

Cyclist & Pedestrians

CYCLISTS AND PEDESTRIANS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

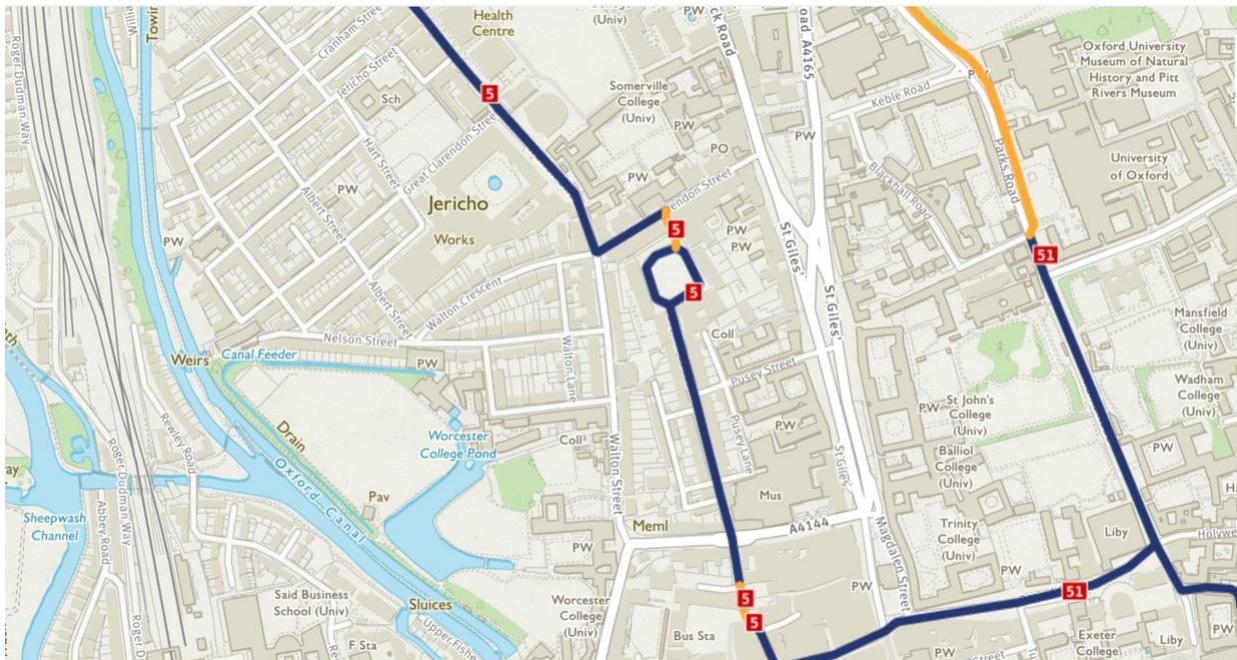
Part of the stated benefits of the closure of the southern end of Walton Street was to improve conditions for cyclists and pedestrians. Whilst traffic levels are notable reduced at the very southern end of Walton Street there have been several unintended consequences that are less desirable for the cyclist.

- Junction with Walton Street, Beaumont Street and Worcester more dangerous when turning right (into Worcester Street)
- Additional traffic, particularly HGV, in side streets makes cycling and walking within the backstreets of Jericho more dangerous
- New access flow into Jericho via Little Clarendon Street negatively impacts Sustrans Cycle Route 5
- Increased traffic at northern end of Walton Street and at junction with St Bernard's Road
- The displacement of traffic is counter to the stated benefits that the closure of Walton Street/Beaumont Street would bring for pedestrians and cyclists
- Loss of Pick Me Up Bus Service negatively impacts on elderly and less able pedestrians, increasing sense of isolation and reducing ability to undertake normal activities

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- With the removal of the traffic lights at the end of Walton Street, cyclists wishing to turn right towards Hythe Bridge Street now have to wait for a gap in the traffic to make the manoeuvre. Previously with the regular phasing of the traffic lights and the advance cycle stop line, cyclist had a frequent and safe way to make the right turn. This is no longer available to them.
- Additional traffic on side streets – one of the consequences of the closure is the increase of traffic on side streets. This has been most noticeable on the roads that run east/west between Walton Street and Woodstock Road. These roads are important routes for cyclists wishing to leave Jericho, heading towards University Parks and beyond. Given the wide variety of cyclists in Oxford and the narrow roads, cars need to slow down and travel behind the slower cyclists. This can feel quite intimidating for the cyclist having a vehicle tracking them closely for several hundred metres. This is most evident on St Bernard's Road and Observatory Street.
- With the closure of the Walton Street/Beaumont Street the first opportunity for vehicles from the west and south of the city to enter Walton Street is via Little Clarendon Street. This is a one-way westbound vehicle route with a contra flow cycle lane. This cycle lane forms part of National Cycle Route Number 5 providing direct access to the city centre from the north of Oxford (via Walton Street/Little Clarendon Street/Wellington Square/St John Street).



