CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT –15 NOVEMBER 2018

OXFORD - VARIOUS LOCATIONS - PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO PARKING AND LOADING PLACES

Report by Director for Structure Operations

Introduction

- This report presents responses received to a statutory consultation on proposals to amend parking and loading places in High Street, New Road and Little Clarendon Street, Oxford. These changes would allow the city council to carry out the necessary consultation for changes to taxi rank provision in these locations.
- 2. The proposals have stemmed from requests by the City of Oxford Licensed Taxi Association (COLTA). In the case of the New Road and Little Clarendon Street proposals this relates to their general concerns about limited taxi rank provision in the city centre.
- 3. The rank on the north side of New Road would replace a temporary bus stop introduced as part of a wider package of measures to accommodate changes to bus and traffic movements that accompanied the reopening of the Westgate Centre. This temporary bus stop is no longer needed. Along with space for three taxis, a stretch of loading bay is also proposed immediately to the east of the existing bay for blue badge holder parking.
- 4. The change to the parking bay in Little Clarendon Street would be for the evening/overnight only, allowing a taxi rank for a three-car length of the existing time limited daytime parking bay between the entrance to the University of Oxford offices underground car park and the cycle connection to Wellington Square. This would, therefore, leave the daytime parking bay unaffected but would reduce the space available for people to park for an unlimited time in the evening/overnight. COLTA have indicated that this is a location where there is a demand for taxi operation.
- 5. In the case of the High Street proposal, this represents a change to the current arrangements for loading, taxi rank and bus stops that were introduced in 2017 to coincide with the re-opening of the Westgate Centre. The removal of the loading bay outside The Mitre would allow it to be replaced by the taxi rank that is currently on the south side of High Street opposite bus stops T1 and T2.
- 6. On the south side of the road, the relocation of the taxi rank to outside The Mitre would mean that it would revert to double yellow lines with a clearway between 12pm and 8pm i.e. loading and unloading would be allowed on this

length from 8pm until 12pm. This is approximately 20m – around twice as long as the current Mitre loading bay.

7. Plans of proposals are provided at Annexes 1, 2 and 3.

Consultation

- 8. Formal consultation on the proposals was carried out between 11 October 2018 and 9 November 2018. A public notice was placed in the Oxford Times newspaper and sent to statutory consultees, including Thames Valley Police, the Fire & Rescue Service, Ambulance service, Oxford City Council and local County & City Councillors. Oxford Bus Company & Stagecoach were also sent the consultation material. Street notices were placed and letters sent directly to approximately 350 properties in the immediate vicinity of the proposals.
- 9. At the time of writing, 16 responses had been received in total, comprising of the following:

Location	Support	Object	Neither	No opinion
High Street	6	6	2	2
Little Clarendon Street	6	2	4	4
New Road	7	-	3	6

10. The responses are summarised at Annex 4. Copies of the full responses are available for inspection by County Councillors if requested.

Response to objections and other comments

- 11. Thames Valley Police did not object to any of the proposals, confirming that civil enforcement of the proposed restrictions applies in Oxford and, therefore, place no additional burden on TVP resources.
- 12. The local members had not responded at the time of writing.
- 13. A number of supportive responses for all of the proposals were made mainly citing the need for better provision for taxis in the areas in question. The objections to the proposed amendments were largely from local businesses in the vicinity of the High Street proposals concerned about the loss of the single loading bay outside The Mitre to allow the reinstatement of the taxi rank.
- 14. The relocation of the taxi rank from the south side of High Street to outside The Mitre will see the reinstatement of double yellow lines on the south side of High Street in place of the existing taxi rank. This is a kerb length of approximately 20m and would be available for loading from 8pm until 12pm. This is a short distance away from the Mitre loading bay. It was previously a bus stop clearway, and was not available for loading activity at any time.
- 15. The proposed changes to loading provision on the High Street raised concerns with local businesses particularly in the Covered Market, in the context of proposals for the introduction of a Zero Emission Zone (ZEZ) in the

city centre. If approved, these changes to loading arrangements would be taken into account in developing the separate proposals for a ZEZ to ensure adequate loading provision is maintained. These will naturally be the subject of separate public consultation.

