

A428 IMPROVEMENTS: AN EXPENSIVE MISTAKE

Countryside campaigners say plans to improve the A428 between Caxton Gibbet and the Black Cat roundabouts are the wrong answer, will cost a fortune and damage the environment. They believe the money would be better spent on a step change in public transport.

These conclusions draw on ground-breaking research by the Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE) to highlight the flaws in road building proposals. They commissioned consultants Transport for Quality of Life Community Interest Company (TfLQ) to examine 86 official studies of completed road schemes. The study examined the schemes for changes in traffic levels; landscape impact; economic benefits and possible reductions in average journey time.

They found road schemes increase traffic dramatically and produce few if any economic benefits.

CPRE Cambridgeshire and Peterborough say over the medium to long term, the A428 scheme will not reduce congestion or journey times or make any significant contribution to economic growth. They understand the cost of the project could be anything up to £1billion.

They also say the Oxford to Cambridge Expressway, of which the A428 would form part, seems designed to promote even more development which would simply use up the additional road space created.

“In our view, the consultation has been rushed,” said CPRE’s Regional Chairman, Michael Monk. “We consider the gains in terms of reducing congestion would be short-lived and would cause significant damage to our countryside.

“It is also premature in advance of studies currently under way for the Oxford/Cambridge corridor and the A1 between the M25 and Peterborough,” he continued. “We would prefer to see an holistic approach which would include all modes of travel and take account of development implications.”

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