



Headington Liveable Streets

Response to Oxford: Headington Central CPZ - proposed parking restriction amendments consultation

General comments

We are alarmed and disappointed that the County Council is proposing to add more car parking spaces as part of these changes, as it is totally inconsistent with, and undermines, numerous County Council policies. It is concerning that the Council's policies to improve transport, place, health and liveability in Oxford are still not being transposed into schemes on the ground, and that various Council teams/departments appear to be actively working against implementation of these progressive and positive Council policies.

Kerb side space is extremely valuable public space, and we need to move away from the assumption that its primary use is for the storage of private property in the form of cars, or that residents have some form of property interest or right to the road space in front of their house. Adding car parking encourages car ownership, makes driving easier, generates more car trips and reinforces drivers' sense of entitlement to public road space.

The addition of car parking spaces conflicts with the following County Council policy requirements:

Policy	Requirement
LTCP goals of 25% reduction in car trips, 66% increase in cycle trips	<i>Reduce car parking and increase cycle parking.</i> People can only make car trips if they can park their car, and lack of cycle parking is an obvious barrier to people cycling. Every car parking space generates multiple car trips a day, particularly visitor spaces. Parking provision is the most obvious example of "you get the traffic you invite".
LTCP 1 - Transport User Hierarchy	Parking for cycles, scooters and other forms of micromobility devices must be prioritised over car parking.
LTCP 7 - Community Activation	The Council must address common barriers to cycling such as lack of bike parking and dangerous roads.
LTCP 8 and COTP Action 8 - Healthy Streets Approach	This includes "Shaping the built environment, green spaces and infrastructure at a local level to improve health and wellbeing" and explicitly requires use of the Healthy Streets "Design Check Tool". This tool does not appear to have been used to design these changes.
LTCP 33 - Parking Management	The Council must take measures to reduce and restrict car parking availability and ensure the parking requirements of all

	modes of transport are considered in line with the transport user hierarchy.
COTP Action 5 – Parking	Consolidate/reduce public parking provision where appropriate.
COTP Actions 12 and 22- Cycle Parking	Deliver increased cycle parking at key destinations including for non-standard cycles, a network of on-street residential cycle hangers across the area, a public hire cycle scheme including e-bikes and e-scooters across central Oxfordshire. Provision of adequate hire scooter/cycle bays is essential to achieve this.
LTCP 38 – Micromobility	Manage, monitor and support the use of passenger micromobility (cycles and scooters). Provision of adequate hire scooter/cycle bays is key to managing and supporting their use.
LTCP 39 - Car Clubs	Support the provision of zero emission shared cars and car clubs, to reduce the dominance of private motor vehicles and create a more balanced transport network. Have the car club operators been approached to see if any of the proposed spaces would be suitable as car-club parking bays?
COTP Action 19	Create public realm measures such as parklets where on-street car parking space is repurposed as a social space with seating and planting.

There is a dire absence of public cycle parking on Headington's residential roads, which has several negative effects:

- Cyclists' only option to secure their cycles whilst visiting premises on these roads is to lock them to signposts, lampposts and fences on pavements, causing obstruction.
- Cycles that aren't locked to a secure object are more likely to be stolen, and most cycle insurance policies won't pay out unless the cycle was locked to a solid, immovable object.
- People may choose to drive to visit premises on these roads rather than cycle due to the lack of secure cycle parking, increasing the congestion, pollution and road danger caused by car journeys and possibly resulting in visitors' cars, rather than cycles, obstructing pavements.
- It may limit social opportunities and community participation for people who can't afford cars or can't drive and rely on their cycles to get around.

Meanwhile, many of Headington's pavements are obstructed and made dangerous by on-pavement parking bays for Voi scooters and bikes and randomly parked Lime bikes.

And even though Headington is one of the areas in Oxford in which it is viable to live without owning a car, and 30% of households in Headington don't own a car, its retail area and residential streets are dominated by cars, including the pavements and cycle lanes.

See below for our comments on each individual proposal.

Comments on individual proposals

All Saints Road - OBJECT

The addition of two car parking spaces is inconsistent with the above Council policies, so should not have been proposed and should not be allowed.

This is already a difficult and dangerous junction for cyclists and pedestrians to cross, due to Lime Walk being a rat-run between Old Road and London Road and the chicane build-outs encouraging erratic acceleration by drivers. The junction forms a key route to Windmill Primary School for families traveling from the west side of the catchment area and an official 'quiet' cycling route.

The proposed north-side parking bay extension is too close to the junction (around 7.5m from the junction line) so flouts Highway Code Rule 243 prohibiting parking within 10m of a junction – why would the Council choose to authorise parking that is deemed dangerous enough to be prohibited in the Highway Code? It is also too close to the pedestrian crossing. A van or large SUV parked in that space would obscure visibility between a pedestrian crossing from north to south and someone driving or cycling from the east. There is already a visibility problem at this junction, and as it forms a route to school, there are often small children crossing here.

The north-side space could, however, be safely used for cycle parking for visitors to the church and local residents, and the south-side space could be used for a hire cycle/scooter bay or a car-club bay.

Bateman Street - SUPPORT

This seems a sensible proposal for this narrow street. Double yellow lines here will help enforce Highway Code Rule 243 prohibiting parking opposite a junction and deter pavement parking.

This space could instead be used for something that takes up less width than car parking, such as some seating or street trees.

Gardiner Street - OBJECT

Again, the addition of two car parking spaces here is inconsistent with the above Council policies, so should not have been proposed and should not be allowed

The northern half of this space should be kept clear of car parking, consistent with Highway Code Rule 243 prohibiting parking within 10 metres of a junction. The southern five metres could instead be used for cycle parking. (The nearest public cycle parking space is around 300m away, at the London Road end of Kennett Road or on Windmill Road by the shops.)