- 16. The Cabinet Member does not actually need to make a decision about the provision a taxi rank in Little Clarendon Street; the city council needs to carry out a separate formal consultation on this and is able to make a decision in the light of response to that process. However, the county council has received comments on the proposal as part of this consultation. A concern has been raised about the possible negative impact of a new taxi rank here, especially during the night (after midnight), given the adjacent residential accommodation, mainly for university students. Also about the loss of a short length of unlimited stay parking from 6.30pm to 8am.
- 17. These issues will need to be considered by the city council in the separate taxi rank consultation it will need to carry out. But in principle, county council officers do not think that the loss of space for 3 car parking spaces between 6.30pm and 8am in this location is sufficient reason not to proceed with further consultation on a taxi rank.

How the Project supports LTP4 Objectives

18. The proposals would help facilitate the safe movement of traffic and improve provision for taxis which for some people offers a realistic alternative to travel by private car.

Financial and Staff Implications (including Revenue)

19. The proposed changes to waiting restrictions would be funded from revenue.

RECOMMENDATION

- 20. The Cabinet Member for the Environment is RECOMMENDED to:
 - (a) approve the proposals as advertised for High Street and New Road and request that the city council carry out the necessary formal consultation on the provision of taxi ranks;
 - (b) note the response to the proposals on Little Clarendon Street and request that the city council carry out the necessary formal consultation on the provision of the taxi rank.

