

Briefing re the Carrington Relief Road - filling the gaps

1 message

Friends Of Carrington Moss <friendsofcarringtonmoss@gmail.com>

6 September 2026 at 09:30

To: "Hartley, Benjamin" <benjamin.hartley@trafford.gov.uk>, sue.maitland@trafford.gov.uk, zak.deakin@trafford.gov.uk, phil.eckersley@trafford.gov.uk, Daniel Jerrome <daniel.jerrome@trafford.gov.uk>, meenakshi.minnis@trafford.gov.uk, tony.obrien@trafford.gov.uk, shirley.procter@trafford.gov.uk, ulrich.savary@trafford.gov.uk, clare.sheridan@trafford.gov.uk, michael.taylor@trafford.gov.uk, gareth.twose@trafford.gov.uk, James Wright <james.wright@trafford.gov.uk>, david.acton@trafford.gov.uk, olly.baskerville@trafford.gov.uk, "Evans, Nathan" <nathan.evans@trafford.gov.uk>, "Leicester, Jane (Councillor)" <jane.leicester@trafford.gov.uk>, "Newgrosh, Julian" <julian.newgrosh@trafford.gov.uk>, "O'Sullivan, Dolores" <dolores.o'sullivan@trafford.gov.uk>, kevin.procter@trafford.gov.uk
Cc: "Fisher, Adrian" <adrian.fisher@trafford.gov.uk>, "Coley, Rebecca" <rebecca.coley@trafford.gov.uk>, "Gore, Richard" <Richard.Gore@trafford.gov.uk>
Bcc: Marj Powner <marj.powner@gmail.com>, Friends of Carrington Moss <friendsofcarringtonmoss@gmail.com>

Dear Planning Committee Member

We would like to provide some additional information to that covered in the briefing on 3rd September, and hope this will be helpful when you are considering the approval of the planning application. We have tried to keep this to factual information rather than straying into the merits of the case (we will produce another document when the planning application comes before committee for approval), so we have not, for example, included an assessment of non-compliance with national plan policy.

Our aim is to ensure that community needs are met, rather than dismissed, that the road does not become a developer's charter, a regional patsy and/or an environmentally/ecologically harmful monstrosity that will facilitate such huge levels of traffic through Partington and Warburton that it will cause chronic financial, mental and physical health issues.

Please do take the time to read our inputs and we would be happy to clarify any queries you may have.

- **History:**

- the Planning Inspectorate examining the 2012 Core Strategy explicitly reduced what is now being labelled the Carrington Relief Road to a £3m minor road solely for the purpose of connecting to the development site
- previous development plan documents (the Core Strategy and the UDP) identified other **essential** transport initiatives, including (for example) improvements to public transport and a bridge over the Manchester Ship Canal, which have not been progressed by Trafford, are not currently funded and, in fact, public transport services in the area have been severely depleted during these plan periods
- in those previous development plan documents, the peat moss and the agricultural land were protected from development as their natural capital value was recognised
- the regional Transport Strategy (TfGM) aims for 50% of trips to be made by sustainable modes by 2040, with **NO** net increase in motor vehicle traffic
- the region has also determined that it will be carbon neutral by 2038
- you were told at the briefing that you cannot "*unpick*" PfE but other councils in GM are doing just that – Wigan Council, for example, has said in relation to the Gibfield allocation that "*it will not be backing the proposals, despite the site being allocated for development in Places for Everyone*" ([article here](#)) and it is only the dire political deadlock at Oldham that has prevented further action following the government blocking its bid to totally withdraw from PfE
- whilst the Carrington Relief Road is mentioned in PfE, the route alignment can be changed
- despite being the largest allocation in PfE, New Carrington will be centred around 4 major new roads, **NOT** public transport hubs and **NO** sustainable freight options have even been contemplated – leading to deeply entrenched, unsustainable car and HGV dependent development, which will not support national, regional or local objectives, nor the health and wellbeing of local communities.

