

Headington Liveable Streets' response to Oxford: Various locations - proposed on-street pedal cycle parking (September 2025) consultation

Headington Liveable Streets (HLS) is submitting comments only on the two proposed cycle parking locations in Headington: St. Andrew's Road and Wilberforce Street.

As a general comment, HLS is strongly supportive of the Council's proposals to introduce new on-carriageway cycle parking in Headington generally and on the two proposed roads specifically.

Whilst there is a reasonable amount of public cycle parking in the central Headington retail area (London Road and Windmill Road), there is little (possibly no) public cycle parking on Headington's minor residential roads for cyclists to securely park their cycles whilst visiting pubs, shops, religious/community venues, businesses and residents on those roads. This lack of formal cycle parking has several negative effects:

- Cyclists' only option to secure their cycles whilst visiting premises on these roads is to lock them to signposts, lampposts and fences on pavements, causing obstruction which can have particularly negative effects on people using wheelchairs, mobility scooters, prams and pushchairs and people with impaired sight.
- Pubs and other businesses may be losing out on revenue from cycling customers, as cyclists may not feel comfortable obstructing pavements, may not want to risk there not being any available parking, or may just feel unwelcome due to the lack of parking provision for them.
- Cycles that aren't locked to a secure object are more likely to be stolen, and most cycle insurance policies won't pay out unless the cycle was locked to a solid, immovable object.
- People may choose to drive to visit premises on these roads rather than cycle due to the lack of secure cycle parking, increasing the congestion, pollution and road danger caused by car journeys and possibly resulting in visitors' cars, rather than cycles, obstructing pavements.
- It may limit social opportunities and community participation for people who can't afford cars or can't drive and rely on their cycles to get around.

As such, the proposed cycle parking on these two roads is very much needed and welcome.

HLS also strongly supports cycle parking being on carriageways rather than pavements. Cycle parking on pavements:

- Takes space away from pedestrians rather than motorists, putting cyclists and pedestrians in conflict, competing for limited and compromised space. This is unfair on both cyclists and pedestrians and goes against the Council's transport user hierarchy.
- Encourages/necessitates cycling on pavements to access the parking, causing collision risk and conflict.
- Is not easily accessible as it often involves having to dismount, bump up a kerb and navigate cramped pavement space, sharp turns, parked cars and other obstructions. This effectively excludes many disabled cyclists and non-standard cycle users from visiting local pubs, shops, religious/community venues, businesses and residents.

Providing cycle parking on the carriageway should therefore improve usability and accessibility for both cyclists and pedestrians and avoid conflict between these groups.

HLS is also supportive of the Council's proposal to use current car parking spaces for cycle parking, as this is in line with the Council's transport user hierarchy and car trip reduction goals and prioritises a non-polluting, space-efficient, healthy and cheap form of transport (cycling) over a polluting, dangerous, space-inefficient, unhealthy and expensive form of transport (driving), thereby contributing positively to public health and safety, inclusivity and a fairer, more efficient use of public space. However, we acknowledge that some people are anxious about the loss of a car parking space and oppose this re-allocation of carriageway space.

The proposed design, using black metal bollards and grey cycle stands, will be relatively aesthetically cohesive with the surroundings and the bollards will help protect the stands and cycles from being hit by motor vehicles.

The following comments address the position options for the cycle parking.

St. Andrew's Road

Lots of people visit the White Hart by cycling, and such customers currently have no choice but to attach their cycles to the signposts and lampposts on the narrow pavements, mostly on the north side outside the church yard but also to the west outside the houses at busy times.

Ideally the cycle parking would be on the south side, right outside the pub where there are currently double yellow lines, but having discussed this with local residents, it seems this would make deliveries to the pub difficult/impossible, so we are discounting that option.

In light of that restriction, the position proposed by the Council seems like the best option: being close to, and visible from, the pub and in a well-lit position with relatively high footfall, cyclists are likely to use it, as it is convenient and obvious, and feel relatively safe doing so from both a personal safety and cycle security perspective. This will replace one HE resident permit/2-hour visitor car parking space with parking for 6+ cyclists. It is understood that this car parking space is used mostly by visitors to the pub and church, rather than residents.



Visualisation of OCC proposed position

The pros of this position are that it:

- Occupies space already allotted to parking.
- Maintains the existing 'chicane' effect, which helps slow drivers.
- Doesn't reduce the effective number of resident car parking spaces (on the basis that it is mostly used by visitors).

The cons of this position are that:

- It results in the loss of one car parking space that is useful for church visitors, particularly for funerals and weddings.
- It maintains existing 'chicane' effect, which regularly causes blockages, congestion, stand-offs and sudden abrupt/unpredictable car movements at peak hours.
- Whereas the car parking space is not always occupied, allowing the space to be used as a 'passing place' by drivers travelling in opposite directions, the bollards and cycle stands will create a permanent physical obstruction, possibly worsening the situation outlined above.

