It has therefore been put forward to be assessed as part of the LTP3 programme process for 2011-2016.
27. This scheme would also complement Oxfordshire's Access to Oxford project and form part of the Council's contribution to this package of schemes.

Financial and Staff Implications

28. Proceeding with the planning application and associated work can be accommodated within existing staffing levels, utilising support from framework consultants. The allocated budget from the capital programme for this work is £200,000 in 2010/11; costs incurred prior to this are approximately £300,000.
29. The likely increased lease cost is currently unknown. However, the previous increase to the last extension is known. There will also be a marginal additional revenue cost associated with increasing the lighting and CCTV on the site.
30. If planning permission was granted and the site extended, then no additional on-site staff resource would be required to operate the expanded Thornhill site.
31. A London-bound departure charge payable for London and airport services departing from Thornhill, would generate revenue to help contribute towards

the running costs of operating Thornhill. Implementing parking charges targeted at London and airport travellers would also generate a revenue stream to contribute to the running costs. The amount generated would be dependent on the actual scheme implemented.

32. A capital budget to implement and build the extension, should planning permission be granted, has yet to be identified. Implementation costs have currently been identified at £3-4 million dependent on the specification of the expansion.

Conclusion

33. The work done to date identifies that there is a high level of unmet demand and additional future demand associated with growth in the area. Following the assessment of potential sites to cater for this additional demand for the eastern corridor, officer preference is to provide for this demand at Thornhill through expansion to the east of the existing site.
34. Seeking planning permission can be a lengthy process and although there is no capital funding identified yet, officers recommend the county council should proceed with seeking planning permission so that they are in a position to proceed with the extension when funding permits.
35. Officers hope to be in a position to be able to apply for planning during spring 2010.
36. Implementation of a charging regime is important for the planning application and to help manage demand for the site. Officers will work with Cabinet Members and stakeholders to develop the details of an acceptable charging regime targeted at London and Airport use.

RECOMMENDATION

37. **The Committee is RECOMMENDED to:**
 - (a) **authorise officers to proceed with making a planning application to expand Thornhill P&R to the east of the current site, increasing the capacity of the site to 1400 spaces as outlined in Annex 3 to this report;**
 - (b) **authorise officers to proceed with negotiations to agree an extension to the current lease arrangement with Shotover Estate;**
 - (c) **authorise officers to proceed with designing and specifying a charging regime, targeted at London and airport bound use, which will form part of the planning application; and**

- (d) delegate approval for the mechanism of the charging regime to the Head of Transport in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Growth & Infrastructure.**

STEVE HOWELL
Head of Transport
Environment & Economy

Background papers: Halcrow Demand Assessment Report
Potential Sites Assessment Report

This report contains a summary of the two reports listed as background papers. As the full reports are of a technical nature they can be viewed on request to Paul Fermer or Chanika Walawage.

Contact Officer: Paul Fermer: Tel: 01865 815764
Chanika Walawage: Tel: 01865 815890

January 2010

Thornhill Park & Ride Demand Assessment

Executive Summary

1 Introduction

- 1.1 Halcrow has been commissioned by Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) to undertake a review of the existing and potential future demand at Thornhill park & ride. For the purpose of this study, it was assumed that any additional park & ride capacity for the eastern corridor of Oxford is at Thornhill; potential sites are covered in the OCC Potential Sites report.
- 1.2 The review has considered and reports on the characteristics of current use and travel patterns at Thornhill, as well as assessing the potential level of demand projected for the future year of 2026, chosen as it is in-line with the Local Development Frameworks (LDF). This report provides an evidence base to help understand the particular characteristics of the Thornhill park & ride facility. The findings of the review will help to determine an appropriate park & ride facility to meet the demand of people travelling predominantly from the east of Oxford.