- **Green Belt v Grey Belt:**

- the council released 169 hectares of Green Belt at Carrington when Places for Everyone was adopted - the remaining Green Belt was supposed to be protected until the end of the PfE Plan Period (2039)
- the Labour government has now introduced the Grey Belt designation, and this has already been used by developers to remove Green Belt for a Battery Energy Storage System in Carrington (Trafford refused this development but the decision was overturned and approved by the planning inspectorate)

- the main landowner for the New Carrington area submitted, in their Local Plan response, that they wish to allocate their “*entire landholding*” for development (including for “*data centres and energy uses*”). This includes the land that is currently in the retained Green Belt, and they indicated that they would use Grey Belt designation to facilitate this
- constructing the eastern part of this road across the fields (and, for completeness, the Eastern and Southern Link roads too) will turn the retained Green Belt into Grey Belt as the roads will significantly weaken the Green Belt purposes.
- **Community Consultation:**
 - communities **were not consulted** about which type of transport options should be prioritised - sustainable passenger and/or freight transport, a bridge across the Manchester Ship Canal or new road capacity
 - communities **were not consulted** about the route of the road (they were merely asked to raise any questions they had about a video produced by the CRR project team)
 - communities **were not consulted** about the New Carrington Transport Strategy (in which meaningless comparisons were made with areas that have train stations and other extensive sustainable transport options)
 - in relation to the Carrington Relief Road, communities have been **consulted just once** - in 2025 - when, of 751 respondents, **77%** resoundingly confirmed that they were **not in favour** of the road (only 17% were in favour)
 - the planning application has so far received around 800 representations of which over **98%** are objections
 - for completeness when communities were consulted about the PfE New Carrington allocation, of 867 responses, **over 83% disagreed/mostly disagreed** and only 7.5% agreed or mostly agreed with the proposals.
- **Business Case**
 - no business case is available for scrutiny (it should be noted that the Treasury Green Book rules require harm to natural capital to be included in the assessment), this should be publicly available prior to the decision about the road being made
 - a cost of £130m was quoted in relation to the road, this figure could be significantly exceeded as there has been no opportunity to review whether it comprehensively and transparently covers all the costs to be incurred, particularly to ensure that the local public purse does not have to pick up any omissions
 - £90m has been funded by the region, presumably because the road will reduce congestion on the motorways (see below)
 - confirmation was given that £16m has already been funded by developers and other sources
 - this leaves a shortfall of over £20m – there should be clarity about the source of that funding
 - many road schemes overspend their budgets (for example, in 2025, North Yorkshire council agreed to fund the overspend of **£11.7m** on the Kex Gill bypass, and in 2026, the Queensway Gateway road in East Sussex ran **£5m** over budget), and it is currently not clear which organisation is on the hook for any overspend in relation to the CRR
 - if £90m of regional funding is invested into building new road capacity, where does the funding for public transport improvements for New Carrington come from? This is important because **over 40% of households** in parts of Partington and Sale West do not have access to a car ([ONS data](#)) and, if sustainable transport options are not provided in advance of the developments, modal shift will be very difficult to achieve.
- **Anticipated Traffic Volumes:**
 - as you can see from this graphic, the planning application confirms that the road will bring immense traffic growth to Partington and Warburton, even if the Eastern and Southern Link roads are approved. Currently the average daily traffic flow on the A6144 between Broadway and Lock Lane in Partington is around 7,300 vehicles. In the graphic, it shows that, by 2045, the predicted average daily number of vehicles at the same location will be **between 20,000 and 30,000**. The average daily traffic flow on the A6144 at the Junction of Warburton Lane and Moss Lane is currently 5,000 vehicles. In the graphic, it shows that, by 2045, the predicted average daily number of vehicles at the same location will be **between 20,000 and 30,000**. Our [recent blog](#) further examines this graphic to determine local impact **as the currently proposed route of the road drives much of this growth**.