The negative consequences of the chicane effect noted above is caused by through-traffic, not local resident traffic, and will not be solved until Old Headington becomes a low-traffic neighbourhood (using modal filters on Dunstan Road and Barton Lane). We understand that Old Headington residents are keen to maintain a chicane in the current traffic context, considering that the safety benefit of slowing drivers down outweighs the peak hour congestion problems.

We have some sympathy with concerns about losing a valuable car parking space for church visitors. As such, we have assessed some alternative positions that have been suggested.

Alternative option 1

Some have suggested using the last resident parking space on the south side of St Andrew's Road, on the basis that it's not widely used by residents because of the risk of collisions at the leading edge of a chicane.



The pros of this position are that it:

- Occupies space already allotted to parking.
- Maintains existing 'chicane' effect, which helps slow drivers.
- Doesn't reduce the number of visitor car parking spaces.

- Will be protected by bollards, so cycles would not be at risk from the same collision damage as cars currently are.
- Is well lit with similar footfall to the Council's proposed position.
- Is on the pub side of the road.

The cons of this position are that it:

- Results in the loss of one resident car parking space.
- Maintains existing 'chicane' effect, which regularly causes blockages, congestion, stand-offs and sudden abrupt/unpredictable car movements at peak hours.
- Will create a permanent physical obstruction, possibly worsening the situation outlined above.
- Is further from the pub and therefore not as convenient or obvious for cyclists, so they may prefer to lock their cycles to the signposts and lampposts near the pub.
- Is unlikely to be seen by cyclists arriving from the East, particularly in the dark, so they may still lock their cycles to the signposts and lampposts near the pub thinking there is no alternative.

Alternative option 2

Some have suggested using the space with double yellow lines on the west side of Old High Street by the junction with St. Andrew's Road:



The pros of this position are that it:

- Doesn't result in loss of resident or visitor car parking space.
- Has the effect of narrowing this unsuitably wide junction.
- May have the effect of slowing driving speeds around that corner.
- Could also serve as cycle parking for the Black Boy pub, which has very inadequate/difficult to access cycle parking in its front garden/car park area.

The cons of this position are that it:

- Is further from the pub and therefore not as convenient or obvious for cyclists, so they may prefer to lock their cycles to the signposts and lampposts near the White Hart.

- Won't be seen by cyclists arriving from the West, so they are likely to lock their cycles to the signposts and lampposts near the White Hart thinking there is no alternative.
- May appear less aesthetically cohesive with the surroundings than the St. Andrew's Road positions.

However, we understand that the Council has already assessed this position as being too close to the junction, so it may not be a viable option.

Alternative option 3

We wondered if it might be possible to put the cycle parking in the current car parking space on the South side of the road nearest the pub in the East-side parking bay and add another car parking space onto the East end of that parking bay where the road is quite wide:



The pros of this position are that it:

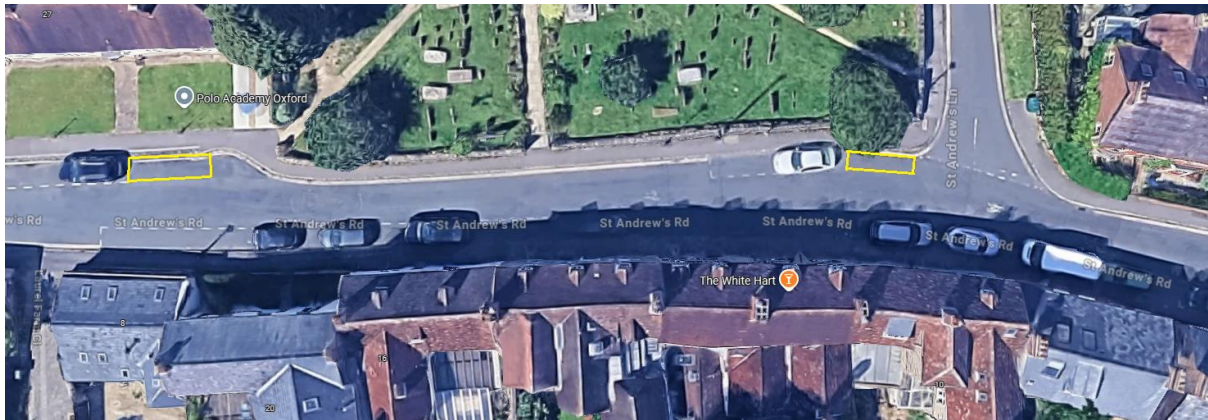
- Doesn't result in loss of resident or visitor car parking space (just a movement of one car length).
- Is close to the pub and on the pub side of the road.
- Maintains the chicane effect.
- Is protected by bollards, so cycles would not be at risk from the same collision damage as cars currently are.