2 Existing Situation

- 2.1 Thornhill park & ride is one of five park & ride sites managed by Oxfordshire County Council, which between them intercept 20% of car trips bound for the city (2005 figures), and divert a total of 1.3m cars per year from the city. The Thornhill site has been in operation since 1985. The site is located on the southern side of the A40 (London Road) to the east of the city. The current capacity available at Thornhill park & ride is 874 parking spaces.
- 2.2 All of Oxford's park & ride sites offer high frequency daytime bus services towards Oxford city centre. Thornhill additionally has coach services to London, Gatwick and Heathrow and a specific link to the Churchill and Nuffield Hospitals. Surveys of users at Thornhill indicate the split of boarders between the different categories of bus services. Around half of boarders use buses to Oxford city centre or hospitals, the remainder are on coach services. A significant number of trips involve driving and parking a car, and this is the dominant mode of access for park & ride bus services focused on the city centre. This is by no means the exclusive mode of access, especially for coach users, as people are also dropped-off, interchange from other buses or access the site on foot or by bicycle.

- 2.3 The car park at Thornhill is at capacity on many weekdays, becoming full as early as 09:15 (Tuesdays and Wednesdays are the busiest, Fridays the quietest). Site visits observed that vehicles could spend 20 minutes seeking a space during these times. There is also a high incidence of vehicles not parking in official bays. The car park occasionally fills on Saturdays, but less regularly than during the week. Long stay and overnight parking is a regular occurrence at Thornhill. There is also some use of Thornhill by car-sharers, and people who walk or cycle from the site.

3 Park & Ride Modelling

- 3.1 Park and ride demand was modelled at Thornhill to assess the potential suppressed demand (present), as well as forecast future demand (including the effects of car park size limitation). Note that the study has focused on Thornhill rather than any of the other potential sites that could be used as a park & ride for the eastern corridor into Oxford. As most demand is from the eastern corridor, forecasts could be transposed to other locations in the east.
- 3.2 Two modelling tools have been used. The starting point for the analysis has been the Central Oxfordshire Transport Model (COTM). COTM has been used to estimate future demand at the site. A bespoke logit model has drawn on trip demand, distribution data and generalised trip cost information from COTM to estimate suppressed demand. In addition, catchment analysis has indicated that around 40 trips that could use Thornhill park & ride are currently using other sites (in the AM peak hour) to get to Oxford city centre and 11 trips to get to the Headington/hospitals area. This represents maximum potential transfers, as users will still choose other sites for reasons unrelated to Thornhill's parking availability.
- 3.3 Note that modelling only simulates demand for the park & ride bus service into Oxford. It is assumed that as most users of London coach services arrive before the car park is full no suppressed demand currently exists. A similar assumption is made for users who park & cycle or park & walk from the site.

4 Results of modelling

- 4.1 Analysis of suppressed demand in 2007 indicates that peak hour demand could be up to 25% higher if parking was available. In 2026, the level of suppression of the COTM forecast AM peak demand was found to be approaching 30% if the car park remains the same size as today. Moreover, if the COTM forecast comparison is made between a suppressed 2007 and an unsuppressed 2026, growth in the demand for park & ride use rises to just over 40%. Most suppressed demand is related to 'conventional' daily park & ride use at the site, the largest category of users. In terms of other users, coach users are less likely to fail to find a space at the site, as a result of a combination of early arrivals and/or a greater proportion of coach passengers being dropped off ('kiss & ride').

4.2 Demand for park & ride bus services at Thornhill has been forecast (by COTM) to increase by some 26% from 2007 to 2026 (AM peak). As COTM is a variable demand model, this does not just include increases from existing origins, but also a re-distribution of trips based on the balance between supply and demand for trips and transport infrastructure. However, COTM's forecast is not constrained by the site car-park, and if site capacity is not increased, forecast demand will not be met. As there is potentially already an element of suppressed demand at Thornhill, this issue will become more significant if parking capacity at the site is not increased.

4.3 Future car park capacity

4.4 Table E.1 summarises the range of demand and implied capacities shown by the model outputs. The implied notional site capacity is a rounded number that effectively makes allowance for additional transfers from other sites.