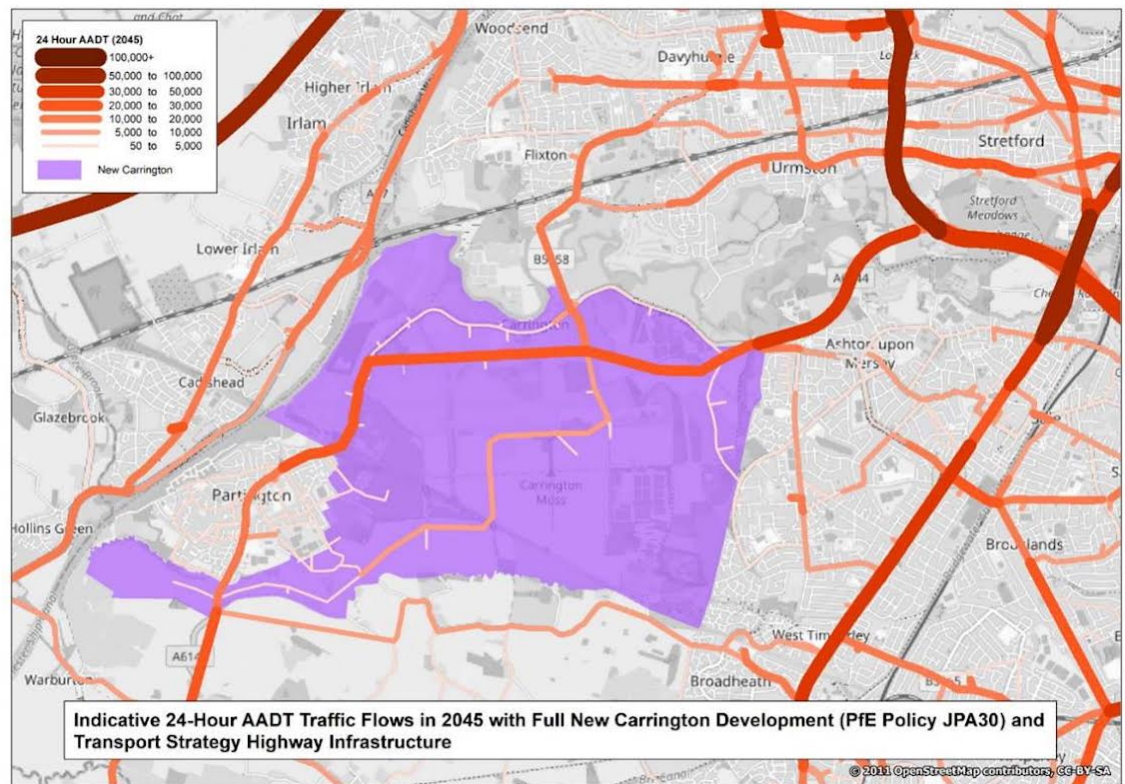


Figure 2-3 - New Carrington Allocation - Estimated AADT flows in 2045

- the planning application confirms that the road will 'draw' traffic from the M60, the M6, the M56 and the A56 onto the CRR and then onto wholly unsuitable minor roads through villages. This will be of benefit to the region because it will reduce congestion on the motorways. It is, therefore, no surprise that Trafford has been awarded £90m of regional funding to support the construction of the road.
- it will not be of benefit to Trafford residents, particularly the over 40% of households which do not have access to a car. Yet those residents will suffer significant harm from the financial, mental and physical effects of the resulting congestion, air, noise, light, vibration, dust and water pollution, the flooding and the loss of well used green space.
- there is a huge amount of evidence of the harms caused by all types of pollution. In relation to air pollution, for example, the [government says](#) "*Poor air quality is the largest environmental risk to public health in the UK, as long-term exposure to air pollution can cause chronic conditions such as cardiovascular and respiratory diseases as well as lung cancer, leading to reduced life expectancy*".
- Partington residents already suffer a higher prevalence of chronic disease than national and regional averages, as confirmed in the [Trafford Health Inequalities Data Report](#) (2022), which highlights that those who present at Partington GP practices have a much higher prevalence of asthma, COPD and cardiovascular disease, for example
- there is now also [strong evidence](#) about how to prevent these harms, with road traffic being a particular issue. Prioritising sustainable passenger and freight transport would reverse the worsening chronic health conditions suffered by local communities. Prioritising additional road capacity will clearly exacerbate the harms, including to the most vulnerable people in our society. This is not compliant with the public sector equality duty as they will be disproportionately harmed by the effects of the huge increase in traffic numbers.
- in relation to noise pollution, we do not believe the 'noise bunds' will protect residents from the effects of the proposed huge volumes of traffic. This is likely to result in a situation such as that experienced by residents in Astley, where they are unable to sleep at night due to the constant noise pollution. This has been partially mitigated at that site as the occupier [has agreed](#) to end all night-time transport operations between the hours of midnight and 6am but this sort of solution will not be possible for a road scheme.
- we commissioned an independent transport consultant and their expert appraisal (which is available on our website [here](#)) suggests that the Transport Assessment submitted with the planning application is inadequate, with concerns about the reliability and soundness of the traffic model. Their report advises that the data provided by the applicant cautions that journey time savings are **only "up to 1 minute lower"** than the alternative and, therefore, with such a low level of benefit, the proposed route does not actually demonstrate genuinely improved journey times or journey time reliability. Their appraisal also confirms that there are limited benefits through Carrington Village and that the stated benefits of the CRR are marginal
- we also note that a 4th Battery Energy Storage System has now been proposed for the New Carrington area, this means 4 times the risk of fire and toxic fumes but in relation to the need for this road, these