OWEN JENKINS

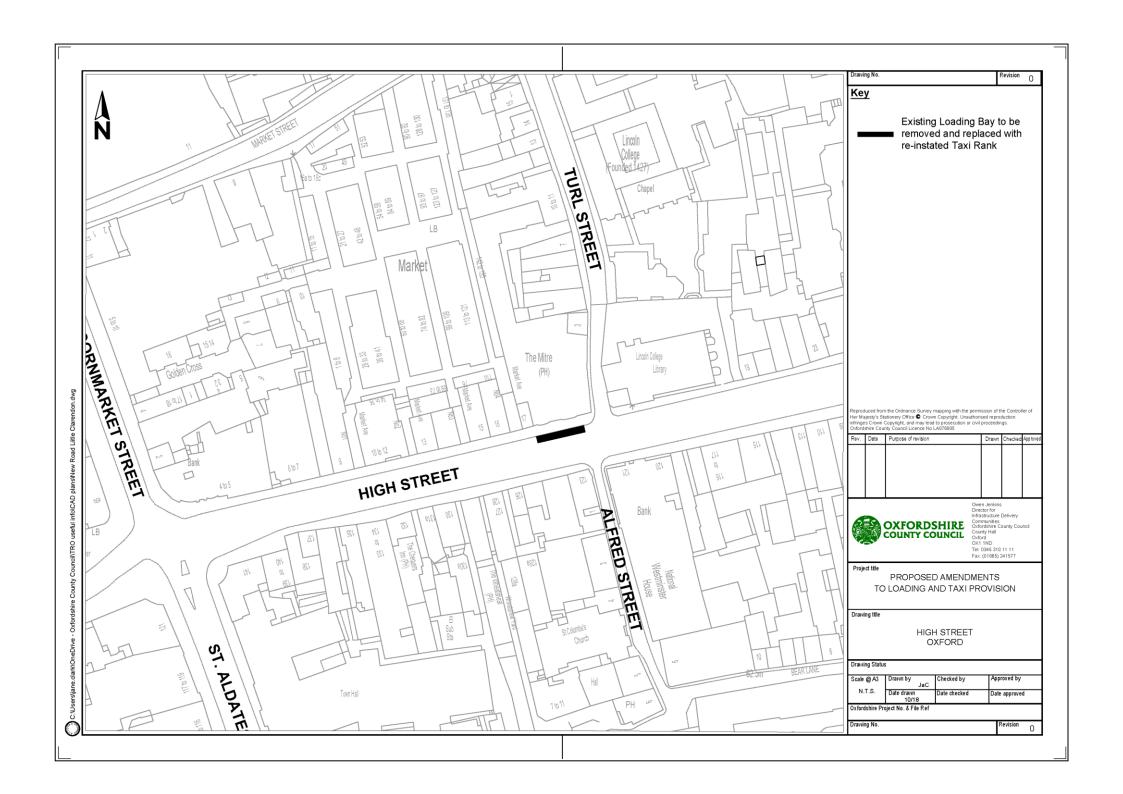
Director for Infrastructure Delivery

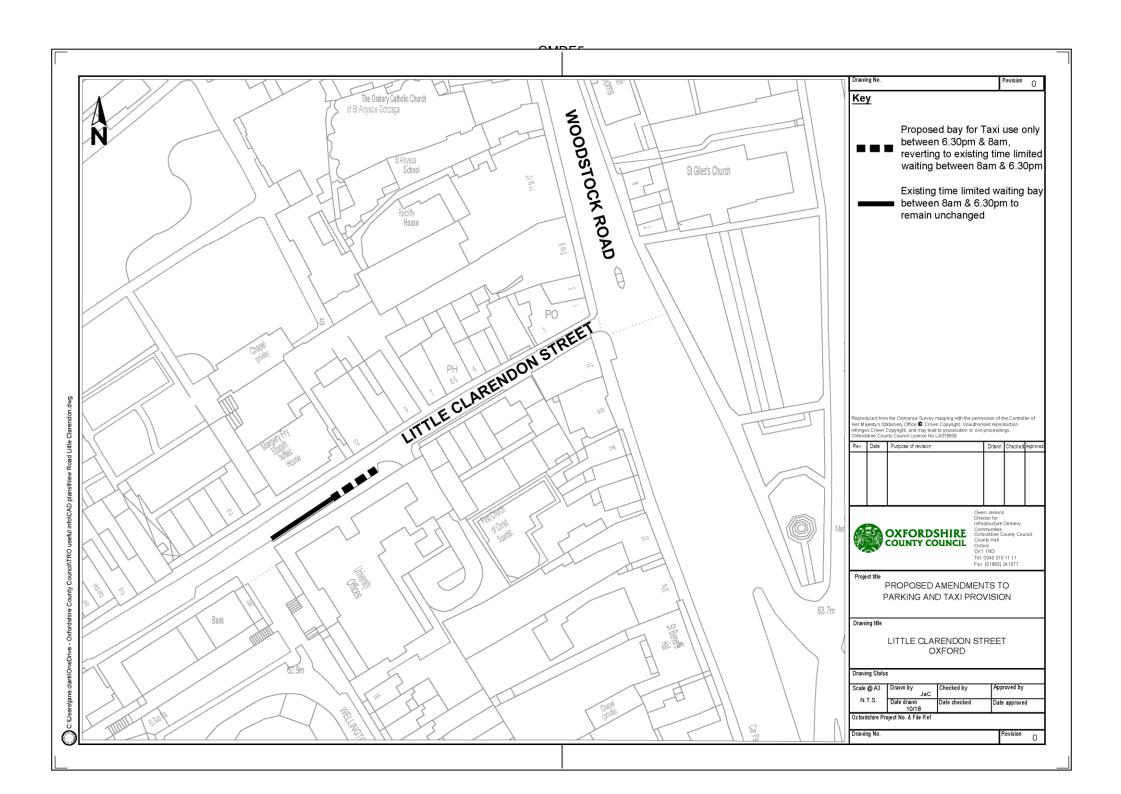
Background papers: Plan of proposed waiting restrictions and other measures

