

Division(s): Barton, Sandhills and Risinghurst  
Isis; Jericho and Osney; Marston and Northway

## **CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT – 14 NOVEMBER 2019**

### **OXFORD – VARIOUS LOCATIONS: NEW AND AMENDED BUS LANES**

**Report by Director for Community Operations (Interim)**

#### **Recommendation**

1. The Cabinet Member for the Environment is RECOMMENDED to approve the proposed amendments to bus lanes as advertised.

#### **Executive summary**

2. The introduction of new equipment to enforce bus lanes within Oxford has required the amendment of the traffic regulation orders defining the extent of these lanes.

#### **Introduction**

3. This report presents responses received to a statutory consultation to amend the bus lanes orders in respect of the lanes on the A40 at Barton Park, A420 Botley Road, A4144 at Folly Bridge and Norfolk Street and Speedwell Street by the Westgate Shopping Centre. While the amendments to the traffic regulation orders extend or create new lengths of bus lanes, they do not materially change the practical effect of the existing traffic restrictions where the changes are proposed.

#### **Consultation**

4. Formal consultation on the proposals as shown at Annex 1 was carried out between 3 October and 25 October 2019. A public notice was placed in the Oxford Times newspaper, and sent to statutory consultees, including Thames Valley Police, the Fire & Rescue Service, Ambulance service, Local Bus Companies, Oxford City Council, the local County Councillors, and the local City Councillors.
5. Seventeen responses were received. These are summarised in the table below:

<b>Proposal</b>	<b>Support</b>	<b>Object</b>	<b>Neither/No Opinion</b>
A40/Barton Fields	7	1	9
Castle Street/Speedwell Street	9	1	6

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Folly Bridge/St Aldates	10	0	6
West Way/Botley Road	10	3	3

- The responses are set out at Annex 5 and these are also available for inspection by County Councillors.

### **Response to objections and other comments**

- Thames Valley Police expressed no objection to the proposals and welcomed the potential introduction of technology-based enforcement.
- Oxford Bus Company also expressed support for the proposals but raised a general query on the times of operation of traffic restrictions in Oxford particularly in respect of the High Street bus lane which currently only applies between 7.30am and 6.30pm, noting that they are experiencing congested conditions outside these times, particularly in the evening.
- Councillor Glynis Phillips, the local member, expressed support for the proposal at the A40 Barton Gate access and link into the Northway estate. In response to her request that the ANPR equipment is installed at the same time as the bus lane is in operation, and her question on whether it can also be used to enforce the prohibition of U turns restriction at the junction, while it is the intention that the ANPR equipment will be operational when the bus lane link is opened, the equipment can only be used to enforce infringements of the bus lane, and not the U turn restriction where a vehicle does not enter the bus lane.
- The above comments are noted. However, the possible extension of the hours of operation of the High Street bus lane requested by Oxford Bus Company is beyond the scope of this specific project and would be best considered in the context of a wider review of access to the city centre.
- Fourteen responses were received from members of the public, including four objections as detailed below:

#### **A40 / Barton Fields bus lane**

- An objection was received on the grounds that the current order and proposed bus lane only permits buses and pedal cyclists, whereas the respondent requests that licenced taxis are also permitted to use the bus lane. The same respondent also requested that the existing exemptions for taxis applying at all restrictions in the city apply only to taxis licenced by Oxford City Council.
- While noting the above, the current permitted use of the existing bus lane was the subject of extensive consultation prior to its approval in 2014 and while not ruling out a review of this restriction, it is not considered to be within the scope of the current proposal which is required to facilitate the use of ANPR enforcement equipment. The same comments apply to the general request in respect of exemptions for taxis to only apply to those licenced by Oxford City Council.

### **Castle Street/Speedwell Street**

14. An objection was received from a member of the public concerned that the proposal would permit taxis to use the Castle Street south of Paradise Street, Norfolk Street and Speedwell Street west of Old Greyfriars Street at all times. However, it is confirmed that such use by taxis and private hire vehicles is only permitted between 7am and 7pm under the provisions of an experimental traffic regulation order. A report on the operation of this experiment will be brought to the Cabinet Member for Environment delegated decisions meeting in June 2020. The current proposals make no change to the provisions of the experimental order.

