

Thank you for letting speak at your committee meeting. Before starting I'd like to introduce myself. I am an energy and climate change consultant of 30 years, advising on national NZ policy, now at the Energy Systems Catapult, a NFP body set up by the Government. I pride myself on being impartial and unbiased. I have won Cabinet Office awards, and last year my work was short listed for an industry leadership award. My family have lived in North Oxford for generations, known for being builders, circa100 years ago my great great uncle was Lord Mayor. I therefore have an enduring love for the place we are caretakers of. As a resident of Woodstock Road, I have followed the ETRO debate and reading the paper for this session I found it to be biased and inaccurate leading to me to write. The results of the trial are stark and show no overall success. The consultation results are clear, 70-77% of respondents objected to the ETRO bus lane amendment. And evidence indicates it has not delivered the original objectives either, air quality is worse, times of journeys are worse in the morning, making only a marginal/change in the evening, and above all the road is more dangerous for pedestrians and cyclists. There are also inaccuracies in the paper submitted including:

1. No work has been done to improve the cycle route: Cylcox 's original response declared the scheme dangerous, particularly the upper part of the Woodstock Road, where there is no longer a cycle route, only a shared pedestrian pavement. The paper mentions mitigation changes implemented, however I can reassure you there are none to the visible eye. Danger is particularly acute on the eastern side of the road by first turn, where Cherwell and Wolvercote school pupils cross the road, cyclists are at full pelt, and there is a bus stop.

2. The paper suggests there have been no accidents, however the residents have witnessed many accidents and near misses. To highlight a few, in the first week a car was abandoned by first turn bus stop for several days after a collision. 24th September 2025 there were two collisions in 1 day, a cyclist was hit in the morning road closed, buses stopped, and subsequently two cars collided in the afternoon. Mr Gant is aware of this as a residents met with him the same week and highlighted the incidents. 4th December 2025 the road was closed due to a serious scooter and car incident, buses stopped and passengers on foot.

3. First Turn Traffic has increased substantially. There is little mention of increased morning traffic at First Turn, by Wolvercote school and Mere Road, with a degradation in air quality, specifically where small children are heading to school.

Further down the Woodstock Road, the junction "improvements" have not addressed the rainwater drainage issues, which are now exacerbated by the higher junction points. Making it all the more dangerous for bike users and pedestrians. Climate change is likely to increase intense rainfall, and yet the opportunity has been missed to prepare ourselves, indeed the road is now less able to cope.

Finally, the argument posed that the budget is not available to undo the ETRO trail is poor, as with any temporary scheme the decision for the trial should not have been taken without the budget allocated for undoing it OR understanding of where the budget was coming from. I also note a suggested budget of £350k is required, however my freedom of information request stated that £284k was spent setting the scheme up. Either inflation is substantial or your officers provided misinformation in your FOI request.

Despite all this evidence, or lack of, if you do insist on keeping the scheme I would suggest that you consider some remedial works which will reduce the levels of danger, including improving the road surface, making it 20mph and installing speed cameras both ways, traffic lights to manage traffic at first turn, and something to limit danger at the first turn pedestrian traffic lights. But of course, you might find resolving these externalities created requires a bigger budget than simply reverting to the original road layout.