sites bring ZERO permanent local jobs, which means that the commercial zone and the CRR will not deliver the anticipated employment benefits for local residents.

- **Environmental and Ecological Impact:**

- questions were raised by a Planning Committee member about the Skylark mitigation – what was not confirmed at the meeting was that constructing the eastern part of this road will cause **“County” scale decline** to already red listed bird species (this wording is from the planning application) – other species will also be significantly impacted – when the applicant suggests that the *“magnitude of this impact is likely to reduce over time as local bird populations become habituated to ambient noise”*, we believe this indicates a huge lack of understanding of the level of harm to be caused to existing populations of threatened species and a lack of consideration of the Council's responsibilities, including its enhanced biodiversity duty (mandated by the Environment Act 2021, which requires public authorities to enhance biodiversity as well as conserve it)
- as the planning committee will be aware, planning rules require the mitigation hierarchy to be enacted, this requires applicants and councils to manage and reduce the negative impacts of development on nature. The sequential decision framework **must** be followed (steps **cannot** be omitted to get to the desired option) – the first step is **avoidance** (preventing harm before it happens **by choosing an alternative location** for the development) – an alternative route **IS** available to Trafford as set out below
- as you can see in the email trail below, Natural England had some strong words for Trafford about the approach taken to assess the environmental and ecological risks during the option appraisal process. There has been **NO** meaningful comparative assessment of the route options and Natural England considers the chosen route to be much more damaging than the alternative
- constructing the eastern part of this road across the best and most versatile agricultural land is contrary to national policy and will impact Trafford's ability to deliver the core and opportunity areas set out in the Local Nature Recovery Strategy
- the attenuation ponds were mentioned, but it was not confirmed that this route requires 2.5 times more water capture and storage than the alternative and communities believe the applicant has significantly underestimated the impact of concreting over this land, especially given the increased incidence of extreme weather
- in addition to flood zones, the Environment Agency also produces a [flood risk map](#) relating to surface water flooding, which shows the area is impacted whichever level of likelihood is chosen (the existing extent of water capture can be seen on the [Carrington Lake](#) page of our website - it must be noted, however, that currently the peatland can soak up huge volumes of water in the area, but when the peat is extracted to enable development, such as for the construction of the Eastern and Southern link roads, and is replaced by crushed stone, for example, with little or no water retention capacity, flood risk in the borough will drastically increase)
- the presence of pylons was confirmed, and the road will dip under these points, which will make it vulnerable to flooding in extreme weather
- the peat moss **will be impacted** by the changes in hydrology due to the need to drain the area to keep the road water free
- road run-off will also cause significant harm to ecology and biodiversity, particularly given the number of HGVs travelling along the route (many carrying hazardous materials)
- we could not hear what was said about the Eastern and Southern Link Roads but it should be recognised that the current plan is to construct these roads across the deepest part of the peatmoss, totally destroying what Natural England considers to be a restorable, irreplaceable habitat.

