

Robert Courts MP



HOUSE OF COMMONS

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Jesse Norman MP
Minister of State
Department for Transport

Thursday, 21st March 2019
RAC/rd/CP

Dear Minister,

I write pursuant to my question put to you during Transport Questions this morning.

All of us in West Oxfordshire were disappointed when Oxfordshire County Council announced that it was withdrawing the B4044 Community Path from the package of transport upgrades in its Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF) bid. This important project would provide a cycle and pedestrian path on a key route between Eynsham, which is due to experience significant housing growth in the coming years, and Oxford.

I am told by OCC that it took this decision after being told by officers at MHCLG that the inclusion of the B4044 Community Path would severely reduce the likelihood of the HIF bid being successful. Therefore the position of MHCLG, and the criteria of the HIF, appear to be at odds with the aims of your Department, which is committed to promoting active travel and improving cycling infrastructure.

I would therefore urge you to encourage greater joined up thinking between your Department and MHCLG, ensuring that those allocating HIF funding are persuaded of the benefits of cycle infrastructure and how it can assist with the delivery of new homes.

Furthermore, I would encourage you to actively consider supporting the efforts of Oxfordshire County Council to have the B4044 Community Path approved as a standalone bid.

Many thanks in advance for your consideration.

Yours,

Robert Courts MP

Cc. Ian Hudspeth, Leader, Oxfordshire County Council

*From the Member of Parliament for the constituency of Witney in West Oxfordshire
including Bampton, Burford, Carterton, Charlbury, Chipping Norton, Eynsham, Witney and Woodstock.*