Kennett Road - OBJECT

We understand that this additional space is to be an Access Protection Marked space and therefore a way of creating more car parking space, e.g. for a visitor to the property whose access it crosses or to provide the resident with an alternative to parking on their own property.

Again, this is inconsistent with the above Council policies, so should not have been proposed and should not be allowed.

Langley Close - SUPPORT

This seems like a straightforward safety measure, and the loss of a permit holder parking space is consistent with the above policies and suitable on a road in which most properties have enough room to park at least one car, and many of them two or three.

Lime Walk - OBJECT

The addition of four more car parking spaces here is inconsistent with the above Council policies, so should not have been proposed and should not be allowed.

The Lime Walk entrance is already difficult to cross as a pedestrian due to the heavy flow of traffic using Lime Walk as a rat-run between Old Road and London Road. The Lime Walk - London Rd junction has a terrible injury/collision history - more than one injury reported a year over the last decade – and adding parking spaces here will generate additional vehicle movements in and out of this road, which will increase danger for pedestrians and cyclists crossing the entrance.

The proposed northern parking spaces would block visibility of vehicles entering and exiting the Britannia Inn car park (on the east side) and the car service centre (on the west side). The latter is particularly problematic as vehicles have to reverse out of the service centre. The pinch-point the parking spaces would create when occupied is likely to lead to erratic acceleration by drivers wanting to squeeze through ahead of oncoming vehicles. They would also hinder visibility of pedestrians crossing the Lime Walk entrance, whilst causing drivers to focus on getting through the pinch-point rather than looking out for pedestrians.

The space on the eastern side could be used for cycle parking, to serve the pub and other businesses nearby on London Road, noting that there is no public cycle parking on the south side of London Road west of New High Street.

The space to the south could be used for cycle parking or, since it is at the bottom of a slope down from London Road, as a rain garden for sustainable drainage.

Stephen Road + London Road - SUPPORT

There is a shortage of disabled parking and motorcycle parking in Headington, so it seems reasonable to convert general car parking spaces to serve these two user groups.

The Stephen Road entrance is regularly blighted by antisocial/illegal parking, often blocking the pedestrian crossing, so making the London Road junction corners "no loading at any time" is a positive step. However, this won't be effective unless it is strictly enforced, and would be more easily enforced with physical measures such as bollards strategically placed to make parking there physically impossible.

New High Street 1 - OBJECT

The addition of two more residents' car parking spaces here is inconsistent with the above Council policies, so should not have been proposed and should not be allowed.

As most of the houses on this road are terraced with no or very small front gardens, this space would be better used for a bike hangar and visitor cycle parking. Currently the nearest public cycle parking to this location is around 240m away on London Road near the New High Street entrance.

New High Street 2 - OBJECT

The addition of five more car parking spaces here, which will mostly be used by visitors, is inconsistent with the above Council policies, so should not have been proposed and should not be allowed.

The New High Street entrance is already difficult to cross as a pedestrian due to high levels of illegal parking near the entrance, often blocking the pedestrian crossing itself. It seems to be particularly favoured as a handy parking spot by Deliveroo/UberEats drivers and people shopping at Al-Medina

Foods Market. Adding five more parking spaces here will generate additional vehicle movements into this road, making it more dangerous for pedestrians crossing the entrance.

Because New High Street is one-way southbound, the new car parking spaces will also create many additional car trips circuiting New High Street-Bateman Street-Kennet Road or New High Street-All Saints Road-Lime Walk to get back to London Road, increasing pollution and road danger on those residential roads.

Furthermore, although New High Street is one-way for cars, there is a contraflow cycle lane heading north. This often feels dangerous/uncomfortable to cycle on because the large amount of existing car parking (legal and illegal) on both sides of the road leaves limited space for moving traffic, meaning southbound drivers pass northbound cyclists very close and often at unsuitably high speeds, as is common on one-way streets where drivers don't have to compete with oncoming cars. Adding more car parking will only increase this close-passing problem by restricting the carriageway space further and adding more drivers for cyclists to encounter.



New High Street looking North towards London Road. The contraflow cycle lane can be seen on the left. The vehicles on the right towards London Road are illegally parked, which is the usual scenario on this road.

Again, many of the homes on this road are terraced and have no or very small front gardens. As such, this space should instead be used for public cycle parking for visitors to the hairdresser and residents, a bike hangar for residents and/or a hire-cycle/scooter parking bay.

St Andrews Lane - NO OBJECTION

This appears to be to keep a driveway access clear of parking.

Stile Road - NO OBJECTION

These look like measures to help keep driveway accesses clear of parking.

York Road - OBJECT

This appears to be adding two new shared use car parking spaces and converting two permit holder car parking spaces to shared use spaces. The addition of four more car parking spaces here, which will mostly be used by visitors, is inconsistent with the above Council policies, so should not have been proposed and should not be allowed. Most of the properties on this road have room to park one or two cars. Drivers visiting residents here can use their hosts' visitor parking permits to park in the existing permit holder spaces or residents can move their cars to the permit holder spaces and let their guests park on their drives. The Council shouldn't be encouraging visitors to travel by car. If there is a demand for visitor parking then the Council should provide visitor cycle parking as well.

To the extent these extra car parking spaces will create additional car trips in the area, this will add pollution and road danger outside Windmill Primary School on Margaret Road.

Adding parking on the east side opposite the west-side parking will narrow the carriageway, creating a pinch-point that will make the road hostile for people cycling. It is also likely to lead to pavement parking as drivers try to put more distance between their parked cars and moving cars to avoid damage.