National Cycle Route 5, Source Sustrans

Little Clarendon Street is narrow, and we are experiencing an increase in vehicle traffic. The layout of the carriageway is such that there is insufficient room for larger vehicles to travel

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along Little Clarendon Street without encroachment into the cycle lane. Below are two examples of this, one from Google Street View and one taken on 31/1/2020.

In the Google image right a van can be seen entering Little Clarendon Street from St Giles. Whilst the vehicle is within the white lining, its clear that the door mirror is overhanging the cycle lane and therefore a danger to cyclists. It should be noted that this van, a VW



transporter, barely fits between the lines of the carriageway, yet its body is less than 2.0m wide. Larger heavy goods vehicles also use this route and can be up to 2.5m wide. Once door mirrors are taken into account (projecting beyond the 2.5m bodywork), further encroachment into the cycle lane will occur. Combined with the high footfall of pedestrians in this area, this cannot be considered a safe situation. Furthermore, there is clearly insufficient width between the buildings to improve this situation.

The image right was taken on 31/1/2020 and clearly shows a van driving within the contraflow cycle lane. Again, given the lack of width, increases in traffic levels on Little Clarendon Street are not conducive to encouraging people to cycle and place them at greater risk. Given that this is on a sign posted National Cycle Route and an important east/west cycle route, this cannot be seen as improving the situation for cyclists.



Little Clarendon Street, Source S Charters

- Two-Way Traffic on Walton Street between Juxon Street and St Bernard's Road. Whilst it is visually easy to observe that there has been a reduction in traffic at the very southern end of Walton Street, it is less clear what the situation is at its northern end. From regular use on foot and by bicycle, there appears to be an increase in two-way traffic between Juxon Street and St Bernard's Road, particularly in busy periods. Traffic which might have once left Jericho to the south is now required to turn around and leave to the north thus what was once a single pass through this section of road is now a two-way movement.

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- At this location general traffic is required to give way to each other through a traffic restriction. As a result, there here is often queuing in this location. Whilst there are bicycle by-passes at this width restriction, queuing vehicles and cars within the parking bays require cycle to wait with general traffic. Again, this does not appear to offer benefit to cyclists and cycling who by its nature, increased uptake would assist air quality.
- Given that this area was likely to have a significant change in traffic movements it is somewhat surprising that the recent traffic surveys (commenced circa 23rd January to 4th February 2020) did not appear to undertake a survey in this location. **NOTE: Date of end of survey to be confirmed.**

DISPLACEMENT OF TRAFFIC DURING TRAFFIC SURVEYS

It was surprising that the highway layout changed on Monday 27th February, part way through the traffic survey period. The survey will not have recorded the traffic movements as experienced by residents over the past months since the southern end of Walton Street was closed for road works and the subsequent traffic order to close its junction with Beaumont Street.

The revised highway layout, coning off the right turn land from Walton Street to St Bernard's Road appears to be acknowledgment by the local authority that the levels for traffic using St Bernard's Road is unacceptable. In addition to the coning off the right turn lane, a sign was erected direction traffic for Woodstock Road to use St Margaret's Road.

However, this attempt to divert traffic further to the north places the roads between Kingston Road and Woodstock Road under additional pressure. In doing this, traffic is moved onto either St Margaret's Road, Farndon Road or Leckford Road. It is worth noting that Leckford Road has schools on it (D'overbroecks and Leckford Place School). There is also a primary school on St Margaret's Road (St. Aloysius Catholic Primary School). The Local authorities attempt to limit traffic on one road will therefore result in additional traffic being placed onto roads with schools on them. The additional traffic will also have an impact on parents and children using Kingston Road and other side streets whilst travelling to and from St Philip & St James School on Aristotle Lane.

This is counter to the stated benefits that the closure of Walton Street/Beaumont Street would bring for pedestrians and cyclists.

The blockage of the right-hand turn lane was removed w/c 3rd February with the ATC equipment still in place. However, turning counts undertaken by video camera between Monday 27th and Tuesday 28th January would not have recorded movements out of the free flow of St Bernard's Road whilst there was free flow into the road from Walton Street.

BUSES

Whilst it has been several years since the Number 17 bus service was suspended, the Pick Me Up service has been a welcome provision since its inception. However, it was recently reported that the operator of this service has stopped the buses serving Jericho, citing the closure of the Beaumont Street/Walton Street junction as the reason for this. This was

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extremely disappointed for those using this bus. The service stopped at the beginning of January 2020. In late January 2020, the Oxford Mail reported that the operation of the Pick Me Up service across Oxford was at risk because the revenue from operation the service was not fully covering costs.

In terms of generation revenue, the additional journey times accessing the users in Jericho no doubt played a part in the removal of the service as the bus, and with fewer potential users this would impact on the viability of the service.

Should the Pick Me Up service be discontinued for economic reasons, this does not mean that there would be time in the near future when an operator may consider bus services more viable because of changing market conditions. With the City Council aims of zero emission zones in the city centre, this point may arrive within the next couple of years. However, the continued closure of the southern junction of Walton Street will clearly have financial and physical constraint on reintroduction of services delaying or even preventing the reintroduction of buses to Jericho. This situation should not be allowed to arise.