

November 2022

# Oxford Traffic Filters: Proposed Bus Service Enhancements

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Oxfordshire County Council  
Our ref: 24194201  
Client ref:

**steer**



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# 1 Introduction

- 1.1 The proposed Traffic Filter trial will improve bus journey times and productivity across Oxford, improving the passenger experience, increasing bus use, enabling investment in modern, low- and zero-emission buses, and supporting new or improved bus services. This note identifies two specific opportunities for bus service enhancements.
- 1.2 Oxford's bus network is largely commercially operated and will continue to respond to the local bus market. Other services changes may therefore result from the proposed Traffic Filters over time.

## 2 Proposed Eastern Arc Bus Service Enhancements

### Context

- 2.1 The proposed Traffic Filter trial will be accompanied by bus service enhancements across the Eastern Arc. The purpose of these improvements is to provide better bus connectivity – through new and enhanced routes - to provide viable and attractive alternatives to car journeys affected by the filters and to enhance provision for all users. All existing and proposed new routes and services would also benefit from the reduced bus journey times that the traffic filters will deliver.

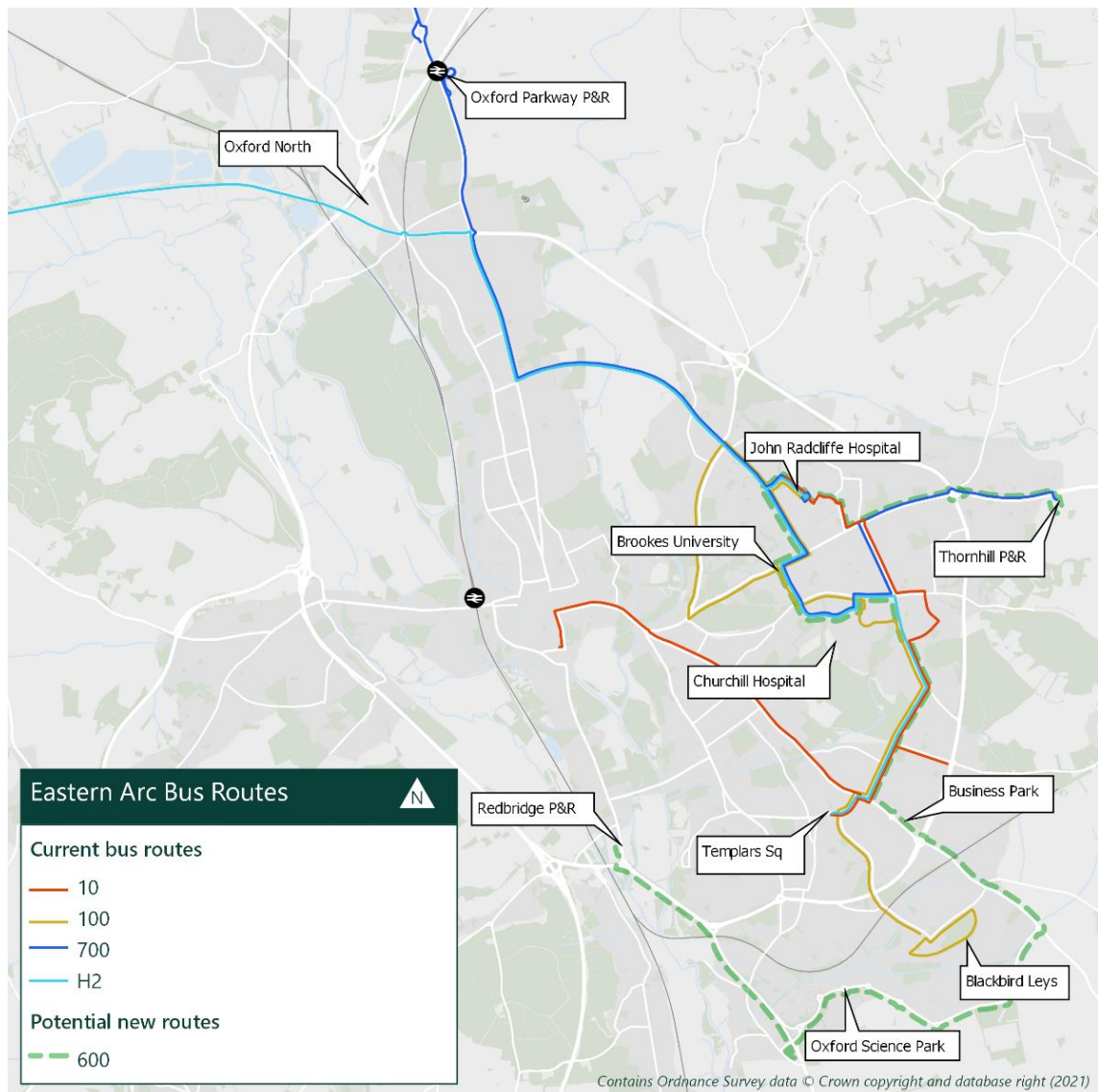
### Proposed Enhancements

- 2.2 Bus service enhancements would be delivered in two Phases. Phase 1 enhancements represent the minimum level of improvement that will be delivered in time for the start of the traffic filter trial. We will work with partners to deliver Phase 2 in time for the start of the traffic filter trial, but if additional funding is not available in time this may come later.
- 2.3 The proposed enhancements are described in Table 2-1 and presented in Figure 2-1.

