

Danny Yee

The advertised scheme contained no suggestion that the restrictions on Littlehay and Crescent Rds would be changed. I have legal advice that, in consequence, introducing exemptions there in the making of the traffic regulation order is unlikely to comply with the requirements in part 14 of the Local Authorities Traffic Orders Regulations. A resident of Crescent Rd who was ok with emergency vehicle access, and unconcerned about how the restrictions were implemented, would at no point have been notified that decisions at this meeting might change what the restrictions on Crescent Rd were by exempting taxis. So please abandon those changes or defer them pending a proper consultation.

There needs to be an open discussion about taxi exemptions to LTN modal filters. The goal of LTNs is to minimise motor traffic in order to reduce road danger, enable active travel and improve local amenity, and taxis affect those just as much as other motor vehicles. It is true that taxis are used by disabled people, but no exemptions are proposed for blue badge holders. Otherwise, taxis are disproportionately used by the well-off. What is the rationale for speeding up taxi trips at the expense of road safety? Why should they be allowed to take short-cuts through local streets to avoid main road junctions?

If opened up, these routes would be more attractive to taxis than before, since they are now uncongested - and alternative main road routes are 20mph instead of 30mph - so more taxis would use them and they would drive faster. On some routes, taxi exemptions would more than triple the amount of motor traffic. This would make these streets less walkable and cycleable and liveable, especially for children and slower or frailer adults - do we want 8-80 cycling or are we going to settle for 12-60 cycling instead?

So I urge you not to approve any of the proposed taxi exemptions. If officers are worried about consistency then you can remove the existing taxi exemptions on Cornwallis and Bartholemew Rds -- or adopt "taxis allowed on bus routes" as a policy (with bus routes generally being on wider and less constrained streets).

Where ANPR is used for emergency vehicle access, I urge you to complement that with bendable, over-runnable plastic bollards. This will stop accidental infringements by confused or lost drivers and deter, or at least slow, deliberate infringement by people with fake or concealed number plates. The income from fines that open filters with ANPR cameras will generate may seem attractive, but that would come at the expense of making people angry with the county - and with its highways management specifically.

The LTN filters are different to the proposed traffic filters, since the primary concern with those is congestion rather than road danger, and there are an extensive array of exemptions.