

Thank you for allowing me to speak today. As chair of Jericho LTN Group, may I first commend cabinet for their courage in advancing these proposals. Restricting car trips will never be popular with everybody, but is essential to tackle the climate, congestion, pollution, health and road accident crises we face.

Our group supports the introduction of the filters and the Central Oxfordshire Travel Plan. We expect the Hythe Bridge St filter to eliminate through traffic in the area, but with the advantage over the previous closure of Walton Street that local traffic will have not one but two routes out of the area. This should help mitigate the problems we previously faced in Leckford and St Bernards Roads. But we would ask for traffic levels on these two streets to be closely monitored and if they rise, for firm action to be taken.

Also, the scheme will only be judged a success if it sees the return of buses such as the pick me up to Jericho.

After the bitter disputes over Walton Street, Ken Paul of Jericho Connections and I decided to bring together groups from across the divide to seek common ground. It is fair to say that almost all of these groups are now at least open-minded to the council's proposals, including Oxford's larger employers, such as OUP and the University who are very much in favour. Perhaps the one exception is the Jericho Traders, several of whom are speaking here today.

To these businesses I would say:

I understand that it is natural for a small business to resist change and to see any potential loss of income as a threat. But this can go too far. Indeed, one local trader said to me that we couldn't have a school safer streets scheme because "they could also be popping into Londis on Walton St for a pint of milk after they've dropped the children by car." Is the small profit that can be made on a pint of milk really worth risking a child's future for? And especially when it is anyway quicker to walk!

The Central Oxfordshire Travel Plan opens up a whole host of new business opportunities that the more entrepreneurial will quickly embrace. One local business speaking here today is already benefitting from the pedestrianisation of North Parade. And the council's street licences scheme has already provided some local cafés and restaurant with almost-free extra table space. Reducing the traffic that drives past these outdoor tables will surely only increase their attractiveness and hence their profitability.

Thank you, Jamie Hartzell