Table – Car park capacity and potential additional demand:

	AM peak net demand (hour)	Max accum (12:00)	Implied capacity (notional)	Additional/ Suppressed demand (daily)
Base – current car park & illegal parking	181	935	-	-
Forecast – suppressed demand released	225	1161	1200	303
Current car park; illegal parking & suppressed demand	181	935	-	540
1200 space car park; 2007 release of suppressed demand	226	1168	1200	228
No suppressed demand	259	1338	1400	-

Category	Approx proportion of Thornhill car park			
	2007		2026	
Park & Ride bus services	43%	(374)	47%	(655)
Coach services	34%	(299)	32%	(441)
Overnight	17%	(151)	16%	(223)
'Other' methods/modes	6%	(50)	6%	(80)

5 Summary and Conclusions

5.1 In summary, current (2007) levels of suppressed demand at Thornhill suggest that maximum potential car park accumulations of over 1150 would be realised, thus indicating a need for an ultimate capacity of around 1200 to meet current demand. This would allow for an element of illegal parking and additional demand from transfers from other sites. Parking allocations to specific users, such as disabled or families, are not specifically identified in these figures. They are effectively included in the accumulations, as these are based on all traffic, but some additional separate provision may still be required to generate sufficient general user spaces.

- 5.2 The 2026 forecasts show that the overall demand will increase, although accumulations and capacity increases are of a slightly lesser order as a result of different patterns of movement and differential growth in coach versus city-focused park & ride service use. Forecasts indicate that a car park capacity of around 1400 would be suggested for 2026, to have no 'suppressed' demand.

Halcrow
Miles Hodgson
October 2009

Potential Sites Assessment

Executive Summary

1 Introduction

- 1.1 Oxfordshire County Council officers undertook an assessment of potential sites for additional Park and Ride capacity to cater for the unmet and growing demand for car parking evident at the Thornhill Park & Ride site.
- 1.2 The assessment looked at the possibilities for providing the additional demand of around 540 spaces for the demand for this facility in the eastern corridor of Oxfordshire. 10 locations (including Thornhill itself) were identified for assessment. The sites are shown in figure 1.
- 1.3 All sites were assessed in line with Planning Policy Guidance note 13, 'Transport', which sets out criteria for the assessment of Park & Ride development in Green Belts, including extensions to existing sites. Annex E states that Park & Ride development is "not inappropriate" provided certain tests are met. These tests include a requirement for a thorough assessment of other potential sites; that the proposal would not seriously compromise the purposes of including land in the green belt and that the proposal is contained within the local transport plan. Officers have been working to address these tests and this information would form part of the justification to be submitted with the planning application.

2 Approach

- 2.1 A staged approach was taken with regard to the assessment process, with each stage having a progressively more detailed assessment undertaken with tighter criteria.
- 2.2 As the requirements for an Oxford based Park & Ride car park and bus service and those for a London coach/car interchange are different they are dealt with independently of each other.
- 2.3 Stage 1 assessed all sites with criteria around site characteristics, effectiveness and travel impacts, environmental concerns and bus/coach operations. Additional considerations were also given to operating costs and tandem operational issues.
- 2.4 Stage 2 assessed the sites which met the stage 1 criteria. Stage two looked more closely at both the transport and environmental impacts.
- 2.5 Stage 3 involved checking and assessment of the finer details of expansion at the Thornhill site as it was officers' preferred option.

3 Stage 1

- 3.1 It is officer opinion that both of the potential non Green Belt locations (8 & 9) have short comings in access, operational and environmental impact terms. Both are also too remote from Oxford to support dedicated Park & Ride bus services and they are not passed by frequent local bus services. Site 9 at Lewknor is too far out to easily serve a large part of the main Thornhill catchment area including Thame and at least part of Aylesbury. It does already operate informally as a Park & Ride car park for the Oxford Tube but this is as a local facility with a catchment area in its own right.
- 3.2 The remaining sites, all of which are in the Green Belt appear to also have environmental or flood risk shortcomings and other than sites 1A or 1B at M40 Junction 8, it is not considered to have significantly less Green Belt impacts than on-site expansion 10A or 10B at Thornhill.
- 3.3 Main stakeholders were consulted following Stage 1 of the assessment process. Whilst some respondents questioned the sustainability of continued Park & Ride provision particularly in respect of coach services to London, most largely agreed with the assessment of the potential sites. No other potential sites were identified during this consultation process. Figure 2 contains a summary of the comments in full.