- **Route Option Appraisal:**

- for the reasons set out in the email below, we believe the route option appraisal was flawed, imbalanced and predetermined
- no alternative option has been genuinely appraised as part of the planning application process which is not compliant with national planning policy
- we commissioned an independent transport consultant and their assessment (which is available on our website [here](#)) includes a review of the route options appraisal. Their assessment demonstrates that Option A (upgrading the exist road) performs much better than the proposed route and does not cause the harms the eastern part of the road will trigger
- when the route option was agreed by Trafford's Executive, **the feedback from Natural England** (raising concerns about the credibility of the appraisal and recommending environmental and ecological constraints be given appropriate weight when considering the route of the road) **and local communities** (requesting that our alternative option be considered as Option A was incorrectly articulated as an undeliverable route) **were omitted from the report.**

- **Community Alternative:**

- the community has repeatedly asked Trafford to consider an alternative since 2021, we have now made the formal request set out in the email below
- our alternative is more sustainable and much more beneficial to local residents. It achieves the Option Appraisal criteria and is also more cost effective and much less environmentally/ecologically harmful than Trafford's preferred CRR route. It will enable funding to be allocated for public transport, will support local, regional and national objectives and will actually enable delivery of modal shift

- the community alternative option, which was created following discussions between the Friends of Carrington Moss, Parish Councils and other community groups, in summary, comprises opening the existing A1 route to bypass Carrington Village, a short link (running parallel with Isherwood Road between the A1 junction with Isherwood Road and Carrington Lane) to bypass the new homes on Isherwood Road, upgrades to the existing A6144 (resurfacing, removing potholes, improving signage) and, crucially, improvements to the public rights of way and permitted routes on, across and around Carrington Moss (including resurfacing, low-level wildlife-friendly lighting and better signage), leading to much greater levels of modal shift, encouraging residents to walk, cycle or horse ride using pleasant, healthy and safe alternatives to the road network (these are peaceful routes with no harmful traffic related pollution).

Kind regards

Marj Powner

Chair, Friends of Carrington Moss (<https://friendsofcarringtonmoss.com/>)

Vice Chair, Save Greater Manchester Green Belts Group (<https://www.savegmgreenbelt.org.uk/>)

Vice Chair, Community Planning Alliance (<https://www.communityplanningalliance.org/>)

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Friends Of Carrington Moss** <friendsofcarringtonmoss@gmail.com>

Date: Sun, 16 Aug 2026 at 16:13

Subject: CRR Alternative Community Option

To: Fisher, Adrian <adrian.fisher@trafford.gov.uk>

Dear Adrian

I am writing on behalf of the communities surrounding Carrington Moss who would like the community alternative to the Carrington Relief Road to be considered in a fair and balanced way, with the needs of local residents and the environment at the heart of the decisions that are subsequently made.

You are aware that the Friends of Carrington Moss (FOCM), along with Parish Councils and other community groups, have repeatedly proposed an alternative community solution to the current route of the road. An alternative which is more sustainable, more beneficial to local residents and one which will actually promote modal shift. This alternative achieves the Option Appraisal criteria and is also less expensive and less environmentally/ecologically harmful than Trafford's preferred CRR route, which will cause (according to the planning application) 'County-scale' decline in red listed bird species and will 'draw' traffic from the M60, the M6, the M56 and the A56 onto wholly unsuitable minor roads.

I am sure that you are also aware that 77% of the 751 respondents to the first CRR consultation in 2025 said they were not in favour of the road and that the planning application has already received almost 800 objections (98.3% of representations).

New Carrington is the largest development in PfE, but there is no confirmed funding to improve public transport for the very deprived (decile 1) communities on either side of the peat moss. Despite over 40% of Partington and Sale West households not having access to a car (according to ONS data), it seems the masterplan will be focused around 4 major new roads, rather than sustainable passenger and freight transport hubs, locking communities into car dependency for the foreseeable future.

At a recent meeting, the CRR project team stated that the community alternative was dismissed as a potential solution because it was considered the costs of meeting TfGM standards for PROWs and permitted routes would be prohibitive. The project team asserted that these standards include 2 way active travel routes, each with separated cycling and walking facilities. We had a subsequent meeting with TfGM, which confirmed that this is a 'misunderstanding' of their requirements. For PROWs and/or permitted routes, TfGM would require accessible, 3m wide, shared use paths, which would clearly not result in the expense anticipated, so it was inappropriate to reject our solution on cost grounds.