The cons of this position are that it:

- Extends the parking bay, so that cars parked in the new space on the right may be at risk from collision damage due to being on the leading edge of a chicane that is closer to a junction.

We understand that the parking layout in this area and the surrounding CPZ were designed around vehicle swept paths including that of large fire engines, with the length of bays carefully worked out to ensure that signage complied with DfT standards at the time. As such, changing the position or length of parking bays would require checking against current standards and potentially changing/relocating space. Furthermore, on the South-side by the pub, posts cannot go in the cobbled footway without building consent and signage on buildings may also require consent, and

these considerations contributed to the length and positioning of parking bays when originally planned. As such, any position that involves changing the existing road layout, including adding parking bays (whether for cars or cycles) where they don't currently exist, such as the options above and below, is unlikely to be a viable option.



Summary

Given the legal and physical constraints and the pros and cons of the different options described above, the Council's proposed position does seem like the best position for cycle parking for customers of the White Hart.

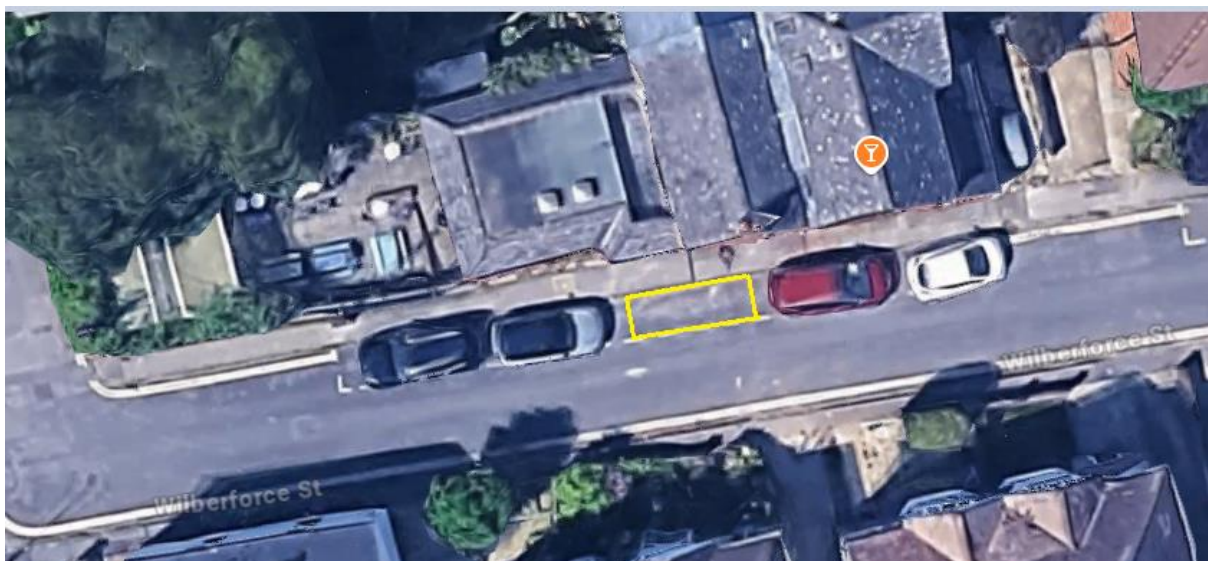
We wonder if it would be helpful to change the car parking space in alternative option 1 to a shared resident and visitor space, on the basis that it isn't a popular parking space for residents due to the end-of-chicane collision risk and could compensate for the loss of the North-side shared parking space. We haven't discussed this with Friends of Old Headington or local residents, but it may be worth investigating.

Wilberforce Street

Lots of people visit the Butcher's Arms by cycling, and such customers currently have no choice but to attach their cycles to fence of the pub garden on the narrow pavement.

The Council's proposed position seems like a good option.

Perhaps another option could be to use the middle space of the parking bay:



This would position the cycle parking right outside the pub entrance, so would be even more convenient for cyclists, and may also make it easier for drivers to access the remaining 4 car parking spaces than it would be with the cycle parking at either end.

Another option, which would avoid losing a car parking space, would be to position the cycle parking on the double yellow lines to the East of the parking bay:



This position may be considered unviable given its proximity to the junction. However, motor vehicles turning from Perrin Street into Wilberforce Street already take that corner at a wide angle to avoid the existing parking bay and drivers sometimes park in that space, so this may not be problematic in practice.

Summary

The Council's proposed position seems good, although it may be worth considering the other options described above.