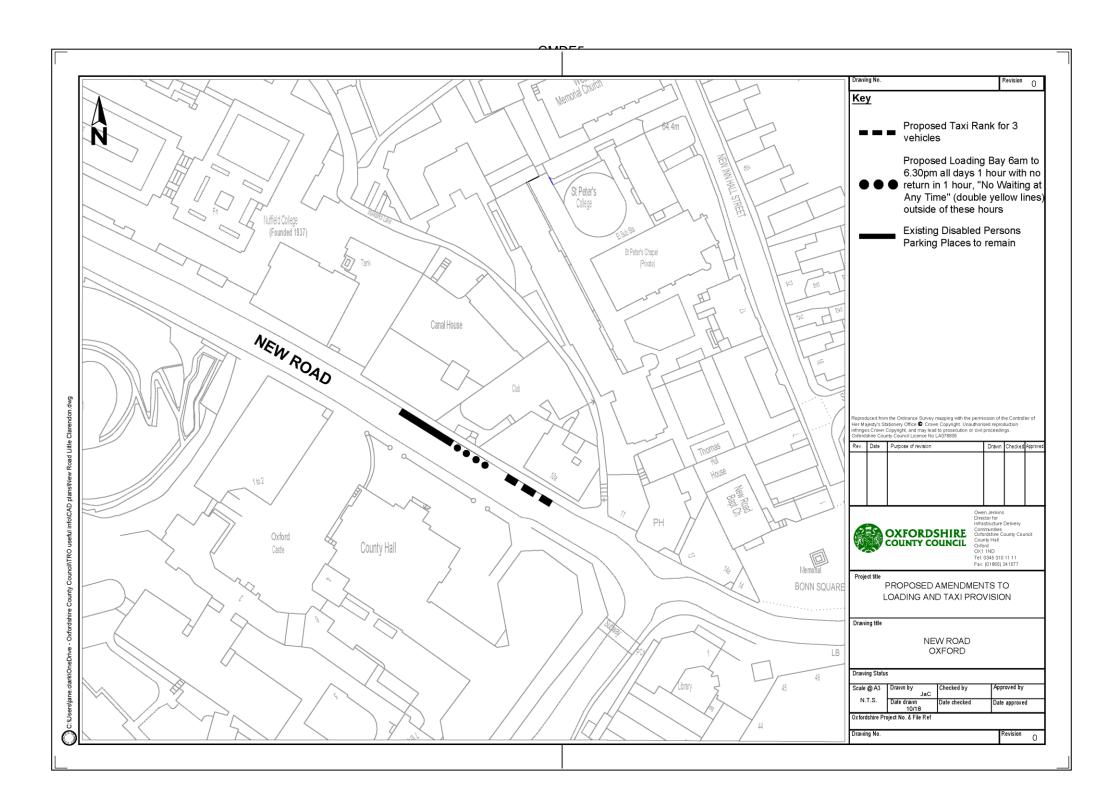
Consultation responses

Contact Officers: Hugh Potter 07766 998704

November 2018







ANNEX 4

RESPONDENT	SUMMARISED COMMENTS	OFFICER RESPONSE
(1) Traffic Management Officer, (Thames Valley Police)	No objection	
(2) Local Resident, (Oxford)	New Road - Support - The Hackney carriage trade of Oxford needs to be accessible to all passengers in and around Oxford city centre. The rank locations proposed are very convenient for everyone to hire a cab from. High Street - Support - There was a taxi rank there before. It was very convenient to hire a taxi during the daytime. The rank should be reinstated by removing the loading bay. Little Clarendon Street - Support - I'm in support of the taxi rank in Little Clarendon Street. It gives passengers choice to hire a cab from an area which is normally difficult to get a cab from.	Noted
(3) Local Business, (Oxford)	New Road - Support - No comment High Street - Support - At present rank not even dangerous to the taxis it's dangerous to the public too. Little Clarendon Street - Support - No comment	Noted
(4) Local Resident, (Oxford)	New Road - Support - No comment	Noted

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	High Street - Support - No comment Little Clarendon Street - Support - No comment	
(5) Local Resident, (Oxford)	New Road - Support - No comment High Street - Support - No comment Little Clarendon Street - Support - No comment	Noted
(6) Local Resident, (Oxford)	New Road - Support - No comment High Street - Support - No comment Little Clarendon Street - Support - No comment	Noted
(7) Local Resident, (Oxford)	New Road - Support - We do need taxi ranks in city centre. High Street - Support - We need same taxi rank located on the high street at the corner of Turl street. Little Clarendon Street - Support - The little Clarendon street is busy all day and especially during the evening so I support the taxi rank.	Noted
(8) Local Business, (Oxford)	New Road - Neither - No comment High Street - Object - As a business in The Covered Market, we require access for loading and unloading of vehicles on multiple occasions throughout the day as follows:-	To re-provide a taxi rank outside The Mitre, a short single loading bay is proposed to be removed in that location. However, a section of around 20m of kerb on the south side just east of Alfred Street where the existing taxi rank is to be removed would be freed up for loading from 8pm until 12pm as a result of these proposals.

- -supplying our shop with fresh flowers direct from the flower market using our own vehicle (2-3 times per week)
- daily deliveries from suppliers (suppliers vehicles)
- access throughout the day to send out deliveries in our own van our driver will collect on average 4 times per day from The Covered Market.

Currently, these loading commitments are split between High Street and Market Street.

If the loading bays were removed from High Street as proposed, then all the vehicles will be forced to use Market Street. If that element of the proposed Zero Emission Zone due to come into force in 2020 is implemented, then Market Street will only be accessible by electric vehicles and HGVs.

