



Oxfordshire County Council

Equalities Impact Assessment

Market Street, Oxford – temporary public realm enhancement. Introduction of a pedestrian and cycle zone using an experimental traffic regulation order (ETRO)

Updated December 2024

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Section 1: Summary details

Directorate and Service Area	Environment and Place
What is being assessed (e.g. name of policy, procedure, project, service or proposed service change).	<p><i>This EIA has been updated since the start of the ETRO and the completion of the 6 month consultation. It takes into account the monitoring of the scheme and the feedback received during the consultation.</i></p> <p><i>The original EIA is available here (Annex 2 of the report to the meeting of delegated decisions meeting of the Cabinet Member for Transport Management dated 21 March 2024).</i></p> <p>This is an EIA of the introduction of a pedestrian and cycle zone in Market Street, Oxford which includes changing to loading and has accompanying enhancements so street furniture, footway/carriageway surfaces and planting. Following consultation in early 2024, the pedestrian and cycle zone was introduced using an Experimental Traffic Regulation Order (ETRO) in April 2024. This is an update of the EIA that was published in support of the proposal to introduce these changes to Market Street as an ETRO. As set out in the original EIA, it is being updated in the light of (i) monitoring of how the ETRO has been operating and (ii) feedback received during the consultation that ran during the first six months of the ETRO.</p>
Is this a new or existing function or policy?	<p>The enhancements to Market Street is a new scheme. Improving conditions for pedestrians and cyclists at the same time as delivering efficient movement of goods and services in Oxford city centre aligns with the county council's transport strategy, as set out in the Central Oxfordshire Travel Plan. The proposal also supports Oxfordshire County Councils' vision to deliver a zero-carbon Oxfordshire transport system that enables the county to thrive whilst protecting the environment and making Oxfordshire a better place to live for all residents.</p>

<p>Summary of assessment</p> <p>Briefly summarise the policy or proposed service change. Summarise possible impacts. Does the proposal bias, discriminate or unfairly disadvantage individuals or groups within the community? (following completion of the assessment).</p>	<p>The original EIA concluded that the proposal was not expected to have a disproportionate impact, bias, discriminate or unfairly disadvantage individuals or groups within the community.</p> <p>Overall, the pedestrian and cycle zone has reduced the volume of motor vehicles in the street and has removed level differences between the footway and the carriageway. This has improved conditions for pedestrians and cyclists; for those visiting and moving through the street. Reducing vehicle movements and removing a trip hazard through the street has improved conditions for those with mobility and visual impairments. A tactile paving strip on the footway where it is adjacent to the carriageway surfacing helps blind and partially sighted pedestrians to know when they are entering/leaving space where there are moving vehicles e.g. vehicles using the street to access loading provision. The nature of the street design means that any moving vehicles will be doing so very slowly.</p> <p>Blue badge holders (BBHs) as well as taxis and private hire vehicles are exempt vehicles in the pedestrian and cycle zone and as such can still access the street. This allows BBHs to be driven into the street and be dropped off to destinations such as the Covered Market and other frontages including Boots and the GP surgery recently opened in the redeveloped Northgate House.</p> <p>Feedback received during the 6 month consultation at the start of the 18 months ETRO has highlighted two areas where it is now considered that changes to the ETRO arrangements should be made and so be subject to a further 6 months consultation.</p> <p>(i) The changes to the street have meant that BBHs are now unable to park in the street. Previously it was possible for BBHs to park in the street where they did not cause an obstruction, between 6pm and 10am i.e. outside of the hours of the loading ban that previously existed. It is therefore proposed to amend the loading bay outside Wagamama restaurant so that it is available for BBHs to park from 12pm (midday) until 12am (midnight). Whilst this is fewer hours than BBHs could park there previously (6pm to 10am), it is felt that overall, these are more useful hours. The rest of the time i.e. from 12am to 12pm, the bay would be available for loading only. This is less time for loading than during the ETRO period so far but means that the bay will still be available for loading at the times when pressure on the available space for loading in the street is likely to be greatest.</p>
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	<p>(ii) The changes to the street have meant that people with temporary mobility impairments and who therefore do not qualify for a Blue Badge and who do not want to/are unable to use a taxi are less able to access the street than before. This is a particular issue for access to the Northgate Health Centre. It is therefore proposed to change the detail of the Pedestrian and cycle zone so that vehicles dropping off and picking up patients at the health centre are included as authorised vehicles. This would not allow these vehicles to park in the street. The first change above will improve access for BBHs who want to drive to the Northgate Health Centre.</p> <p>Both of these changes to the ETRO will be carefully monitored and subject to a fresh 6 months consultation.</p>
Completed By	Craig Rossington
Authorised By	Jo Fellows
Date of Assessment	5 December 2024

