

Good morning Councillor Gant. I'm Peter Turner, a committee member of Bicester Bike Users' Group and an Elmsbrook resident. I'm also a parent who cycles through this bus and cycle gate multiple times daily taking my 2-year-old to and from nursery, to walk our dog and any time I need to travel towards town. There is no alternative route for pedestrians and cyclists.

I'd like to start by highlighting that these aren't new restrictions - they are 15-year-old planning conditions that were consulted on in 2010 for the 398 home Elmsbrook development (approved in 2012), and tested again in 2023 for the 530 home Firethorn addition, with signage in place since day one and even the ANPR electrical connection already installed as per the approved plans.

This TRO simply delivers those commitments in line with Oxfordshire's Local Transport and Connectivity Plan.

The decision today matters urgently: Oxfordshire's own 2024 traffic survey revealed over 40% of the huge number of vehicles already ignoring the signage were also exceeding the 20mph limit, right where children walk to school. It is completely at odds to expect families to choose sustainable transport with such a high volume of cars speeding through this narrow section.

Every day, I witness speeding, wrong-way driving forcing cyclists onto the verges, and drivers not willing to wait just a few seconds for a cyclist. Last April, I was forced to withdraw from a marathon due to injuries sustained from an aggressive driver in this bus gate. Families with children regularly spill onto the carriageway because the pavements aren't wide enough to accommodate them. A serious injury is only a matter of time.

Charlotte Avenue was intended to be a safe community spine road but has become exactly the opposite, a dangerous rat-run that punishes sustainable transport choices. Private cars have a convenient alternative with direct access to the B4100, whereas pedestrians and cyclists have no other option but to "run the gauntlet".

This decision also matters beyond the existing Elmsbrook development because it tests whether Oxfordshire's transport commitments are real. As highways authority, OCC didn't object to the 530 additional homes using the spine road (21/01630/OUT) because the applicant's traffic modeling, and council officers, assumed and assured that enforcement would happen. The application was allowed on OCC's assurance.

If families like mine, who want to cycle with our children, are driven back to cars by dangerous conditions, the ambitious targets set by the LTCP become impossible. Every family that abandons cycling due to safety fears represents multiple failed trips.

Without enforcement, OCC are approving massive growth while undermining the very transport behavior changes that growth depends on. The decision to implement and enforce these provisions today is the decision to protect families who support choosing sustainable transport. The days of ignoring the highways commitments made during planning applications must end.

I ask that you support the officer's recommendation and show that Oxfordshire's transport commitments are real and will protect the residents who depend on them.