This will have a devastating impact on our business:_

- 1. on the assumption that our suppliers are not going to invest in an electric vehicle to supply our shop alone, our access to our core product will be severely restricted we need access to fresh flower supplies on a daily basis and in a timely fashion
- 2. vehicle technology is not yet sufficiently developed to provide an electric van of the size and range required for me to collect and return with our flowers from the London flower market.
- 3. while we could feasibly send out a small number of our deliveries using a bicycle courier, in many cases this would not be possible logistically. We are currently looking at sourcing an electric delivery van, and are keen to do so once the technology has improved further. However, there are numerous periods during the year when we require several delivery vehicles to service our business and also times when we need deliveries in a larger vehicle. It remains to be seen if such vehicles will be available for us to hire. However, without solving the supply issue, we will have no need for delivery vehicles in any case.

<u>Little Clarendon Street</u> - **Neither** - *No comment*

To be clear, the rank proposed outside the Mitre is not in addition to the existing rank on the South side; rather, it would replace it.

There will be further, separate consultation on the proposals for a city centre Zero Emission Zone (ZEZ). If the taxi rank and loading arrangements on High Street that are the subject of this report are approved, that will be taken into account in the ZEZ proposals and consultation.

(9) Local Group/Organisation, (Oxford)	New Road - No opinion - No comment High Street - No opinion - No comment Little Clarendon Street - Neither - The proposal talks of permitting 3 taxi spaces in "the evening", without specifying times. On behalf of local residents, we would not object to provision of a taxi rank until midnight (provided drivers are not permitted to keep their engines running - the street is narrow and fumes would build up rapidly), but would strongly oppose all-night provision which would disturb not only occupants of residential accommodation in Little Clarendon Street itself but also occupants of houses in the surrounding area as lively groups made their way to the rank. If the intention is to cater for Walton Street nightlife, we respectfully suggest that using the public parking spaces outside the Blavatnik and/or Freuds would cause less nuisance to residents.	The proposal is for a taxi rank to be provided for three vehicles for the hours 6.30pm to 8am. Drivers would be required to turn off their engines if they are waiting for any length of time. In order for the taxi rank to be introduced, the city council will need to carry out a separate formal consultation. These issues can be considered as part of that.
(10) Local Business, (Oxford)	New Road - Neither - No comment High Street - Object - As I am sure you are aware, Oxford County Council is already proposing a Zero Emissions Zone in Market Street (where our business is located) to commence by 2020. This will massively impact the viability of businesses in the Covered Market due to restrictive access for our customers, suppliers, our own delivery vans and external contractors. One of the alternatives our business and other traders have looked in to and have discussed with representatives of Oxfordshire County Council, is to use the High Street loading bays as a short-term solution until electric vehicles (both for the public and businesses) are more proven in terms of range, cost effectiveness and the appropriate infrastructure is in place. Oxford County Council is now proposing to remove one or more of these bays. This means there will already be increased pressure on the remaining bays if and when the ZEZ is introduced.	To re-provide a taxi rank outside The Mitre, a short single loading bay is proposed to be removed in that location. However, a section of around 20m of kerb on the south side just east of Alfred Street where the existing taxi rank is to be removed would be freed up for loading from 8pm until 12pm as a result of these proposals. To be clear, the rank proposed outside the Mitre is not in addition to the existing rank on the South side; rather, it would replace it. There will be further, separate consultation on the proposals for a city centre Zero Emission Zone (ZEZ). If the taxi rank and loading arrangements on High Street that are the subject of this report are approved, that will be taken into account in the ZEZ proposals and consultation.

	There does not appear to be joined up thinking in this approach unless the idea is to prevent businesses operating out of central Oxford which I presume is not the case. We fully understand that taxis are also under pressure to find parking spaces due to the various parking strategies and policies that have been implemented over the last 25 years but all this proposal does is push the problem on to another group of users. Perhaps our business, along with other traders and interested parties in the area, have mis-interpreted the proposals. I would be grateful if you would let me know if this is the case. I look forward to receiving confirmation that our feedback has been received and will be taken in to account before a decision is made. Little Clarendon Street - Neither - No comment	
(11) Local Business, (Oxford)	New Road - Support - No comment High Street - Object - We need the spaces there for the indoor market loading. There is not have enough parking/ loading spaces in town already. Little Clarendon Street - Object — We don't need taxi waiting at there. There is a lot of taxi around St Gail's which is just round a corner from Little Clarendon Street. Please don't amend what we have currently. We need more parking spaces.	To re-provide a taxi rank outside The Mitre, a short single loading bay is proposed to be removed in that location. However, a section of around 20m of kerb on the south side just east of Alfred Street where the existing taxi rank is to be removed would be freed up for loading from 8pm until 12pm as a result of these proposals. To be clear, the rank proposed outside the Mitre is not in addition to the existing rank on the South side; rather, it would replace it. There will be further, separate consultation on the proposals for a city centre Zero Emission Zone (ZEZ). If the taxi rank and loading arrangements on High Street that are the subject of this report are approved, that will be taken into account in the ZEZ proposals and consultation. The taxi rank provision in St Giles' is not sufficiently close to be convenient for most people visiting Little Clarendon Street and the close vicinity. The proposal only results in the loss of three car parking spaces from 6.30pm to 8am. Daytime parking in the bay remains unaffected. In addition to parking in St Giles' there is pay

