

Oxford Low Traffic Neighbourhoods Taxis and Private Hire Vehicles - Covering Statement

You will be aware that Oxfordshire County Council has decided to allow taxi and private hire vehicles through six traffic restriction points within the Cowley and east Oxford low traffic neighbourhoods (LTNs) where the bollards are being replaced with automatic number plate recognition (ANPR) cameras. These sites are:

- Littlemore Road
- Littlehay Road
- Crescent Road
- Magdalen Road
- Divinity Road
- James Street

In all other respects the established restrictions for the LTNs remain in place, with the provisional exception of an exemption for licenced taxis and private hire vehicles. This exemption is effective from 17 May 2024 when the ANPR enforcement cameras became operational.

All taxi and private hire vehicles that are currently registered with the county council for an exemption at the bus lanes and bus gates in the city, are automatically included within this exemption. If you are unsure whether you are registered, please contact:

parking@oxfordshire.gov.uk

As you can understand, the continuation of the exemption is subject to ongoing monitoring and review to ensure that our shared aims of safer and quieter streets, and our commitment to making residential streets more comfortable for walking, wheeling and cycling are prioritised in balance with an improved efficiency across our highways network for essential journeys.

The decision to agree these exemptions was exceptionally difficult to make, with many residents concerned that the decision to allow taxi and private hire vehicles through the LTN ANPR cameras will weaken the LTN measures and create road safety problems impacting on how safe people feel walking, wheeling and cycling in the streets where the exemptions are intended to be introduced. In particular, local people are worried about the speed and number of vehicles, and potential risks of drivers driving without due care around pedestrians, cyclists, and other vulnerable road users. We would like to work with the taxi and private hire industry to ensure we can achieve the intended LTN benefits whilst providing appropriate access for exempted vehicles – recognising the role of taxis and private hire vehicles in providing a public transport service. It is crucial that drivers of exempted vehicles will be mindful that they are guests in these streets and drive accordingly.

We will expect drivers to respect the rules of the road and the attached code of conduct, with especial consideration for people walking, wheeling and cycling. There is similar code of conduct for cyclists when using the road and their responsibilities particularly when sharing routes with pedestrians.

Oxfordshire County Council has agreed to closely monitor the behaviour of exempted vehicles using the ANPR sites. Please can you remind your drivers of their responsibility, not only through ANPR LTN locations but across the wider network, so that we are able to continue to provide this access.

This is subject to consistent monitoring, and it may be necessary at any point for Oxfordshire County Council to review exemptions at these locations, and consult on changes to them, where it is deemed important to do so.

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