

Climate Impact Assessment

Details of proposal

Directorate and Service Area	Environment & Highways, Transport, Property & Infrastructure Delivery
What is being assessed (e.g. name of policy, procedure, project, service or proposed service change).	Implementation of a congestion charging scheme at points across Oxford (Hollow Way, Hythe Bridge Road, Marston Ferry Road, St Clements, St Cross Road and Thames Street). It is proposed to use the Transport Act 2000 to introduce six charging points (at previously approved traffic filter locations) to mitigate the Network Rail delays delay in the reopening the Botley Road. This will support bus services and help key workers, such as carers, in the city until the traffic filter trial can be undertaken.
Is this a new or existing function or policy?	Yes - however, the proposal is expected to have a broadly similar impact, in terms of traffic reduction and bus journey time improvements, as the traffic filters trial approved in November 2022.
Summary of assessment Briefly summarise the policy or proposed service change. Summarise possible impacts. (following completion of the assessment).	The proposed temporary congestion charging scheme is intended to make bus journeys quicker and more reliable, support the introduction of brand-new electric buses and new bus routes, make cycling and walking safer and more attractive, and reduce local air pollution to improve the health and wellbeing of Oxford's communities. They are expected to have a strongly positive climate impact.
Context / Background Briefly summarise the background to the proposal, including reasons for any changes	The significant delay (and continued disruption) of Network Rail's work to improve Oxford rail station has delayed the traffic filter trial. To mitigate this delay, Oxfordshire County Council is proposing a temporary congestion charging that is to be replaced by the traffic filter trial once Network Rail has completed its highway works and Botley Road has reopened.

Proposal

Explain the detail of the proposal, including why this has been decided as the best course of action.

The proposal is for a temporary congestion charge, using the locations of the trial traffic filters approved in November 2022 as congestion charging points.

The charge would apply only to cars - all other vehicles are exempt

A wide range of permits would be available for cars, allowing free access (either unlimited or on a specific number of days).

Automatic number plate recognition (ANPR) cameras will be installed to monitor vehicles going through the charge points. Traffic signs will identify the location of each charge point, including operational hours and vehicles that are exempt to travel through.

Any driver of a vehicle that goes through the charge point and is not exempt, will be liable for the charge. If payment of the charge is not paid by midnight after a vehicle passes any of the six filter charging points, the vehicle owner will be issued with a penalty charge notice (Currently £70 but £35 if paid within two weeks). One daily charge will allow a vehicle to pass any of the six charge points, unlimited times until midnight of the day of the charge.

The proposals include six charging points. Three of these will be located in the city centre on St Cross Road, Thames Street and Hythe Bridge Street.

The remaining three filters will be located on: St Clements, Marston Ferry Road and Hollow Way.

The scheme is considered to be the only way to deliver significant congestion improvements in the short-term, prior to the introduction of the traffic filter trial after Botlev Road reopens.

<p>Evidence / Intelligence List and explain any data, consultation outcomes, research findings, feedback from service users and stakeholders etc, that supports your proposal and can help to inform the judgements you make about potential impact on our ability to deliver our climate commitments.</p>	<p>Much of the evidence base for the traffic filters applies, as the congestion charge will have similar impacts.</p> <p>https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/trafficfilters</p> <p>Additional evidence for the congestion charge has also been produced, including a transport modelling and income forecasting report, an update to the air quality assessment, and Equality Impact Assessment.</p>
<p>Alternatives considered / rejected Summarise any other approaches that have been considered in developing the proposal, and the reasons why these were not adopted. This could include reasons why doing nothing is not an option.</p>	<p>Smaller traffic management schemes have been considered and will also be progressed, but these will not deliver a significant citywide improvement.</p> <p>Doing nothing is not an option because Oxford's already challenging congestion has been made worse by the closure of Botley Road, leading to a deterioration in bus operating conditions and bus services in the city. Bus operators and the city council have urged the county council to act as soon as possible to address congestion, not wait until Botley Road reopens in summer 2026.</p>
<p>Completed by Climate action sign off by</p>	<p>Martin Kraftl</p>

Director sign off by	
Assessment date	