

Summertown & St Margaret's Neighbourhood Forum consultation response to the Central Oxfordshire Travel Plan and Traffic Filters

Central Oxfordshire Travel Plan

We are strongly supportive of the Central Oxfordshire Travel Plan and believe it will be transformative for Oxford and for our own area of the city, by reducing the dominance of the private car.

Outcomes

We strongly agree with each of the outcomes set out, all of which will make the Summertown & St Margaret's area of the city much more attractive and liveable, with reduced congestion, cleaner air, safe walking and cycling, better and more affordable public transport.

Actions

We strongly support all the actions listed in the consultation. We do think that the combination of all these actions will be synergistic.

We would like to add in a 23rd action, which is to commit to 20mph within the city boundaries, along with a commitment to enforcement ideally by average speed cameras. Summertown & St Margaret's are dominated by the two major arterial roads, Woodstock and Banbury Road. These roads, when not heavily congested, regularly suffer from speeding vehicles. Reducing speed also reduces serious or fatal collisions, which supports the policy of Vision Zero.

We also want to see much improved cycling and walking infrastructure along both these roads. We were disappointed by the loss of funding to implement the improvements to Woodstock Road. Junctions are where more than three quarters of collisions occur, so if there is lack of resources to do a full-scale redesign of Banbury and Woodstock Road, we suggest you concentrate on the major junctions, to ensure safety but also to make them inclusive, accessible, and supportive of modal shift.

Key performance indicators

We strongly agree with the KPIs proposed for the COTP.

The KPIs proposed seem a useful, balanced set, covering both outcomes and individual mode performance.

The data you collect and present should be disaggregated by gender where possible as this provides deeper insights - especially since it has been predominantly women who have been killed in Oxford as cyclists.

Traffic filters

We strongly support the additional traffic filters in Oxford. These are essential to creating safer, attractive spaces for walking and cycling, and to freeing up capacity on the roads for buses. Our comments relate to how these will impact on the major roads through Summertown & St Margaret's wards, and the impact on our residents.

The plans are controversial, and the outcomes are hard to predict but with the proviso that they should be carefully monitored & changed in the light of experience we are in full support.

- The central traffic filters should make a considerable difference to the volume of traffic heading into the city centre along both Woodstock and Banbury Road.

- We support the filter on Marston Ferry Road operating 7am to 7pm. This filter is needed to regulate the traffic sufficiently to enable rapid and reliable bus services between the north and east of the city. We believe that this filter will make a significant difference to congestion on Woodstock and Banbury Roads, and in the ladder streets, in particular Moreton Road, reducing vehicles travelling from Woodstock Road to the Marston Ferry Road.
- Most cycle deaths are caused by HGVs. For safety, we think HGV traffic should be significantly reduced, particularly on dangerous junctions. We also want you to consider the timings of when HGVs can access the city through the traffic filters, as they should not be mixing with children cycling to school. The council has adopted Vision Zero and so in line with that they should consider introducing restrictions on the timings of when large delivery vehicles enter the city (it's done elsewhere successfully) so that there is no conflict between these large vehicles and people travelling to school and work by bike as the reality is we don't have fully segregated cycle lanes as yet.
- Freight consolidation: We support these measures and promoting last mile deliveries by cargo bike to reduce the number of delivery vans and HGVs in the city which add to congestion.
- Tourist coaches should not be exempted. Their journeys tend to be in and out on the same arterial road. Also, exemptions should be withdrawn for any vehicles that breach parking or idling restrictions.
- In the LTCP the transport user hierarchy puts shared vehicles (car clubs, car sharing schemes) higher than other motorised vehicles. Since these provide a viable alternative to car ownership they need to be encouraged. There are many car club cars available in our area and we ask that car club cars and cars in car sharing schemes should be allowed to pass through the filters.
- We support the proposal to give residents within the permit area 100 day passes per vehicle per year. We feel that this number is a good balance between trying to reduce the journeys of those who use the car to cross the city for a daily commute or daily school trips, while allowing for those who make fewer regular journeys around and across the city being too inconvenienced. Our anecdotal observation in discussion with residents is that they feel this number will not be too disruptive to their current driving pattern, but that the 100 passes will make them think about their journey, perhaps combining two trips that they may have made separately, or thinking about an alternative to going by car to save up their passes for when needed urgently. The opportunity for up to three car-owners per address to have permits though does seem too many. This should be an absolute maximum of two.