### **West Way/Botley Road**

15. Three objections were received from members of the public concerned that the proposals would remove the current provision for cars travelling to the Seacourt Park & Ride car park to use the eastbound bus lane between the A420 link road and the Seacourt Park & Ride car park access. However, it is confirmed that the proposals do not change the above provision but are required so that those vehicles using the bus lane but then not turning into the Park & Ride access can be enforced for a violation of the bus lane.

### **Other responses**

16. The remaining responses from members of the public expressed support or no opinion with no other comments.

### **How the Project supports LTP4 Objectives**

17. The proposals would help facilitate the safe movement of traffic.

### **Financial and Staff Implications (including Revenue)**

18. Funding for the proposed measures will be met from capital funding allocated for the ANPR scheme.

JASON RUSSELL  
Director for Community Operations (Interim)

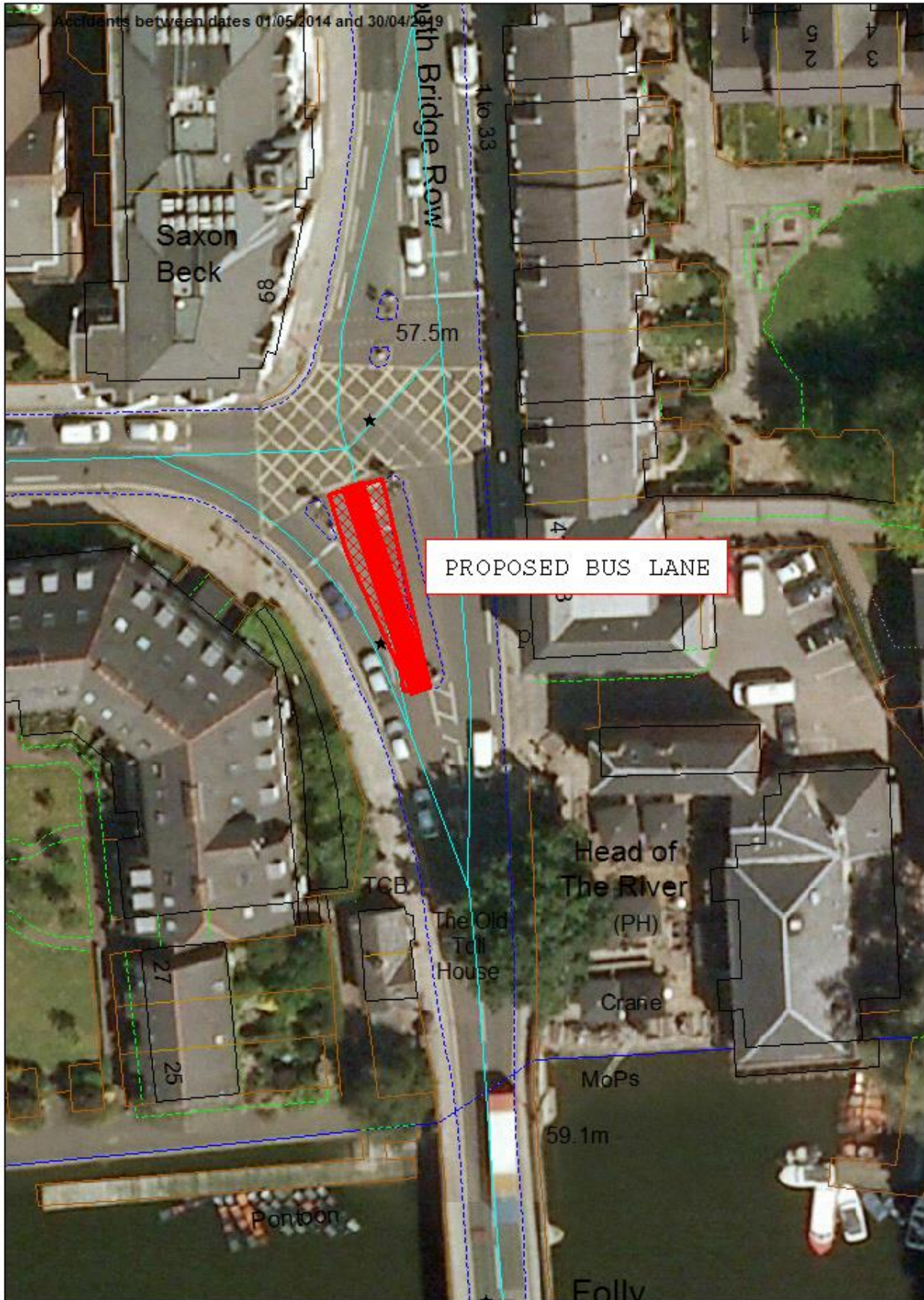
Background papers:            Consultation responses