Table 2-1 Proposed Eastern Arc Service Enhancements

Route	Description	Frequency increase within Arc	New / extended route	Additional P&R
New Route (600)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Phase 1 Enhancement:</b> New route / service from Redbridge P&amp;R, Science Park, Cowley, JR Hospital to Thornhill P&amp;R at 2 buses per hour (bph)</li> <li><b>Phase 2 Enhancement:</b> Increase to 3bph</li> </ul>	Y	Y	Y
H2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Current:</b> Oxford North to Headington at 1 bph</li> <li><b>Phase 1 Enhancement:</b> Extend services to Cowley and increase to 2bph</li> <li><b>Phase 2 Enhancement:</b> increasing to 3bph</li> </ul>	Y	Y	
700	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Current:</b> Kidlington to Thornhill P&amp;R via Headington at 2 bph</li> <li><b>Phase 1:</b> As current</li> <li><b>Phase 2 Enhancement:</b> Increase to 3bph</li> </ul>	Y		Y
10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Current:</b> JR Hospital to City Centre via Cowley at 5bph</li> <li><b>Phase 1 &amp; 2:</b> Unchanged from current</li> </ul>			
100	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Current:</b> Blackbird Leys to JR Hospital via Brookes at 3bph</li> <li><b>Phase 1 &amp; 2:</b> Unchanged from current</li> </ul>			

**Figure 2-1 Proposed Eastern Arc Service Enhancements**



## Benefits

### Phase 1 Benefits

2.4 The Eastern Arc Phase 1 improvements will be the minimum level of improvement delivered in 2024 alongside the traffic filters. Phase 1 will deliver the following benefits:

- Enhanced connectivity within the Eastern Arc.
  - The H2 service will provide a new direct linkage between North Oxford / Summertown and Cowley at an initial minimum frequency of 2 bph.
  - The new 600 service will provide a new route between Redbridge P&R, the Science Park, Oxford Business Park, Cowley and Headington to Thornhill P&R at an initial minimum frequency of 2 bph.
- These services will increase the combined service frequency on key sections of the Eastern Arc, as these services would be additional to the existing 10 and 100 routes and services.



For example, the frequency between Cowley and Headington will increase from 8 services per hour in each direction currently to 12 services per hour in Phase 1.

- The improvements provide additional P&R services between Redbridge and Thornhill Park & Rides and the Science Park, Business Park and hospitals.

2.5 The service enhancements complement the wider bus improvements that the traffic filters will deliver and enable through:

- Improved journey times across the Eastern Arc bus routes, enabled by the traffic reduction achieved by the filters.
- The introduction of zero-emission buses which will replace existing diesel fleet for all services operating wholly within the Oxford SmartZone area.

#### *Phase 2 Benefits*

2.6 The traffic filters, future planned developments and further planned bus improvement will serve to increase bus demand from 2024 onwards. This will allow for Phase 2 further enhancements in service frequency from 2 buses per hour to 3 buses per hour on each of the H2, 700 and proposed 600 services. These would provide for 3 bph from each of Oxford Parkway and Redbridge P&R to the Eastern Arc and a combined 6bph from Thornhill P&R to the hospitals.

### **Funding and Delivery**

2.7 The enhancement of bus services within the Eastern Arc will be delivered by operators but will be part funded by Oxfordshire County Council.

2.8 OCC has undertaken an analysis of the funding requirement for the Eastern Arc enhancements alongside the funding sources available to deliver bus service improvements, including from committed developer contributions.

2.9 Based on this analysis the Phase 1 enhancements can be funded from identified committed funding and delivered from 2024, alongside the introduction of traffic filters.

2.10 The delivery of Phase 2 enhancements will be subject to additional funding that is not yet committed. Phase 2 funding will could be from future developments / contributions and potentially from the revenue generated by the proposed Workplace Parking Levy.



## 3 Proposed North – West Oxford Bus Service Enhancements

### Context

- 3.1 The proposed Traffic Filter trial will be accompanied by bus service enhancements between north and west Oxford. The purpose of these improvements is to provide better bus connectivity to provide viable and attractive alternatives to car journeys affected by the filters and to enhance provision for all users. All existing and proposed new routes and services would also benefit from the reduced bus journey times that the traffic filters will deliver.