Section 2: Detail of proposal

<p>Context / Background</p> <p>Briefly summarise the background to the policy or proposed service change, including reasons for any changes from previous versions.</p>	<p>Improving conditions for walkers and cyclists at the same time as delivering efficient movement of goods and services in Oxford city centre aligns with the county council's transport strategy, as set out in the Central Oxfordshire Travel Plan. The improvements to street layout in Market Street support Oxfordshire County Councils' vision to deliver a zero-carbon Oxfordshire transport system that enables the county to thrive whilst protecting the environment and making Oxfordshire a better place to live for all residents.</p> <p>Following consultation, it was decided at a Cabinet Member Decisions meeting in March 2024 to introduce the scheme using an Experimental Traffic Regulation Order (ETRO)</p> <p>Some or all parts of an experimental scheme can be made permanent following the experimental phase, subject to feedback from the six-month consultation and the monitoring of the scheme's impacts. Changes to the ETRO can be made following monitoring and consultation feedback – which is what is proposed in this case.</p>
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	<p>The changes to the street were made and the ETRO started at the end of April – a 6 month public consultation ran until 25 October 2024. As a result of the scheme monitoring and an analysis of the feedback received during the 6 month consultation, this revised EIA has been written which concludes that some changes should be made to include provision for Blue Badge holders and the ability for people with short term mobility impairments to be driven into the street to be dropped off and picked up at the Northgate Health Centre.</p>
<p>Proposals</p> <p>Explain the detail of the proposals, including why this has been decided as the best course of action.</p>	<p>The scheme introduced a pedestrian and cycle zone in Market Street in Oxford city centre with exemptions for blue badge holders, taxis and private hire vehicles and for loading in bays and for accessing off street premises in the street. The zone was accompanied by changes to street surfaces, and new street furniture and planting in order to make the street a more attractive place to visit and spend time in.</p> <p>The scheme has reduced the number of vehicles using the street for dropping off and picking up as well as parking and should better facilitate legitimate loading activity by premises in the Covered Market and other frontages. The zone has made make walking and cycling more attractive including for people with mobility and visual impairments.</p> <p>Following feedback from the first six month consultation, it is now proposed to introduce a time limited section of Blue Badge holder (BBH) parking outside the Wagamama restaurant and to allow people with temporary mobility impairments to be driven to Northgate Health Centre to be dropped off and picked up.</p>
<p>Evidence / Intelligence</p> <p>List and explain any data, consultation outcomes, research findings, feedback from service users and stakeholders etc, that supports your proposals and can help to inform the judgements you make about potential impact on different individuals, communities or groups and our ability to deliver our climate commitments.</p>	<p>To inform the scheme design, preliminary engagement by city council officers with stakeholders took place from August to October in 2023. This involved emailing and providing online engagement sessions for councillors at Oxfordshire County and Oxford City Councils, county and city officers, bus operators, emergency services, Oxford Preservation Trust, Historic England, University of Oxford Colleges, delivery companies, local interest and advocacy groups and local businesses.</p> <p>Feedback received during the preliminary engagement stage of the project primarily included some concerns about loading capacity/displacement, mixing cyclists and pedestrians, and lack of cycle parking. The design of the scheme was adjusted accordingly.</p> <p>Plans were presented at the Oxford City Council Inclusive Transport & Movement Focus Group on 20th September 2023, followed by a site visit with representatives of Unlimited Oxfordshire on 10th October 2023 and with MyVision Oxfordshire, 23rd January 2024. Following these visits, upgrades to the accessible toilet have been delivered and</p>

	<p>the proposed approach to the use of tactile hazard paving to delineate the footway from carriageway areas was confirmed as acceptable.</p> <p>During the informal consultation about the ETRO in January and February 2024, a total of 50 responses were received. Feedback received primarily included concerns about the impact on loading activity, the adequacy of parking enforcement activity, the lack of cycle parking, the limited impact on vehicular activity of the scheme and the negative effects of mixing cyclists with pedestrians. Officer responses to these concerns were set out in the Cabinet Member Decision's report.</p> <p>The decision to approve the scheme was taken in the knowledge that the changes to the street layout would be subject to monitoring and a consultation as part of the Experimental Traffic Regulation Order process.</p>
<p>Alternatives considered / rejected</p> <p>Summarise any other approaches that have been considered in developing the policy or proposed service change, and the reasons why these were not adopted. This could include reasons why doing nothing is not an option.</p>	<p>Full closure to vehicles for a core part of the day was considered as a way of improving the quality of the street for pedestrians and cyclists and the businesses situated there. However, for the time being at least this was felt to impact too negatively on legitimate access to the street for frontagers/businesses e.g. Covered Market and the GP Surgery. The full-time pedestrian and cycle zone will limit access to the street but allow legitimate users to reach their destination.</p> <p>The scheme has been implemented as an experiment so the impacts can be monitored, and feedback sought - changes to the scheme can be made if necessary. That is what is now being proposed.</p> <p>Following the feedback from the consultation, it has been highlighted that space outside Wagamama restaurant was previously available for Blue Badge holders to park between 6pm and 10am. The changes to the street mean that this is now not possible as this space has become a loading bay. Changes to the scheme layout are proposed to address this, allowing BBH parking there between 12pm and 12am. Removing loading completely in this location so that BBH parking is available all the time has been considered. Space for loading has already been reduced as part of the scheme which was a concern raised in feedback received during the pre-ETRO consultation and also since the scheme has been in operation. Reducing it further will push the loading activity elsewhere either causing congestion in the areas where it is allowed in the street and/or to other nearby streets where there could be negative impacts on pedestrians. Cyclists and BBHs trying to park e.g. on high Street and on Turl Street (north of Market Street).</p>