Contact Officers:            Hugh Potter 07766 998704  
                                      Seema Masih 07917 534262

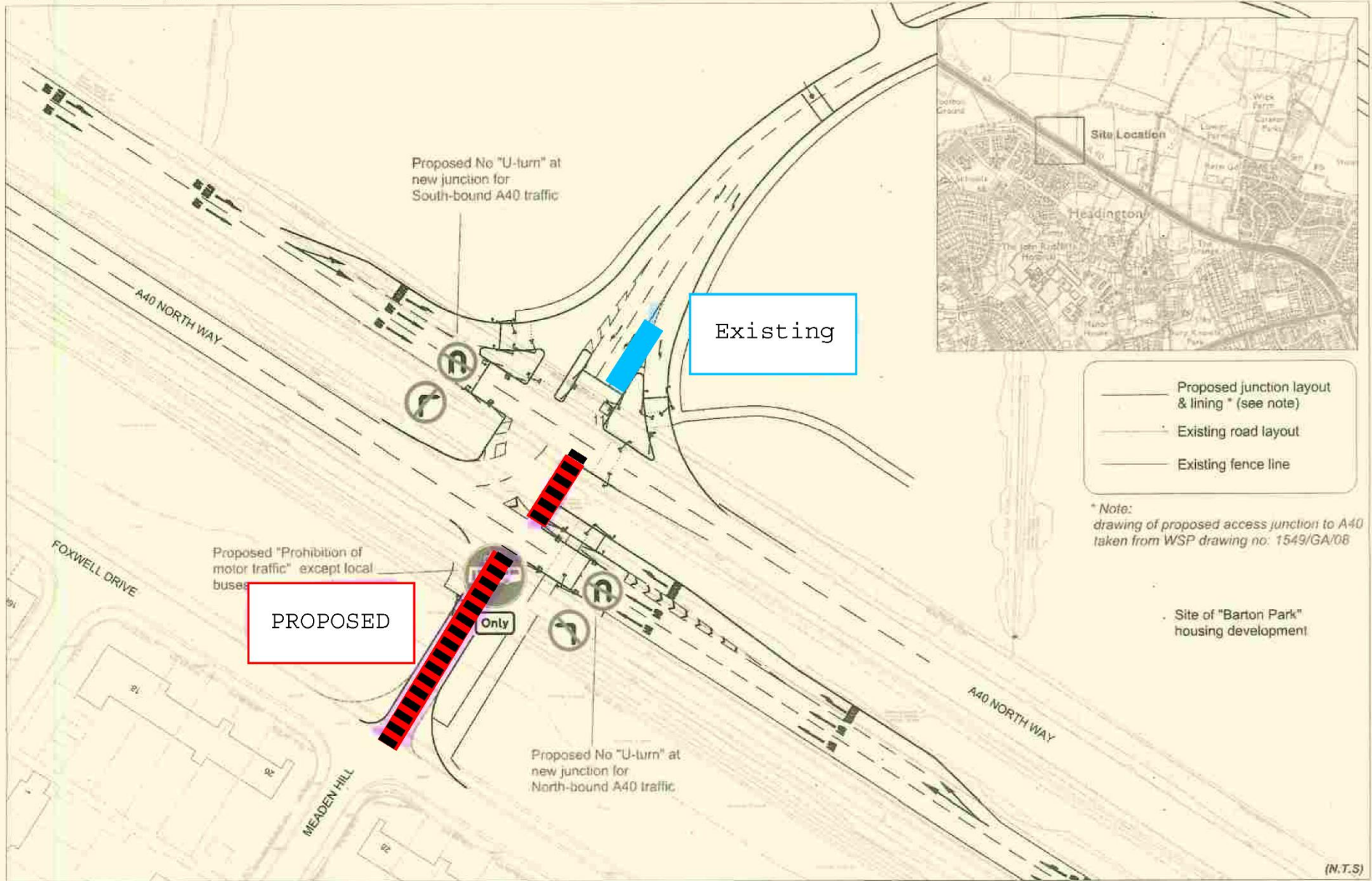
November 2019

# ANNEX 1 Oxfordshire County Council - Highways & Transport Service

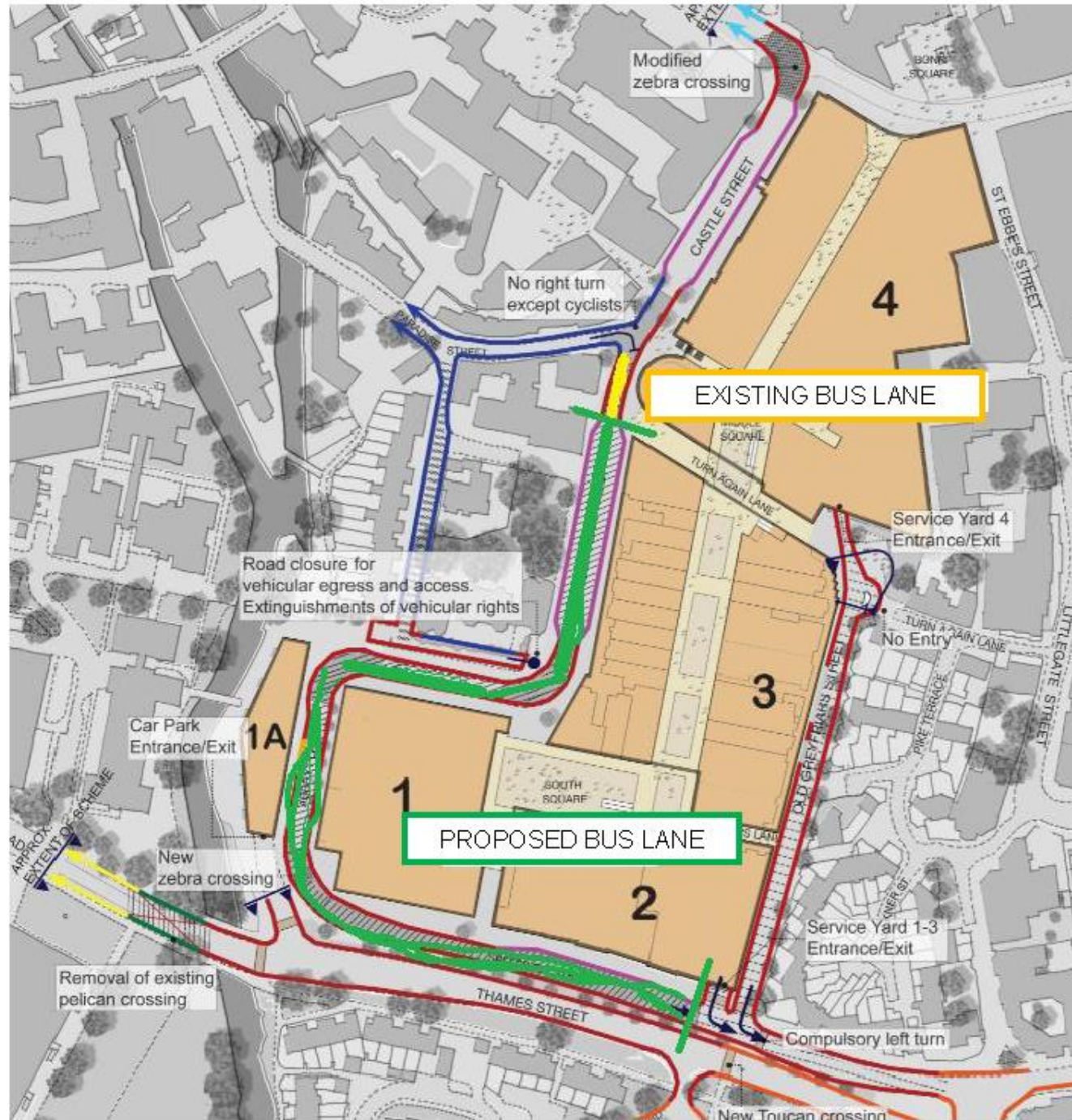
St Aldates / Folly Bridge







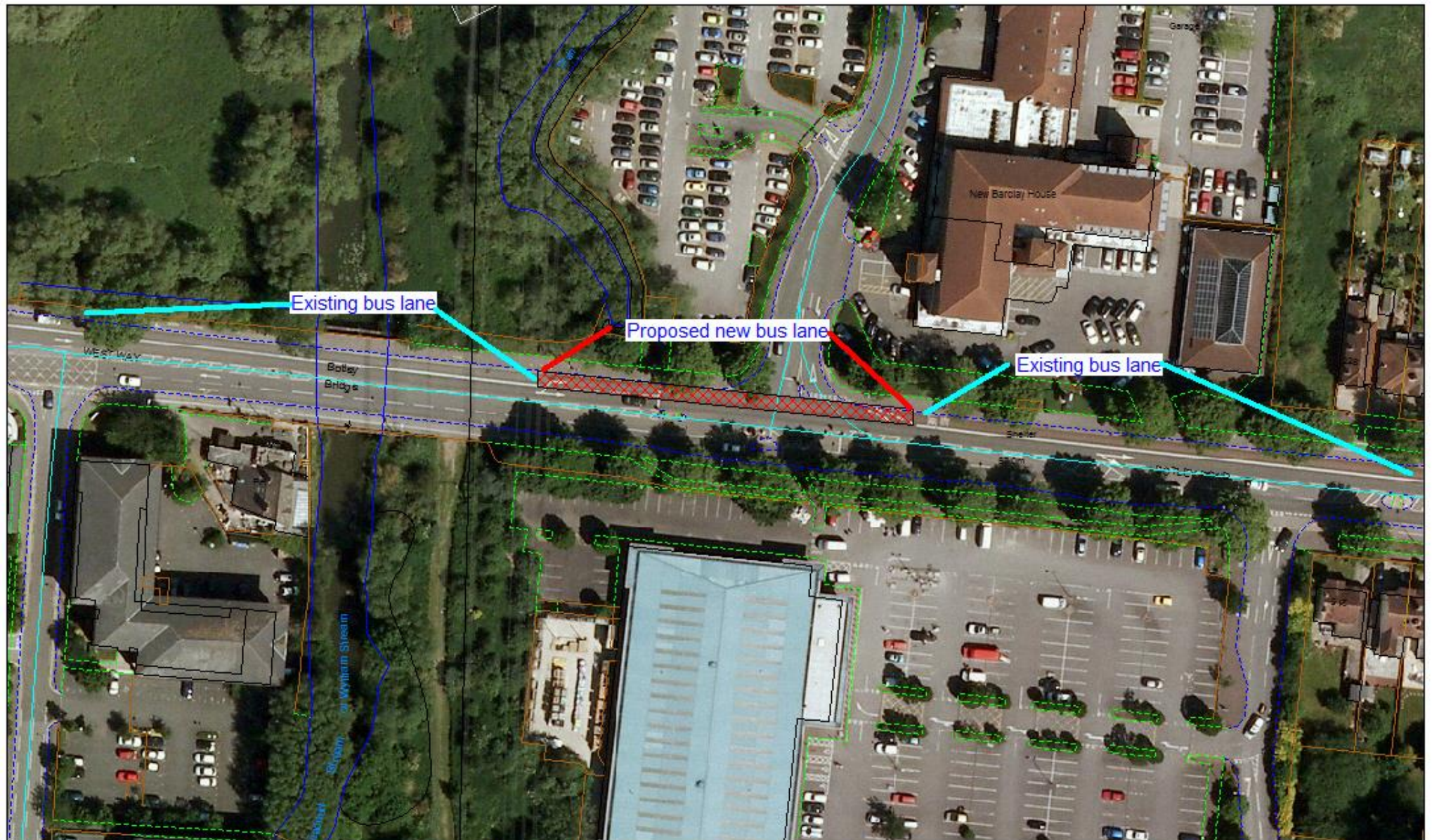






# Oxfordshire County Council - Highways & Transport Service

West Way / Botley Road



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RESPONDENT	SUMMARISED COMMENTS
(1) Traffic Management Officer, (Thames Valley Police)	<p><b>No objection</b> - welcome the introduction of technology-based enforcement.</p> <p>I'm assuming as all the Bus Lanes are included in the TRO this scheme can be expanded at a later date beyond the Bus Lanes highlighted.</p>
(2) Local County Councillor, (Barton, Sandhills & Risinghurst Division)	<p><u>A40/Barton Fields</u> – <b>Support</b> - I support the extension of the bus lane but would welcome more clarity on the introduction of the