



OXFORDSHIRE GREEN PARTY

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RESPONSE TO HEADINGTON TRANSPORT CONSULTATION

Oxfordshire Green Party covers the County of Oxfordshire with a network of local branches. It is a local party of the Green Party of England and Wales with representation on both Oxford City Council and Oxford County Council. Oxfordshire Green Party supporters number over 28,000 – based on European Election results in Oxfordshire in 2009, European Elections offering the fairest test of public support for political parties in our current cycle of elections.

RESPONSES TO CONSULTATION QUESTIONS

What do you consider to be the transport issues and problems in the study area (includes Barton, Headington, Marston, Risinghurst and Wood Farm)?

1. The addition of 885 homes in the new Barton West development could add up 1770 vehicles to the traffic flows in Oxford. Exceptional measures to mitigate the impact of additional traffic must be used, or traffic congestion will be appreciably worsened by this development. Other more minor housing developments in the next few years in the consultation area are also quite likely to contribute a typical two vehicles per unit of housing;
2. The absence of a road user hierarchy approach to traffic by either the City or County councils to determine spending and pollution reduction priorities in respect of all traffic within the County. A road user hierarchy generally places pedestrians and cyclists at the top of the hierarchy followed by public transport, freight and business transport and then cars;
3. Inconsistent quality of cycle track markings in this area, eg. disappearing markings on both sides of Hollow Way, needing urgent repainting;
4. The general absence of flat fares for buses to maximise use;
5. Although the Green Party aspires to the closure of Longwall to through traffic and also consider that emergency and bus access to Barton should be considered via Marsh Lane rather than Foxwell Drive, these traffic solutions must be carried out so as not to lead to further increase of traffic in Marston.
6. The presence of the hospitals and other related developments presents real traffic problems that have not been resolved and have grown steadily over the years. More must be done to reduce traffic flow to and from the hospitals, such as enhanced green travel plans. The Churchill and other

hospitals could benefit from direct and increased bus services and not just linked to the city centre.

What solutions do you think could form part of a strategy to address the transport issues identified?

1. With regard to Barton West, we suggest that the development must be fully integrated into the walking, cycling and bus networks of the City to maximise low impact travel options. We also suggest the use of Section 106 agreements to designate a proportion of the new housing as 'car free'. This means car parking is not provided in the plans for a part of the development and the new occupiers are obliged to accept this and either have no vehicle at all, or it must be parked outside the area eg such as a works vehicle based at their employer's premises. This has been done - for example - at Artillery House in Artillery Street, Canterbury - off the very busy and polluted A28. The Council should note that about 1 in 5 households in the UK do not have access to a car, justifying car-free housing in principle - potentially permitting larger gardens and larger apartments in comparatively high density developments;
2. With regard to steps towards a road user hierarchy - raising on-street parking charges, imposing a trial of congestion charging, and imposing a local tax on supermarket car parking should all be considered by the City and County Councils in order to increase resources, cut air pollution and reduce greenhouse gas emissions;
3. Concerning suggestions of on street parking charges in Wood Farm and Bulan Road in the Lye Valley area, it should be recognised that these are very different street environments: the former is comparatively 'tight' with limited off road parking in most parts; the latter is almost entirely houses with drives and wide kerbs on which vehicles are often wholly or partially parked. In Wood Farm and other high density parts of the consultation area on street parking charges may help to deal with areas of 'parking congestion'; however, in Bulan Road specifically the Council could spend money developing road marking to find that residents are more careful to park in their existing driveways or on the wide pavements where a ban against the latter activity is currently not being enforced - such enforcement if enacted creating another cost for the Council. Ironically, current parking on the edges of curbs is contributing to preventing Bulan Road becoming a rat run, in addition to the 'sleeping policeman' and pinch points already present;
4. Following some of the principal suggestions made by *Living Streets*, notably the creation of 'play streets' or home zones to create areas of very low traffic speed that are safer for children and the elderly than current arrangements;
5. Concerning flat fares, although routes and stops are authorised by the County fare structures are the responsibility of the companies. The latter may argue that they have a fare system that encourages maximum usage already: frequent travel cards; 70% of passengers covered by concessions (subsidy from the Government) or discount student cards(cut rate for under 25s). There is also free Home to School transport which must be retained. It has taken nearly 20 years to get the companies to accept cross ticketing systems. ie where the companies run on the same route to accept a return ticket from another company. Matters would be simplified further by flat fares to maximise use of buses;

6. Risinghurst estate and Barton residents are aware, we feel, that the only realistic solution to the crossing problem (Barton to Risinghurst and vice versa) is traffic lights at the Collingwood road junction. This would allow the traffic to come out of the Risinghurst estate and for people to cross this extremely busy road. There are traffic lights up the road a little that serve as a bus separation process. They should be removed and brought down to the junction. That is the solution to the fatal (only a matter of time) situation at Collingwood Road/London Road. Oxford Green Party has been supporting such an initiative since the Council blocked the exit two years ago. Current conditions for pedestrians – crossing a road where cars are moving at high speed – are completely unacceptable and are likely to lead to serious accidents involving fatalities. There is bound to be some disincentive to using buses on the part of elderly or less mobile given such intimidating road conditions.
7. Emergency and bus access to Barton West needs to be considered via Marsh Lane as well as existing Barton and not via Foxwell Drive where it will disrupt the amenity of Northway and encroach on the open space and existing hedgeway.
8. Traffic to the hospitals and related developments needs to be far more strictly limited. Direct Bus services need to be made and increased in frequency and not only connecting to the city centre – the Churchill and former Nuffield Orthopaedic are particularly poorly served and measures to reduce traffic to the John Radcliffe are urgent.

Compiled by Steve Dawe for Oxfordshire Green Party, with contributions by Judy Chipchase, Sushila Dhall and David Williams.
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