	<p>Splitting the Wagamamas bay was also considered providing one BBH bay and one loading bay so each would operate 24 hours a day. But this is not possible because a disabled bay must be 6.6m long and this does not leave sufficient length for a loading bay (4.4m).</p>
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Section 3: Impact Assessment - Protected Characteristics

Protected Characteristic	No Impact	Positive	Negative	Description of Impact	Any actions or mitigation to reduce negative impacts	Action owner* (* Job Title, Organisation)	Timescale and monitoring arrangements
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Age	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Update:</p> <p><i>As a result of the proposed changes to the ETRO scheme, people are unlikely to be disproportionately impacted by the scheme based on their age.</i></p> <p><i>Feedback during the consultation has highlighted that older people who are reliant on their car for travel to the city centre and in particular to destinations on or close to Market Street may be negatively affected by the scheme introduced in April as a result of the removal from the street of the ability to park (if the older people are Blue Badge holders) OR to be dropped off and picked up at the Northgate Health Centre (if they have a short term mobility impairment which means they can't apply for a Blue Badge).</i></p>	<p>Update:</p> <p><i>The bay outside Wagamama restaurant will be changed so that Blue Badge holders can park from midday to midnight – the rest of the time it would be used for loading. Blue Badge holders were able to park in this location before the scheme but only from 6pm until 10am because of the loading ban in the street which applied 10am to 6pm.</i></p> <p><i>Being able to park from midday to midnight is considered to be an improvement on the previous situation.</i></p> <p><i>Further parking for BBHs could be provided by making the Wagamama bay for the exclusive use of BBHs i.e. 24 hours a day. And of course changing some or all of the other loading bays in the</i></p>	OCC/city council Project Team	<p>Monitoring during the experiment (ETRO) period started from April 2024.</p> <p><i>The scheme will continue to be monitored once the changes are made to the scheme. A new period of 6 months consultation will be used to receive feedback from users of the street.</i></p>
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				<p><i>street to BBH parking. However, this would reduce the amount of loading for Covered Market traders and other frontagers even more than it already has been. This is likely to result in pressure and congestion caused by loading elsewhere in the vicinity e.g. High Street and Turl Street which would have negative impacts on pedestrians and cyclists, flow of buses and limiting the ability of BBHs to park e.g. Turl Street.</i></p> <p><i>The ETRO wording will be changed to allow people being dropped off or picked up at Northgate health centre to drive in the street – they will be added to the list of authorised vehicles in the ETRO.</i></p> <p><i>Blue badge holders can be driven to the GP surgery to access care.</i></p> <p><i>Reduction in the volumes of traffic and the removal of level differences in the street should be positive for older</i></p>	<p><i>A tactile strip along the edge of the footway allows visually impaired people to know when they are entering the carriageway</i></p>		
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				<i>people with mobility and visual impairments.</i>			
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Disability	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Update:</p> <p><i>As a result of the proposed changes to the ETRO scheme, people are unlikely to be disproportionately impacted by the scheme based on their disability.</i></p> <p><i>Feedback during the consultation has highlighted that disabled people who are reliant on their car for travel to the city centre and in particular to destinations on or close to Market Street may be negatively affected by the scheme as a result of the removal from the street of the ability to park (if the disabled people are Blue Badge holders) OR to be dropped off and picked up at the Northgate Health Centre (if they have a short term mobility impairment which means they can't apply for a Blue Badge).</i></p>	<p>Update:</p> <p><i>The bay outside Wagamama restaurant will be changed so that Blue Badge holders can park from midday to midnight – the rest of the time it would be used for loading. Blue Badge holders were able to park in this location before the scheme but only from 6pm until 10am because of the loading ban in the street which applied 10am to 6pm. Being able to park from midday to midnight is considered to be an improvement on the previous situation.</i></p> <p><i>Further parking for BBHs could be provided by making the Wagamama bay for the exclusive use of BBHs i.e. 24 hours a day. And of course changing some or all of the other loading bays in the street to BBH parking.</i></p>	OCC/city council Project Team	<p>Monitoring during the experiment (ETRO) period started in April 2024</p> <p><i>The scheme will continue to be monitored once the changes are made to the scheme. A new period of 6 months consultation will be used to receive feedback from users of the street</i></p>
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				<p><i>Reduction in the volumes of traffic and the removal of level differences in the street should be positive for disabled people with mobility and visual impairments.</i></p>	<p><i>However, this would reduce the amount of loading for Covered Market traders and other frontagers even more than it already has been.</i></p> <p><i>The ETRO wording will be changed to allow people being dropped off or picked up at Northgate health centre to drive in the street – they will be added to the list of authorised vehicles in the ETRO.</i></p> <p><i>Blue badge holders can continue to be driven to the GP surgery to access care.</i></p> <p>A tactile strip along the edge of the footway has allowed visually impaired people to know when they are entering the carriageway</p>		
Gender Reassignment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	People undergoing gender reassignment are unlikely to be disproportionately impacted by the scheme.	Not applicable	Not applicable.	Not applicable.