ANPR cameras</p> <p>Can you confirm that a) they would be installed at the same time as the bus lane and b) would also be positioned to capture images of drivers doing U turns at this junction?</p>
(3) Local Business, (Oxford Bus Company)	<p><u>A40/Barton Fields</u> - <b>Support</b> - No comments.</p> <p><u>Castle Street/Speedwell Street</u> - <b>Support</b> - No comments.</p> <p><u>Folly Bridge/St Aldates</u> - <b>Support</b> - No comments.</p> <p><u>West Way/Botley Road</u> - <b>Support</b> - With regards to all the bus lanes, may we suggest that a review of the times of operation would be beneficial. We would like to see an increase on the restriction times, mainly to reflect the extended trading hours of the Westgate. Increasingly we are experiencing evening congestion past 6pm mainly westbound from The Plain towards St Aldate's but also from other directions such Abingdon Rd and Frideswide.</p>
(4) Local Resident, (Oxford)	<p><u>A40/Barton Fields</u> - <b>No opinion</b> - No comments.</p> <p><u>Castle Street/Speedwell Street</u> - <b>Support</b> - No comments.</p>



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	<p><u>Folly Bridge/St Aldates</u> - <b>Support</b> - No comments.</p> <p><u>West Way/Botley Road</u> - <b>Support</b> - No comments.</p>
<p>(5) Local Resident, (Oxford)</p>	<p><u>A40/Barton Fields</u> - <b>Support</b> - No comments.</p> <p><u>Castle Street/Speedwell Street</u> - <b>Support</b> - No comments.</p> <p><u>Folly Bridge/St Aldates</u> - <b>Support</b> - No comments.</p> <p><u>West Way/Botley Road</u> - <b>Support</b> - No comments.</p>
<p>(6) Local Resident, (Bampton)</p>	<p><u>A40/Barton Fields</u> - <b>No opinion</b> - No comments.</p> <p><u>Castle Street/Speedwell Street</u> - <b>No opinion</b> - No comments.</p> <p><u>Folly Bridge/St Aldates</u> - <b>No opinion</b> - No comments.</p> <p><u>West Way/Botley Road</u> - <b>Object</b> - The Botley road is already heavily trafficked early in the morning and as a regular user of the SeaCourt park&amp;ride I object to the need to queue up with the other traffic just to access the car parking lot. This is discriminatory and a disincentive to use public transport and the park&amp;ride. If the lane is to be made for buses only you should provide first another access to (in only) from the A420 slip road, using the existing gated access (which is approximately 100m away from the parking lot edge). That would make infinitely more sense than effectively delaying users to access the car park's main entry.</p>
<p>(7) Local Resident, (Oxford)</p>	<p><u>A40/Barton Fields</u> - <b>Support</b> - No comments.</p> <p><u>Castle Street/Speedwell Street</u> - <b>Object</b> - I object because this would allow taxis to use this route. Many taxis drive safely, but a significant number of them drive fast, dangerously and aggressively in central Oxford, and allowing them to do so on more roads would decrease safety for pedestrians and cyclists. They already drive down roads that they're not allowed to, flouting the "no motor vehicles" signs in the city centre. They shouldn't be granted more access unless</p>

