

speech to cabinet by Danny Yee, 19 July 2022

I urge you to make the Cowley low traffic neighbourhoods permanent, and to address any problems they raise by moving forwards rather than backwards.

The Cowley LTNs are essential to the county's transport plans. Removing them would be a huge setback to the goals both of the Fair Deal Alliance you represent and of the county's Local Transport Plan. It would be inconsistent with the county's commitment to Vision Zero. It would be incompatible with other schemes that have been put in place or are underway. And it would risk funding from the Department for Transport.

It is a Fair Deal Alliance policy to "create a transport network that makes active travel the first choice for short journeys". Which is simply impossible without the LTNs, witness the unprecedented active travel boom they have brought, especially to schools. The Local Transport Plan commits not only to a transport hierarchy that prioritises walking and cycling, but explicitly to low traffic neighbourhoods, especially where they enable strategic cycle routes. In this case, that would be the OCR16 cycle route along Rymers Lane and Littlemore Rd, connecting Littlemore to East Oxford and the city centre.

The LTNs have addressed many injury hotspots. The Rymers-Cornwallis junction, for example, was so bad that a previous Cowley councillor spent two years of his discretionary funds to put in ineffective traffic calming. And there were multiple injury hotspots induced by short-cutting motor traffic turning onto or off the main roads, for example at the bottom of Church Hill Rd.

The Quickways cycling schemes are designed to work alongside the LTNs. They presuppose the removal of most of the motor traffic turning into and out of side streets. And they reduce the main road speed limits to 20mph, a change which would push more traffic down side streets if the LTNs were not in place.

Taking out the Cowley LTNs would immediately terminate the county's shortlisted £20 million bid for mini-Holland funding and would risk future funding for active travel.

With the Didcot-Culham road project the previous administration left you a scheme you have had to grin and bear, but with these LTNs they started something positive. Undoing them would leave over ten thousand people with significantly worse conditions for walking and cycling than they had when you came to power.