



Comment on Oxford Transport Vision

20 October 2019

CREDS responds to consultations and calls for evidence from government, agencies and businesses, providing insight and expertise to decision-makers.

This response was created for the Connecting Oxford consultation by Oxfordshire County Council and Oxford City Council. The consultation ran from July-October 2019.

The consultation response written on behalf of CREDS by Jillian Anable and Greg Marsden (University of Leeds).

The full consultation response, as submitted, is below.

Comments from the Centre for Research into Energy Demand Solutions (CREDS)

Overall the strategy lacks any commentary about electric vehicles (EVs) or e-bikes or really about cycling infrastructure at all. It also lacks provision for car sharing or bike sharing and both of these are major omissions.

The next version of the plan needs to include the resources to implement the measures proposed with clear links to how the charging for road use or emissions reductions and parking is paying for the new measures. It also needs to be made clear how this plan is addressing the real problem around Oxford, which is the green belt and the massive, unconnected new housing developments.

The strategy as currently set out, considers travel by car to be bad and by other modes to be OK. In a recent report about Shared Mobility, CREDS sets out how authorities need to have a clear plan for the way they are going to provide access to shared cars (car clubs) or shared bikes and also how they will treat sharing of lifts. The document states that an estimated 220,000 vehicle miles are driven in and around the city by around 45,000 vehicles every morning rush hour, emitting around 50 tonnes of CO₂. The plan aims to reduce that by 25%. It seems implausible that all of this would transfer to bus and so by ignoring lift sharing the plan is missing a major trick.

"Shared mobility – where now, where next?" Second report of the Commission on Travel Demand. Available at www.creds.ac.uk/publications/where-now-where-next/

Specific suggestions to improve the plan:

1. The workplace parking levy (WPL) within the plan could be designed so that employers who can demonstrate [e.g. by working with Liftshare] that they are using 25% fewer parking spaces as a result of greater sharing and mode shifting are exempt or charged at 50% of the rate.
2. This is because charging for parking is important. But restricting the *space* for parking is more effective. Therefore, the WPL must be designed in such a way that it does not end up just being a de facto tax on employees, but must change the parking availability and function in more fundamental ways including having a net effect on traffic pressure.
3. Organisations within the WPL area should only start to get exemptions after they have auditable proof that they have implemented the measures. It is critical that exemptions are NOT given for things that are only promised. Years of workplace travel planning reveals how hollow the promises of action are on this front and how lacking in resource the authorities are to monitor anything.

So, the levy has to be the stimulus for businesses to develop full travel plans and act on things like dedicating spaces to sharers, paying for a proper ride-matching software/ service to facilitate sharing (and guaranteed taxi ride home services), installing charge points and docking stations for

electric bikes. Clusters of businesses should coordinate deliveries for milk, paper, sandwiches, and other services. Parking permits given to employees which are restricted to only 3 days a week could encourage some mixing and matching of modes on other days.

4. There must also be shared pool cars.
5. What will companies do with freed-up parking space? Could some of these be converted into mobility hubs with charge points for EVs and e-bikes and car share possibilities? This would help both the businesses and also people who live and work locally.
6. Electric bike sharing schemes should be placed in residential areas that house many of the employees in the earmarked WPL areas of the city.
7. Part of the levy should be dedicated to monitoring and auditing the WPL. The idea should be that revenue from the WPL is not an infinite cash cow but purposely goes down over time as long as the promised measures in the plan have been put in place.
8. There is nothing currently in the plan about how the interchange to the bus services will be delivered. If people are travelling from outside Oxford then they need to have a really good interchange experience or they will not switch. Again – mobility hubs – either at Park and Ride or smaller ones within business parks should be considered.

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