Among other points, that meeting with the CRR project team also revealed that the traffic modelling in the Option Appraisal was unreliable, that information in the appraisal document was based on out of date data, and that it was a very crude assessment which required a number of assumptions and manual interventions to be made. We were informed that, in summary, the traffic numbers in the Option Appraisal are an historic piece of work that is no longer relevant to the planning application and that the data included in the Option Appraisal was not reviewed or updated for the planning application.

This means that no alternative option has been genuinely appraised as part of the planning application process.

The decision about the Preferred Option resulted in the most environmentally and ecologically destructive, and least sustainable, option being chosen despite the alternative suggested by local communities and the concerns of Natural England at the time. Those concerns were disregarded and were not included in the report to the Executive. Naturally we are extremely concerned that the outcome of the Options Appraisal was, therefore, flawed, and that the process was neither fair nor transparent due to the lack of consideration of that feedback.

Given the comments received from Natural England in response to the Option Appraisal process (summarised in the graphic below), and the extremely harmful environmental and ecological consequences of the current choice of route, we believe it is essential that the mitigation hierarchy is followed and that the alternative route is fully assessed.

Trafford's CRR Preferred Options Report

Ignores Natural England advice & does not comply with the Green Claims Code!



The Green Claims Code Principles are:

- claims must be truthful and accurate
- claims must be clear and unambiguous
- claims must not omit or hide important relevant information
- comparisons must be fair and meaningful
- claims must consider the full life cycle of the product or service
- claims must be substantiated.



Extract from Natural England feedback on CRR Options Appraisal

3. Route Options

We are disappointed that the findings of the environmental desktop study **are not fully reflected** in the appraisal of the route options. Appendix D contains slightly more information on the environmental constraints but is **not an accurate representation**.

5.3 Option F Risks

The environmental risks have **not been included** in this section although they were included in Chapter 5.2 (Option A Risks). We think this presents **an inaccurate and unbalanced view** of the environmental constraints and it is Natural England's view that **Option F would be considerably more damaging than Option A**.

Natural England also said

"Natural England acknowledge that a full Environmental Scoping Report will be produced and we advise that this is done **to help inform the decision of the preferred route** for the relief road. Environmental constraints should be given appropriate weight when determining the preferred option".



Trafford ignored this advice, they did not carry out a full Environmental Scoping Report prior to making the decision and they selected Option F, a route across Grade 2 agricultural land, woodland, wetland and impacting the peat moss. The route Natural England advised would be **considerably more damaging** than the alternative!

It is clear from the information recently provided and the confirmation in the 'Induced Traffic Technical Note' that Trafford's preferred route will be at capacity by 2040 (less than 14 years away), that investment in sustainable passenger and freight transport is urgent and must be prioritised. This can only be done by minimising spend on increased road space.

We understand that the only funded transport intervention for the New Carrington area is the CRR, which is contrary to the objectives of PfE and the vision set out in the Greater Manchester Transport Strategy. In addition, the planning application indicates that, in drawing traffic from the motorways, the CRR will increase air, noise, light, vibration, dust and water pollution (to say nothing of carbon emissions), resulting in increased prevalence of chronic long term health conditions such as asthma, COPD, and cardiovascular disease, which are already a factor for Partington residents, with the Health Inequalities Report (2022) showing significantly higher incidence than the averages for England or Greater Manchester.

Existing communities are keen to have meaningful input into the development of New Carrington, and, whilst we note the Council's concession, in their recent legal action, about "*the importance of consultation*"^[1], we recognise that challenge would equally apply to the New Carrington Transport Strategy, for which there was no consultation.

With all the above in mind, we'd like to formally request that the community alternative is reconsidered to ensure procedural fairness, that sustainable transport is prioritised and that a valid alternative is considered within the planning application process, rather than any approval merely being a 'tick in the box'.

Our aim is to ensure that communities can influence the plans for our area (in accordance with government expectations that "*decisions about what to build and where should be shaped by local communities and reflect the views of local residents*"), and, of course, to leave a positive legacy for future generations.

I look forward to your response.

Thanks

Marj

[1] <https://www.bailii.org/ew/cases/EWHC/Admin/2026/261.pdf> (paragraph 65)

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Kind regards

Marj Powner

Chair, Friends of Carrington Moss (<https://friendsofcarringtonmoss.com/>)

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