4 Stage 2

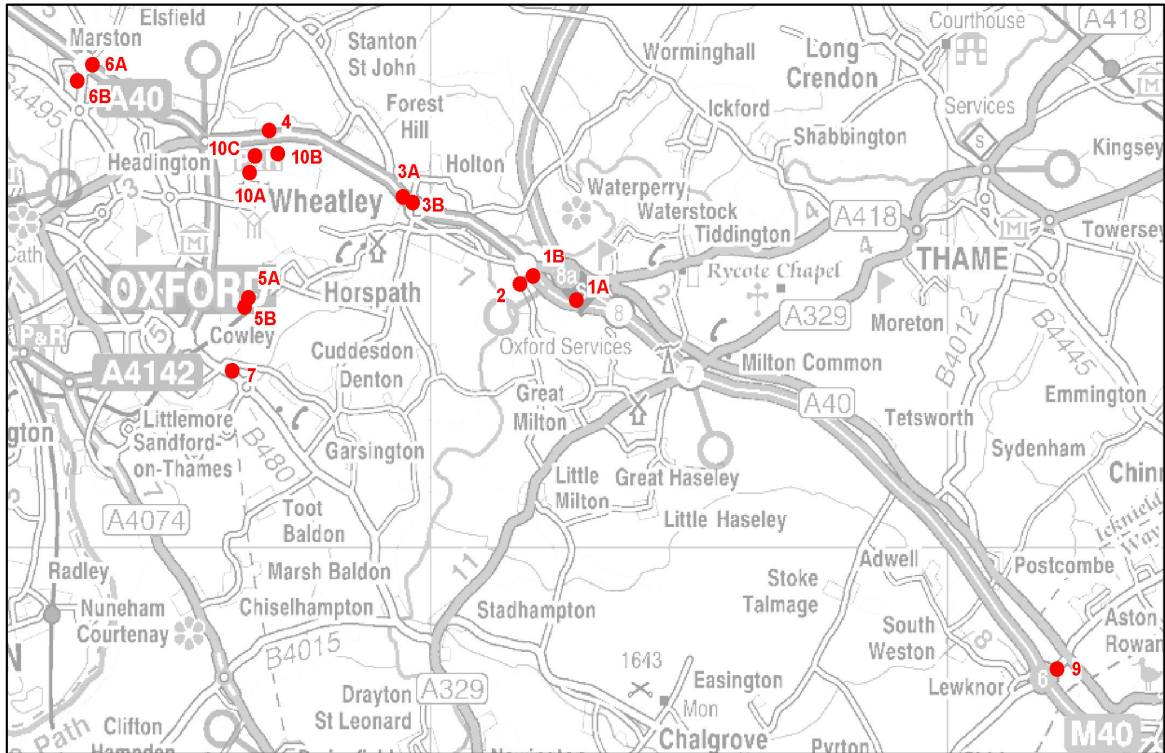
- 4.1 More detailed work in Stage 2 examined to what extent sites 1A and 1B can serve the catchment area for Oxford based Park & Ride and consider the operational and access issues. These sites, and site 9 at Lewknor, were also considered in more detail for a coach interchange. However, even if these sites could be effective in attracting coach users away from Thornhill this would not necessarily remove the need to find additional parking for Oxford based Park & Ride, although it could reduce the amount of additional parking required.
- 4.2 Stage 2a assessed the potential sites for operation of an Oxford based Park and Ride. Only sites 1A and 1B were assessed for this stage as Lewknor does not capture all Oxford bound users of Thornhill Park & Ride. While there are merits in locating an Oxford bound Park & Ride at either of these sites, they do not outweigh the benefits of further expansion at Thornhill. Both sites do not capture all users of Thornhill, especially frequent users from Wheatley. The associated costs for the works required for access are significant and do not provide economies of scale. Bus operation costs will also rise and bus services may not commercially viable.
- 4.3 Stage 2b assesses all three sites for a London coach/car interchange. This assessment shows that although sites 1A and 1B are in the Green Belt, both sites are better located than Lewknor in terms of the Thornhill catchment area. Even so, both sites at Junction 8 will only capture users from Wheatley, for most other users it would involve increased car mileage. Lewknor is too far out to capture coach users at Thornhill.

5 Stage 3

- 5.1 Stage 3 assessed site options 10A and 10B, extensions at Thornhill Park & Ride in detail with regard to environmental and transport impacts to ascertain which would be the preferred site.
- 5.2 The eastern extension is preferable as it utilises existing site screening, uses existing filed boundaries, and would mean the bus and coach terminal building is central to the car park.