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	<p>they can behave responsibly and lawfully with the access that they currently have.</p> <p><u>Folly Bridge/St Aldates</u> - <b>Support</b> - No comments.</p> <p><u>West Way/Botley Road</u> - <b>Support</b> - No comments.</p>
<p>(8) Local Resident, (Oxford)</p>	<p><u>A40/Barton Fields</u> - <b>Support</b> - No comments.</p> <p><u>Castle Street/Speedwell Street</u> - <b>Support</b> - No comments.</p> <p><u>Folly Bridge/St Aldates</u> - <b>Support</b> - No comments.</p> <p><u>West Way/Botley Road</u> - <b>Support</b> - Please explain what will happen with the filter lane from the A34? Will this be closed? At present, cars use this lane to bypass the queue at the traffic lights and then merge with the traffic on Botley Road (and fail to enter the P&amp;R). How will these proposals change this?</p>
<p>(9) Group/Organisation, (Witney)</p>	<p><u>A40/Barton Fields</u> - <b>Neither</b> - No comments.</p> <p><u>Castle Street/Speedwell Street</u> - <b>Support</b> - No comments.</p> <p><u>Folly Bridge/St Aldates</u> - <b>Support</b> - No comments.</p> <p><u>West Way/Botley Road</u> - <b>Object</b> - The Witney Oxford Transport campaign group objects to the proposed restrictions to the access to the park and ride (Seacourt) that the closure of the lane to all private traffic will impose on bona fide users of the car park. Seacourt is used by many residents along the Witney/Oxford corridor (particularly the A420 section) and disallowing users from driving straight into it will provide a disincentive to use this parking lot. We see no reason why for the sake of a few drivers who dodge regulations most law abiding citizens need to be punished. There are already long queues to approach the junction from 7 onwards, as your cameras may tell you, so it is likely that several more minutes would be added to a commuter's journey, with the result also of missing the bus connection too and therefore potentially lengthening a journey into town by bus by an additional 20/30 minutes. The only option to have ANPR cameras would be if those were synchronised with the ones inside the car park, thus any driver using the lane and entering the car park itself would not be fined. Alternatively, you may consider opening another access to the car park further up from the slip road. In any event your current proposal is unsatisfactory.</p>



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<p>(10) Local Resident, (Wantage)</p>	<p><u>A40/Barton Fields</u> - <b>No opinion</b> - No comments.</p> <p><u>Castle Street/Speedwell Street</u> - <b>Support</b> - No comments.</p> <p><u>Folly Bridge/St Aldates</u> - <b>Support</b> - No comments.</p> <p><u>West Way/Botley Road</u> - <b>Support</b> - This bus lane extension must ensure that traffic wishing to enter Seacourt Park and Ride will be permitted to continue sharing the bus lane from the junction with the A34 down to the entrance to the Park and Ride. I would however support measures to "segregate" the bus lane, to prevent traffic misusing the lane as a method to beat queues on the Botley Road. Some road users are prone to misusing the lane by driving in the bus lane up to the junction with the Park and Ride and then changing lanes to continue on the Botley Road.</p>
<p>(11) Local Resident, (Abingdon)</p>	<p><u>A40/Barton Fields</u> - <b>Support</b> - No comments.</p> <p><u>Castle Street/Speedwell Street</u> - <b>Support</b> - No comments.</p> <p><u>Folly Bridge/St Aldates</u> - <b>Support</b> - No comments.</p> <p><u>West Way/Botley Road</u> - <b>Support</b> - No comments.</p>
<p>(12) Local Resident, (Oxford)</p>	<p><u>A40/Barton Fields</u> - <b>Object</b> - Firstly, access must be given to locally licensed Hackney Carriages. I would then support the ANPR cameras.</p> <p><u>Castle Street/Speedwell Street</u> - <b>Support</b> - As a locally licensed Hackney Carriage driver I would hope that the county takes the opportunity to restrict all those taxis licensed 'out of town' from entering this route. Reading Borough Council have done something similar. Out of town taxis add to our continuing problem of congestion in Oxford. They do not benefit oxford city as such because they choose to licence their vehicles elsewhere but come to operate in Oxford city.</p> <p><u>Folly Bridge/St Aldates</u> - <b>Support</b> - As a locally licensed Hackney Carriage driver I would hope that the county takes</p>

