



## **Our hopes for M40 strategy**

THANK you for drawing our attention to the M40 draft route management strategy, issued in March, and the public consultation period which ends on July 2.

The draft strategy states that it has been prepared "after consideration of the needs of people who drive along, cross or live alongside the route" and follows "a detailed study, including discussions with key local and regional interests." Lane End is just one community blighted by traffic diverting from the M40 and noise. We have been unable to find anyone here aware of the consultation.

The M40 runs most of its length through green belt and areas of outstanding natural beauty (AONB). Three million live by it. Yet only one of the 17 "outcomes" of the draft strategy addresses the issues of people who live by the M40, rather than those of users. That "outcome" calls for "production of a biodiversity action plan and environmental management plan for the whole route, subject to funding." In our view, there is already ample evidence of the profound nuisance caused by the M40, especially noise.

Such is their contribution to safety, absorbent asphalt surfaces are used for all new projects on motorways. A quieter example is now between Beaconsfield and Loudwater. We urge that, as part of the planned project to improve the Handy Cross junction presumably using these surfaces, the strategy commits the Highways Agency to extend them from Handy Cross east to Loudwater and west to Stokenchurch.

We believe the M40 Road Management Strategy should make a further commitment to the environment. Earth barriers and noise fencing have been erected at some, but not all, locations where the M40 is particularly intrusive, visually or aurally.

Where introduced, barriers have had a positive impact. The strategy should include commitment to a funded, focused activity to introduce and improve barriers wherever the motorway impinges on populated areas or public footpaths. This commitment should include, but not be limited to, AONBs.

We plan to advise the Highways Agency of these views. Do other readers have environmental concerns regarding the evolution of the M40 over the next ten to 15 years? If so, we strongly urge you to make your concerns known, during the consultation ending on July 2, using the freepost questionnaire in the leaflet on the M40 draft route management strategy available at Wycombe Library, or [www.highways.gov.uk/roads/projects/motorways/m40/london\\_birmingham/leaflet\\_rms\\_march04/index.html](http://www.highways.gov.uk/roads/projects/motorways/m40/london_birmingham/leaflet_rms_march04/index.html)  
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9:37am Friday 25th June 2004

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