Richard Micklethwaite
Chanika Walawage
2009

Figure 1: Site locations



Site	Description
1A	M40 Junction 8
1B	M40 Junction 8, adjacent to Welcome Break services
2	M40 Junction 8
3A	Wheatley adjacent to sports field
3B	Wheatley, adjacent to sports field
4	Sandhills, opposite Thornhill Park and Ride
5A	Horspath Road, recreation site
5B	Horspath Road, recreation site
6A	Marston, part agricultural
6B	Marston, within Conservation Area and Protected Open Space
7	Watlington Road, agricultural use
8	Milton Common, adjacent to edge of Green Belt, close to M40
9	Lewknor, adjacent to Conservation Area and an Area of Natural Beauty
10A	Southern expansion at Thornhill
10B	Eastern expansion at Thornhill
10C	Decking at Thornhill

Figure 2: Stage 1 stakeholder consultation

The Stage 1 assessment was sent to the following stakeholders for their comments in February 2008. They were consulted on both Seacourt and Thornhill sites, although only the comments with regard to Thornhill are referred to here.

Stakeholder	Comments
Oxford City Council	<p>Strong support for the expansion of Park & Ride capacity serving Oxford. It is important that capacity keeps ahead of demand in order to ensure that Park & Ride remains convenient option for users. The adopted Local Plan and emerging LDF Core Strategy support the principle of capacity improvements. Concern that not all planning designations have been picked up in this assessment, such as economic designations. It is important that work continues to progress as speedily as possible on expansion to meet the current and predicted short term demands.</p> <p>In future remote Park & Ride sites may well be needed given the constraints affecting many of the existing Park & Ride sites. It would be useful if a clear short and long-term strategy for Park & Ride provision could be presented as part of the forthcoming planning application at Thornhill.</p>
Campaign to Protect Rural England, Oxfordshire Branch	<p>CPRE is concerned that the scheme to expand the Park & Ride could encourage new journeys across the country. Furthermore the use of public transport may be discouraged as Park & Ride will become the 'easy' option as a result of the expansion, which would also affect the viability of services.</p> <p>"Transport hubs" like Thornhill where coach services to London pick up passengers is unsustainable. People are travelling further e.g. from Thame to Thornhill to catch the coach instead of the more sustainable at their origin. This problem could be further exacerbated if the supplementary sites were to accommodate only the "coach" element of present Park & Ride use. If the use as outbound "transport hubs" were to be terminated the problem that this consultation seeks to solve might no longer exist.</p> <p>A number of alternatives are dismissed for sound reasons leaving just two, both at Junction 8 of the M40. Both would involve a new breach of Green Belt controls. Although Thornhill is also a breach, it would seem preferable in principle to expand an existing harm than to create an entirely new one. The provision of two park & rides to serve effectively the same road would be confusing to users. It would also involve greater support and maintenance costs than would apply on a single site and a greater number of</p>

	<p>shuttle bus journeys would be needed on two sites than one to cope with the same level of overall demand. If there is to be an expansion of Park & Ride facilities it would appear more appropriate to expand Thornhill than to develop either of the two alternatives.</p> <p>Junction 8 sites could create yet more long distance car journeys across the country to access coach services. The roundabouts at Junction 8a are already congested.</p>
Highways Agency	<p>Supports sustainable transport measures. However, are concerned that the expansion of Park & Ride facilities is not a sustainable solution and could attract more vehicles onto the Strategic Road Network (SRN) which is already at capacity.</p> <p>The Access to Oxford model should be used to test the suitability of alternative sites and the impact on the SRN. Where adverse impacts are identified, appropriate mitigation should be undertaken.</p> <p>Additional HA comment (received via email 03-07-2009) The northbound entry slip road was probably changed to an emergency slip road in 1991 when the dedicated Oxford spur at J8 was constructed. Imagine the decision was made due to the close proximity of J7 and J8 where manoeuvring into the correct lane to stay on the M40 (J7 traffic) or leave the M40 (J8 traffic) would lead to weaving accidents. This remains applicable and we would not consider reinstating this slip road. Constructing a new southbound slip road at J7 would require land take at our depot and possibly other premises on the industrial estate. Our depot at Milton Common is key to our operations and we would not consider loss of this function in return for a slip road. If a southbound exit slip road was created. Imagine it would also attract weaving accidents between traffic already on the mainline M40, traffic joining from J8 spur road and wanting to leave at J7. For these reasons, this site is not a viable option in our opinion.</p>
Natural England	<p>The existing site at Thornhill is within 1km of Brasenose Wood and Shotover Hill Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and within 2km of a number of other SSSIs. The site at Thornhill is also within 7km of Oxford Meadows Special Area of Conservation (SAC). The impact of any expansion at Thornhill on these sites will need to be considered. Agree with the selection of the junction 8 sites as possibly suitable. However these too are located within 5km of 4 SSIs, the impact of these sites will need to be considered.</p>