Marriage & Civil Partnership	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	People who are married or in a civil partnership are unlikely to be disproportionately impacted by the scheme.	Not applicable	Not applicable.	Not applicable.
Pregnancy & Maternity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Pregnant people and parents with infants/young children are unlikely to be disproportionately impacted by the scheme.</p> <p>These groups should find that the reduced volumes of motor vehicles in the street will make visiting and spending time there a safer and more attractive experience.</p>	No actions/mitigations needed.	OCC/city council Project Team	<p>Monitoring during the experiment (ETRO) period started in April 2024</p> <p><i>The scheme will continue to be monitored once the changes are made to the scheme. A new period of 6 months consultation will be used to receive feedback from users of the street</i></p>
Race	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	People are unlikely to be disproportionately impacted by the scheme based on their race.	Not applicable	Not applicable.	Not applicable.

Sex	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	People are unlikely to be disproportionately impacted by the scheme based on their sex.		Not applicable.	Not applicable.
Sexual Orientation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	People are unlikely to be disproportionately impacted by the scheme based on their sexual orientation.	Not applicable	Not applicable.	Not applicable.
Religion or Belief	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	People are unlikely to be disproportionately impacted by the scheme based on their religion or belief.	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable

Section 3: Impact Assessment - Additional Community Impacts

Additional community impacts	No Impact	Positive	Negative	Description of impact	Any actions or mitigation to reduce negative impacts	Action owner (*Job Title, Organisation)	Timescale and monitoring arrangements
Rural communities	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	People who live in rural areas are unlikely to be disproportionately impacted by the scheme.	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable
Armed Forces	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Armed forces are unlikely to be disproportionately impacted by the scheme.	Not applicable	Not applicable.	Not applicable.
Carers	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Carers are unlikely to be disproportionately impacted by the scheme.	Not applicable	Not applicable.	Not applicable.
Areas of deprivation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	People who live in areas of deprivation are unlikely to be disproportionately impacted by the scheme.	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable

Section 3: Impact Assessment - Additional Wider Impacts

Additional Wider Impacts	No Impact	Positive	Negative	Description of Impact	Any actions or mitigation to reduce negative impacts	Action owner* (*Job Title, Organisation)	Timescale and monitoring arrangements
Staff	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Council staff are unlikely to be disproportionately impacted by the scheme.</p> <p>The street will be more attractive for spending time in during breaks from work in city centre office buildings</p>	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable
Other Council Services	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other council services are unlikely to be disproportionately impacted by the scheme.	Not applicable	Not applicable.	Not applicable.
Providers	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	OCC providers are unlikely to be disproportionately impacted by the scheme.	Not applicable	Not applicable.	Not applicable.
Social Value ¹	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not applicable	Not applicable.	Not applicable	Not applicable

¹ If the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 applies to this proposal, please summarise here how you have considered how the contract might improve the economic, social, and environmental well-being of the relevant area

Section 4: Review

Where bias, negative impact or disadvantage is identified, the proposal and/or implementation can be adapted or changed; meaning there is a need for regular review. This review may also be needed to reflect additional data and evidence for a fuller assessment (proportionate to the decision in question). Please state the agreed review timescale for the identified impacts of the policy implementation or service change.

Review Date	The proposals were approved in March 2024 to be introduced as an ETRO and they were introduced in April 2024. This EIA has been updated to reflect the monitoring of the scheme to date and the feedback received during the consultation on the scheme that took place during the first 6 months of the ETRO. Further monitoring will take place for the rest of the ETRO period and a further consultation will take place from January 2025. The EIA will be reviewed again following the monitoring and consultation i.e.
Person Responsible for Review	Craig Rossington, Technical Lead, Transport Planning - Central
Authorised By	Jo Fellows