

Safety of pedestrians and other road users

From the figures given by Mr Duffy at the public meeting, some 550 cars will park in the paddocks off the old Banbury Road and the occupants, (perhaps 1000 people) will have to walk from the car park described as the inner car park, through the village to The Old Rectory. Attendees will have to walk down Valley Road, where there are no footpaths, and the road is effectively single track where vehicles are parked outside the houses near the junction with the Banbury Road. Given that people are likely to arrive and leave together at the start and finish of the event, cars and pedestrians are likely to have to queue taking up the whole of the roads affected. This will cause severe congestion and obstruct other traffic resulting in a further risk to safety in respect of pedestrians and other road users.

Emergency Vehicle access

Given the volumes of people and vehicles attending the event with the majority likely to arrive and leave together, should the need arise; emergency vehicles would be significantly delayed gaining access to or through the village, posing further risks to public safety.

Car parking arrangements

The car parking arrangements for the event described by Mr Duffy at the public meeting comprise 150 being parked at the fields off Valley Road at The Old Rectory with the balance of 550 being parked at two paddocks on the old Banbury Road. There seemed to be inconsistencies in the arrangements, such as the withdrawal by the owner of one of Banbury Road fields originally offered, the coach drop off and collection points, and the direction of traffic flow through the fields at The Old Rectory.

When asked about the contingency arrangements, which would apply in the event of wet weather, which would render these parking arrangements unsuitable to most vehicles, Mr Duffy said that cars would be directed to park on the road between Finmere and Tingewick. He seemed unsure about the capacity of parking there and if permission from Bucks County Council would be required, as the road falls into Buckinghamshire. It seems as though insufficient thought has been given in the traffic plan to deal with inclement weather. A major concern is that stewards could be ineffective in preventing large numbers of vehicles from parking on the constrained highway in the centre of the village, causing severe congestion, danger and loss of amenity to the village as a whole.

Mr Duffy explained how a tidal traffic system would be deployed taking vehicles into the fields at The Old Rectory via Mere Lane. This ancient lane, which is best described as a track, leading to a public footpath and bridleway, is maintained by residents of the lane and is wholly unsuitable for large volumes of traffic. The use of this lane for this event poses significant disturbance and loss of amenity to the residents of Mere lane and other users of the public footpath.

As Mere Lane is the only way of accessing the houses located there, the traffic queuing to gain access to the car park would pose a significant obstacle and delay to residents but also to emergency vehicles needing to access any of the residences located in the lane. This causes further potential and avoidable risks to public safety.