

ITEM 6: OXFORD - ST MICHAEL'S STREET: PROPOSED PERMANENT PROHIBITION OF VEHICLES AT EAST END OF STREET

DANNY YEE

There are very limited east-west cycling routes across Oxford's centre, and the problems with blocking the quietest and least stressful of those should be clear from the objections to the proposal.

I would like to add that the problems do not - as the report suggests - arise only when Broad St is blocked, but that St Michael's St is an essential route at all times for less confident cyclers, especially children, given concerns about having to mix with buses on George St between New Inn Hall St and Broad St.

It should also be noted that St Michaels St is a marked cycling route in the county's Local Cycling and Walking Plan, as formally adopted by the county. I do not see how blocking the route to cycling can possibly be consistent with that.

So, I do not believe the route should be blocked to cycling, even using an experimental traffic order. Instead, an experimental traffic order should be used to close the route to motor traffic but allow walking, wheeling, and cycling.

Various methods of managing this could then be tried. If necessary, the closure could be extended further westwards in order to provide more space for seating.

END

ROSALIND OWEN

Initial Comments

I am the Head Teacher of St Michael's. We have very little parking on site - only enough for 8 vehicles, which we reserve for peripatetic teachers, visiting professionals, e.g. special needs specialists, social workers, and contractors. Every year we typically buy 10 parking permits for our staff to park on Marston Road. Staff drive into school for a number of reasons, but principally because they live outside the city of Oxford or have mobility issues. Public transport is not good enough to persuade them to abandon their cars. If the on-street parking on Marston Road is removed, staff will need to park in local residential streets, where parking is not plentiful as most houses do not have driveways or garages. Marston Road at this point is safe for cyclists - I know because I cycle down it every day to get to work - the pavements are also wide enough to be shared by pedestrians and cyclists, not too dissimilar to the Botley Road, which I also cycle along as I live in Botley. To reduce the amount of space on the school grounds to provide additional staff parking would mean depriving children of well used outdoor space and would be too costly for the school to afford.

Follow-up Comments

My school, St Michael's C of E Primary School, is on Marston Road. If the on-street parking by the school is removed it will have significant implications for us. The school

only has on-site parking for 8 vehicles. The majority of staff park on Marston Road - we typically buy 10 parking permits a year. Staff principally drive because they live outside the city of Oxford (housing costs in the city being too high) or they have mobility issues. Public transport is not good enough to persuade them to abandon their cars.

We reserve parking on site for some staff and visitors e.g. contractors, education specialists, peripatetic teachers -there are days when visitors have to use on-street parking because of insufficient space in our car park.

If the on-street parking on Marston Road is removed, staff and some visitors will have to park in local residential streets, where parking is already limited because the majority of houses do not have driveways or garages.

Cycling down this stretch of Marston Road is safe, I know because I cycle this route every working day. The pavement is also wide enough to accommodate cyclists and pedestrians, similar to the Botley Road, which I also cycle down because I live in Botley.

Having to provide more parking on the school site would mean the removal of well-used outdoor space from the children and would be prohibitively expensive.

I urge the meeting to reconsider their plans for this stretch of Marston Road.

END