

# £24 million to beat rush hour traffic in Wokingham approved

- 2.3 km relief road to divert traffic away from smaller villages and open up land for new housing
- dedicated pathway for cyclists and pedestrians will make it easier to travel by greener modes of transport
- latest in a string of investments made by the Department for Transport to improve local roads

Road users in Wokingham will benefit from a £24 million investment to reduce congestion, boost employment and create opportunities for greener forms of travel.

Roads Minister Baroness Vere has today (2 August 2019) announced funding for the new 2.3 km Arborfield Cross Relief Road, which will link the A327 Reading Road to the A327 Eversley Road, providing traffic relief for the village and local community.

The new development will also benefit cyclists, pedestrians and horse riders, with the creation of a shared use pathway alongside the route, encouraging travellers to choose greener modes of transport.

Roads Minister Baroness Vere said:

Roads are part of the fabric of everyday life – stimulating local economies and helping bring communities together.

This vital £24 million scheme will provide a new route for cyclists, drivers and pedestrians, helping reduce traffic through local routes and making towns a nicer place to live.

By 2026, without the relief road, rush hour traffic through the village of Arborfield Cross is forecast to increase to around 3,200 vehicles per hour, risking worsening congestion, queues and delays in local villages as frustrated drivers take alternative routes including rural lanes unsuitable for traffic.

The scheme will divert traffic away from busier routes, ensuring that the local villages of Arborfield and Arborfield Cross are not bombarded by traffic, making the scheme a vital addition to local infrastructure.

Leader of Wokingham Borough Council John Halsall said:

This is exceptional news for the borough, reducing congestion is a principal objective for us at Wokingham and we welcome this funding to assist in the delivery of the identified infrastructure.

The plans are set to unlock major housing developments and drive economic growth, enabling 3,500 homes to be built at Arborfield Garrison.

The new route will also benefit keen cyclists in Wokingham, who will receive greater access to the areas around Berkshire through the inclusion of a 3 metre wide pathway alongside the eastern side of the proposed carriageway.

This announcement is the latest in a string of investments made by the Department for Transport to ensure roads are fit for purpose, spending more than £6.6 billion between 2015 and 2021.