		& display parking available in nearby Wellington Square.
		In order for the taxi rank to be introduced, the city council will need to carry out a separate formal consultation. These issues can be considered as part of that.
(12) Local Business, (Oxford)	New Road - No opinion - No comment High Street - Object - I am writing to object in the strongest possible terms to your proposed amendments to the loading bays on the High Street. The loading bays on the High Street are vital to our struggling business, many if not most of our delivery people use them, preferring the wider space and easier access for their lorries. The Market Street loading area is often/usually congested with smaller vans as there are a lot of businesses based in the market who have or do regular deliveries. That space on its own is wholly inadequate for the needs of the market traders who as whole make a huge financial contribution to OCC coffers. I am surprised that this change has even been considered frankly as anyone with knowledge of Oxford would appreciate the importance of this area to the market traders. If I sound angry that's because I am! Trading in the market often feels like an uphill struggle with our landlord (OCC) continually coming up with new ways to scupper the market. The ill-thoughtout Westgate development, the ridiculously expensive parking I could go on. The loading bays on the High St are vital for the market especially if the zero emissions plan goes ahead. Also am I right in thinking that if and when the Jesus College development in Cornmarket goes ahead that Market St will be closed at some point?	To re-provide a taxi rank outside The Mitre, a short single loading bay is proposed to be removed in that location. However, a section of around 20m of kerb on the south side just east of Alfred Street where the existing taxi rank is to be removed would be freed up for loading from 8pm until 12pm as a result of these proposals. To be clear, the rank proposed outside the Mitre is not in addition to the existing rank on the South side; rather, it would replace it. There will be further, separate consultation on the proposals for a city centre Zero Emission Zone (ZEZ). If the taxi rank and loading arrangements on High Street that are the subject of this report are approved, that will be taken into account in the ZEZ proposals and consultation. There are no plans to close Market Street as part of the recently approved Jesus College development.
	Please can OCC reconsider this proposal and really think about the needs of OCC's tenants. The Covered Market makes a valuable	

	cultural and financial contribution to Oxford it would be really nice if OCC could consider this occasionally and stop working against us. If we cannot get our deliveries then the market becomes unviable as a retail area which funnily enough a lot of our customers think is what OCC wants. Little Clarendon Street - No opinion - No comment	
(13) Local Business, (Oxford)	New Road - No opinion - No comment High Street - Object - I am writing with the strongest objections to the proposed change to the loading bay in the High street. I have a shop in the Covered Market on the high street side. We get deliveries daily at certain times of the year and many delivery companies use this loading bay. It is essential for our businesses in the Covered Market that it remains. Often the route round to Market street is much more time consuming to get to and takes the vehicles through more of the city. If you are trying to keep vehicles out of the city and we are ultimately compromised by the ZEZ on the Market street loading bay how do you propose we get our deliveries. There is no need for a taxi rank in this area as it is already serviced by many bus stops and a private taxi rank in St Aldates. Also, environmentally I cannot see how it makes a difference to have taxis sitting there rather than other vehicles. I hope you will listen to the very valid reasons for keeping this loading bay and not just ignore them as is often the case. Little Clarendon Street - No opinion - No comment	To re-provide a taxi rank outside The Mitre, a short single loading bay is proposed to be removed in that location. However, a section of around 20m of kerb on the south side just east of Alfred Street where the existing taxi rank is to be removed would be freed up for loading from 8pm until 12pm as a result of these proposals. To be clear, the rank proposed outside the Mitre is not in addition to the existing rank on the South side; rather, it would replace it. The view of the taxi trade communicated via COLTA is that a rank is needed in this location. To be clear, the rank proposed outside the Mitre is not in addition to the existing rank on the South side; rather, it would replace it. There will be further, separate consultation on the proposals for a city centre Zero Emission Zone (ZEZ). If the taxi rank and loading arrangements on High Street that are the subject of this report are approved, that will be taken into account in the ZEZ proposals and consultation.