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<p>(13) Local Resident, (Abingdon)</p>	<p><u>A40/Barton Fields</u> - <b>No opinion</b> - No comments.</p> <p><u>Castle Street/Speedwell Street</u> - <b>No opinion</b> - No comments.</p> <p><u>Folly Bridge/St Aldates</u> - <b>No opinion</b> - No comments.</p> <p><u>West Way/Botley Road</u> - <b>Neither</b> - As long as park and ride users can continue to use the bus lane to access Seacourt park and ride in the same way they currently do, then I would have no objection, and would support the proposal.</p>
<p>(14) Local Resident, (Oxford)</p>	<p><u>A40/Barton Fields</u> - <b>No opinion</b> - Please improve car signage on approach to bus lanes in central Oxford. It is currently highly inadequate: only says at the last moment buses only with no clue as to where cars should go.</p> <p><u>Castle Street/Speedwell Street</u> - <b>No opinion</b> - No comments.</p> <p><u>Folly Bridge/St Aldates</u> - <b>No opinion</b> - No comments.</p> <p><u>West Way/Botley Road</u> - <b>No opinion</b> - No comments.</p>
<p>(15) Local Resident, (Wantage)</p>	<p><u>A40/Barton Fields</u> - <b>No opinion</b> - No comments.</p> <p><u>Castle Street/Speedwell Street</u> - <b>No opinion</b> - No comments.</p>



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	<p><u>Folly Bridge/St Aldates</u> - <b>No opinion</b> - No comments.</p> <p><u>West Way/Botley Road</u> - <b>Object</b> - Although I appreciate the sentiment of trying to stop people beating the traffic and cutting in later on down Botley Road, this Bus Lane Amendment will cause further problems.</p> <p>Not allowing legitimate Park &amp; Ride users to use the Park and Ride Lane will greatly increase the traffic on the general lane coming into Oxford. Traffic will back up even further on the A420 and A34.</p> <p>In addition, if legitimate Park &amp; Ride users are not allowed to use the Park &amp; Ride Lane then many will prefer to drive on into town as this will undoubtedly be quicker than having to queue before the Park &amp; Ride, then trying to park, then taking the bus or walking - this goes directly against the Council's aim of trying to reduce the amount of traffic in the city centre.</p> <p>Further, if the Park &amp; Ride lane on the A420 between Botley Road and the Botley interchange is to be made into a bus lane only, this will be more or less a redundant road as very few bus routes use that piece of road. It is also submitted that there are currently quite a few cars who enter the Park &amp; Ride and then seemingly drive straight back out again. This is because of the building works currently taking place at Seacourt Park &amp; Ride resulting in the P&amp;R being full by 8:30 on a week-day. This problem will alleviate itself once the building works have finished and there is room for everyone to park.</p> <p>The Council should focus on making Seacourt Park &amp; Ride an attractive place for people to park, rather than making it more difficult to access and adding to the congestion problems in Oxford.</p>
<p>(16) Local Resident, (Didcot)</p>	<p><u>A40/Barton Fields</u> - <b>No opinion</b> - No comments.</p> <p><u>Castle Street/Speedwell Street</u> - <b>No opinion</b> - No comments.</p> <p><u>Folly Bridge/St Aldates</u> - <b>Neither</b> - No comments.</p> <p><u>West Way/Botley Road</u> - <b>Support</b> - Whilst I do appreciate the annoyance of drivers cutting in from the park and ride lane in to the main road to Oxford city centre, turning the park and ride lane in to a bus lane only will push traffic out on to the A34 and to other areas in Botley. The morning traffic queues are already very bad, so removing the lane for genuine park and ride users will just make traffic generally in Botley much worse. Due to the park and ride being extended, and therefore having hundreds of spaces removed to accommodate site traffic and cabins etc., is making</p>

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	<p>the appearance of cutting in much worse than it normally would be. Often people are turning in to the park and ride, seeing that already many cars are leaving due to the car park being full, and so are aborting the park and ride before attempting to park.</p>
<p>(17) Local Resident, (Oxford)</p>	<p><u>A40/Barton Fields</u> - <b>Support</b> - No comments.</p> <p><u>Castle Street/Speedwell Street</u> - <b>Support</b> - About time these were properly enforced, some selfish drivers take advantage, to the annoyance and inconvenience of law-abiding motorists.</p> <p><u>Folly Bridge/St Aldates</u> - <b>Support</b> - No comments.</p> <p><u>West Way/Botley Road</u> - <b>Support</b> - No comments.</p>