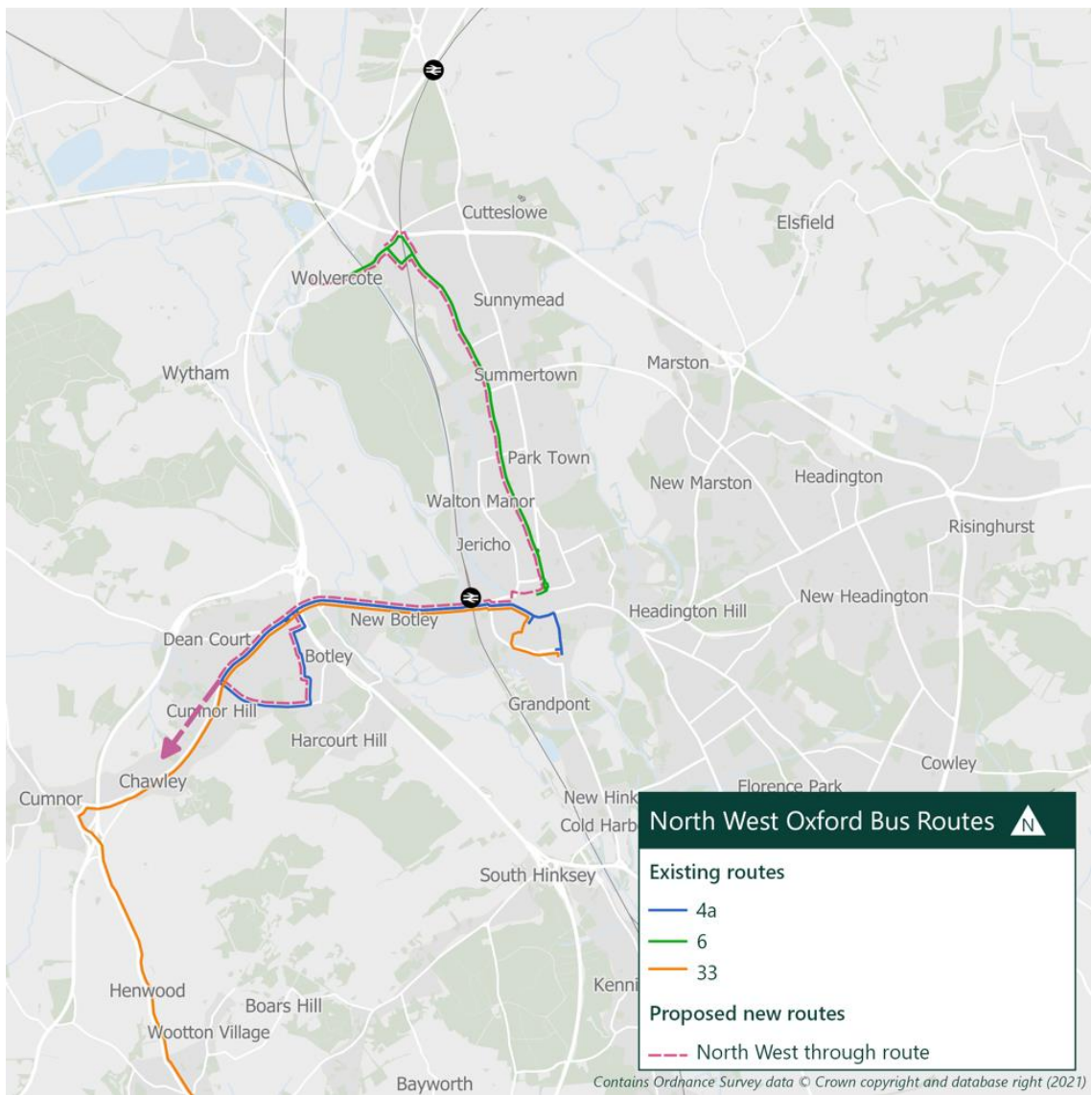
### Proposed Enhancements

- 3.2 Existing services 6 and 4a/ 33<sup>1</sup> would be linked together in Oxford city centre to create a new through service, providing direct links between Wolvercote, Woodstock Road, Oxford city centre, Oxford rail station, Botley Road, Botley and Cumnor.
- 3.3 The new service would operate at 4 buses per hour (bph) between Wolvercote and Cumnor Hill and existing service frequency to Cumnor and beyond would be maintained or enhanced.
- 3.4 The proposed enhancements are presented in Figure 3-1.

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<sup>1</sup> The 4b service was withdrawn in September 2022 and replaced by the 33, such that the combined 4A and 33 between Botley and the city centre provides the equivalent service previously provided by the 4A and 4B.

Figure 3-1 Proposed North West Bus Route



## Control Information

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