

Connecting Oxfordshire, LTP4 and OTS comments from the City Council Liberal Democrat group

The overriding problem in Oxford is the growing congestion, causing delays and poor air quality. We are glad to see that this is recognised, especially as the estimates of future in-commuting growth of another 23,000 journeys on top of the present 46,000 is clearly unsustainable. We support proposals to address this, in particular

- Tackling unnecessary driving by any vehicles into the city centre
- Removing as far as possible all through journeys, vehicles with no business in the city itself
- Requiring deliveries to be made outside peak hours
- Measures to achieve a step-change in the number of people cycling or walking instead of driving
- Working with the bus companies to improve connectivity across the city eg from the north to south, east and west
- Firm air quality targets should be set in accordance with the City's Air Quality Action Plan

Cyclists need safe routes, segregated from other traffic, which lead from one part of the city to another without gaps in provision. The surfaces need to be smooth, without abrupt level changes or rutted surfaces. Dropped kerbs should not have a 'step' but be smooth for cyclists, buggies and wheelchairs.

Many light-controlled junctions could have a cycle filter to allow cyclists to ride without stopping when there is no traffic coming from the left. All advance cycle boxes should have a sufficiently wide segregated cycle track leading into them.

Wide cycle lanes should connect the new Oxford Parkway station with both Oxford and Kidlington to make it safe and convenient to cycle there rather than to drive.

George Street should not be pedestrianised as it is an essential link from the north to the west and the station for buses and from the east for cyclists.

To reduce congestion round the hospitals, a link from the A40 direct into the JR should be considered.

Bus services must be provided from the Park and Rides and the Parkway station to the business park in Cowley.

The plan suggests enlarging Gloucester Green bus station. This is physically impossible. A much better idea would be to relocate the local buses, and perhaps some or all of the long-distance ones too, to a new bus/rail interchange at Oxpens. This would be convenient for people wanting to change from train to bus and vice-versa.

While on Park and Ride, this needs to be made as attractive as possible to encourage people to use it. Parking charges should be reduced to be as low as possible, preferably zero.

The Northern Gateway development threatens to engulf North Oxford in traffic. It is already suggested that the A40 speed limit be reduced to 30mph for most of the route through north Oxford, removing main road status from that part of the route would make it possible to integrate the development with the city as proposed but which is not possible as long as it is cut off by a busy main road. The A40 should be rerouted along the new strategic link road from the A40 west of the A34 to the Loop Farm roundabout. The A40 should then continue along the A34 to Junction 9 on the M40, or even to a new motorway junction, so that eastbound traffic then uses the M40 to London. This would remove the through traffic which has no business in North Oxford or Headington from the present route, improving the functioning of the Wolvercote, Cutteslowe and Green Road roundabouts very significantly as well as much improving the connectivity across the A40 along the route, helping Barton West as well as the Northern Gateway.

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2nd April 2015