Oxford Bus Company	<p>Supports methodology and main considerations of the report. Believes that one of the key considerations must be the convenience of potential users. Park & Ride schemes work best when the car park is sited at the start of a peak traffic queue with significant bus priority downstream.</p> <p>In the case of alternative sites Oxford Bus Company believes that a discrete commercial service would not be viable unless built up over a number of years. A service calling at two different sites will not be attractive and could be confusing to users. It also gives the perception of delay to those who travel from the farthest point.</p> <p>To attract car users Park & Ride services should have limited stops and significant priority. Not convinced there would be any demand for bus or coach services at Junction 8 as it is too far from Oxford to effectively intercept traffic to the city and lacks an easily accessed hinterland for coach users. The existing site should be expanded which would provide economies of scale both for the bus services with rising demand for more capacity which could then be met by high frequencies and car park management.</p>
Oxford Preservation Trust	<p>Appreciate the need for these facilities. However would be concerned to see any proposals for new Park & Ride provision within or adjacent to the Oxford Green Belt. The alternative sites would have to be thoroughly considered along with details of landscaping and screening measures to limit the impact of the development.</p>
South Oxfordshire District Council	<p>The report makes no reference to trying to manage the demand for park & ride and to encourage the use of local bus routes.</p> <p>Whilst park & ride has a role in protecting Oxford from traffic and congestion it does encourage car use to the edge of Oxford. Any expansion would impact on the Green Belt. Some of the objections to alternative sites appear weak giving the impression of a lack of balance in the report, this includes people disembarking at the wrong site. More fundamentally the disadvantages of the use of existing bus routes also appear overstated. Assuming the case for further provision can be made we would support the further exploration of a site close to junction 8.</p> <p>Other comments received: Letter dated 20 November 2006 stated that further expansion of the Thornhill site would need to be justified in terms of capacity, management of car park with regard to charging and length of stay. Concerned about effect of London and airport coaches on the car park and</p>

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	<p>whether this meets the objectives of the Park & Ride scheme to protect the character of Oxford. If the site were to be expanded an eastern expansion would be preferable, decking is very unlikely to be acceptable.</p>
Stagecoach	<p>Expansion at the Thornhill site makes the greatest sense to meet short/medium term growth in Park & Ride demand, possibly using decking to provide additional capacity. A site adjacent to Junction 8 would not be at all attractive for coach passengers as an alternative to Thornhill and it would be seen as very much less convenient. The use of the Old London Road would be particularly unattractive to coach passengers who would perceive this as lengthening of an already fairly slow “express” journey.</p>
Oxford Green Belt Network	<p>Happy that the Green Belt has been one of the main considerations but still anxious of any more development on it. Would be unhappy with additional facilities in Green Belt villages such as Holton, Horspath Road and Marston. A major concern of Thornhill is, in addition to loss of Green Belt land that this site would become a commercial centre with shops and cafes. In future Park & Rides should be located outside the Green Belt. Decking should be considered at the existing site. Suggests that less generous parking allowance at Thornhill could have some benefits.</p>
Vale of White Horse District Council	<p>Comments provided refer to expansion at Seacourt only.</p>
West Oxfordshire District Council	<p>Comments provided refer to expansion at Seacourt only.</p>

Eastern Expansion at Thornhill

Indicative Plan

The plan below shows the likely extents of providing a car park around 1400 spaces at Thornhill. **This is for indicative purposes only**; detailed plans are currently being developed.