(14) Local Business, (Oxford)	New Road – No opinion - No comment High Street - Object - As a retail business operating in close proximity to Turl St (directly opposite Lincoln College Library) I wish to object to the removal of the nearby loading bay to our premises. We have daily deliveries and collections of goods to and from our premises twice per day. The Oxford University Press Post Room van driver depends on the ability to park nearby to unload and load boxes of books. There are a significant number of retail and food beverage businesses operating on this part of the High st that all share the same delivery bay. Your proposal to remove the loading bay nearest our premises is unreasonable without offering an alternative location for the loading bay so that we can all continue to trade and our delivery drivers can conduct their work safely without conflict with the buses and other road users. I would also like to point out that there is a 3 car-length taxi rank directly outside of the Oxford University Press Bookshop which is never used by any taxi company during our working day, I cannot understand the requirement or justification for a second taxi rank less than 50 yards from the current one on the opposite side of the road. The best public transport solution would be to reinstate all of the previous bus stops on the High st that were removed to drive footfall into the Westgate, this would be a much better use of the existing space and has the advantage of having been successful in the past. Little Clarendon Street – No opinion - No comment	To re-provide a taxi rank outside The Mitre, a short single loading bay is proposed to be removed in that location. However, a section of around 20m of kerb on the south side just east of Alfred Street where the existing taxi rank is to be removed would be freed up for loading from 8pm until 12pm as a result of these proposals. To be clear, the rank proposed outside the Mitre is not in addition to the existing rank on the South side; rather, it would replace it.
(15) Local Business, (Oxford)	New Road - No opinion - No comment	Comments noted

<u>High Street</u> – **No objection** - As a business on the High Street, we have no objection to the specific suggestion to change the loading bay in front of The Mitre to a taxi rank. In fact, it would be an improvement.

But can we make the general point that the level of heavy traffic on the High Street has become way too much in recent years. Be careful about encouraging yet more taxis, all the more so since they are usually diesels. On other roads we are often puzzled about why these private chauffeured cars are allowed privileged access to such things as bus lanes, where they significantly add to the hazard of cycling. N2O gases from diesels are almost certainly poisoning our children, or indeed anyone with lungs.

The High Street is locally referred to as "Stalingrad", on account of the number of heavy diesels rumbling over the kerbs and crushing the infantry. Do we really need double-deckers, which weigh about the same as a T34, in this little city? Florence and Sienna, for example, use electric mini-buses in their city centres. The High Street here is very off-putting for cyclists and pedestrians, not to say downright dangerous, and woe betide if you are encumbered with a Zimmer frame or a pram. The eighteen-wheel motorway buses cannot make it round the corner from St Aldates without running over the kerbs and orange traffic bollards. Really, they should start from Thornhill, and electric shuttles run up to there.

Taxis should be electric or hybrid, and banned from cycle/bus lanes.

<u>Little Clarendon Street</u> – **No opinion** - *No comment*

(16) Local Business, (Oxford)

New Road - No opinion - No comment

<u>High Street</u> - **No opinion** - *No comment*

<u>Little Clarendon Street</u> - **Object** - After 18:30 we may still need to make deliveries to the old Barclays Bank 37-38 Little Clarendon

This proposal does not affect the parking bay closest to number 37-38 Little Clarendon Street.

The view of the taxi trade communicated via COLTA is that a rank is needed in this location. The taxi rank provision in St Giles' is not sufficiently close to be convenient for most people visiting Little

Street.

This area lacks secure cycle parking, so by preference it would be better to add more cycle parking than additional space for taxis. People expect to get a taxi from St. Giles.

Many taxi drivers are in the habit of leaving their engines running which is damaging to the air quality of our outlet, the graduate accommodation above, and the climate in general.

There is the potential for noise "pollution" to the graduate accommodation.

I would have no objection to the first three spaces, below Central Living's retail outlet, being earmarked for taxis.

Clarendon Street and the close vicinity.

The city council has powers to fine drivers who unnecessarily leave their engines idling.

This proposal is not reducing the amount of cycle parking. In this area, there are very limited opportunities to provide additional cycle parking on highway land. However, these comments are noted and suggestions for additional provision are welcomed.