

Oxford City Zero Emission Zone Proposal

Frequently Asked Questions

Why are you proposing a Zero Emission Zone (ZEE) in Oxford?

The Royal College of Physicians and the Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health found, in [a 2016 report](#), that air pollution contributes to cancer, asthma, stroke and heart disease, diabetes, obesity, and changes linked to dementia. The study also found that outdoor air pollution causes about 40,000 early deaths every year in the UK.

The European Union requires national governments to keep annual average NO₂ levels across their countries to below 40µg/m³. Despite a 36.9 per cent reduction in NO₂ levels across Oxford in the last decade, parts of the city centre are still failing to meet this legal limit. Although it is expected that the UK will not be in the EU by 2020 local councils are planning on the basis of regulations as they currently stand.

[Latest monitoring data](#) has found that air pollution appears to have plateaued above the legal limits in some parts of the city. Between 2011 and 2013, average NO₂ levels across the city centre fell by 18.9 per cent; but between 2014 and 2016 they fell by just 3.9 per cent.

Oxford City Council has a legal duty to monitor the air quality within Oxford and a report is produced annually. The link to the latest Air Quality Annual Monitoring Report can be found here:

https://www.oxford.gov.uk/downloads/file/3832/air_quality_annual_status_report_2016

The majority of emissions and air pollution in the city centre is generated by motorised traffic. Moving to emission free transport solutions, through the introduction of a zero emission zone, is therefore the most effective solution to our air pollution problems.

Who has been consulted on the proposed Zero Emission Zone (ZEE)?

We are consulting bus and taxi companies, specialist organisations such as Disabled Motoring UK and the Freight Association, local businesses and groups, the universities and residents. The proposed ZEE has also featured in local and national news to reach a wider base to ensure that we receive as many responses as possible. Oxford City Council and Oxfordshire County Council want everyone who uses the city centre to take part in consultation, so the councils can try to make the ZEE work for everyone.

Will the implementation of the ZEZ just spread air quality problems to the suburbs of Oxford?

It is expected that introducing a ZEZ will improve the quality of air within Oxford overall *and* beyond due to the restrictions on vehicles that can use the centre. Additionally, the county and city councils are investigating supplementary measures to improve air quality in areas that breach safe levels and have already committed to working on areas such as St Clements which experiences high levels of air pollution.

What will the impact of the ZEZ be on private vehicles?

The proposed 2020 zone is unlikely to affect many private vehicles, but does cover some disabled parking spaces and college car parking within the red zone. The County Council is currently conducting a survey of workplace parking spaces in the City that will help to further determine this. We are also seeking views through the consultation from all residents as to how this issue will impact them, in addition to asking for comments from Disabled Motoring UK.

When will I need to replace my car?

Government is planning to ban the production of all pollution emitting vehicles by 2040. In Oxford, under current proposal, private cars that emit pollution are proposed to be excluded from all roads within Hollybush Row, Hythe Bridge Street, Worcester Street, Beaumont Street, St Giles', part of Parks Road, South Parks Road, St Cross Road, Longwall Street, Merton Street, Blue Boar Street, St Aldate's and Thames Street by 2030.

How will residents without Zero Emission Vehicles exit from streets on the edge of the ZEZ such as St Johns Street?

We expect vehicle technology to have developed significantly by 2030 and that the majority of the vehicles will be zero emission by this time. We are also working on associated projects across the city, having partnered with electric car clubs to provide access to electric vehicles for people who do not have one. Specific solutions for residents unable to comply with a ban are currently being explored and will form part of the next stage of development of the proposals.

How will tradespeople/utilities be able to access my property for emergency repairs?

We are exploring this in more detail. Possible solutions include a permit system or a phased approach to switching vehicles. We also expect the industry to adapt in a similar way to deliveries which has introduced business models based around the bike and low/zero emission vehicles.

Will disabled drivers of vehicles that do not comply with the ZEZ be exempt?

At this stage no specified drivers are proposed to be exempt however, we are of course committed to ensuring proper access for people with disabilities, we wish to hear from you on the implications of this and we will be engaging directly with disabilities groups.

Will the ZEZ cause alterations to bus routes / stops?

The ZEZ is not intended to change bus routes/bus stops, but instead bus companies will be encouraged to update their fleet. As part of the work on the joint city and county council “city centre movement and public realm strategy” a review of bus routes is underway and will include Westgate bus routes.

How will I receive deliveries to my business located within the Zone?

Through the current public consultation and engagement with impacted businesses we are gathering information about the challenges associated with deliveries within the zone. The city centre is a working commercial centre which employs a significant amount of people and the final proposals will have to reflect this and ensure businesses can continue to flourish. There are a number of zero emission delivery companies already operating in Oxford and it is anticipated this market will develop to accommodate deliveries in within the zone.

Does the consultation take into account the costs to businesses to comply with the ZEZ?

The feasibility study which was conducted to inform the ZEZ includes an economic assessment of the proposal on businesses and residents. The full costs can be viewed [here](#). Both councils are committed to working with partners to make the transition as smooth as possible.

Are Heavy Good Vehicles (HGVs) excluded from the ZEZ?

HGVs would not be excluded from the ZEZs until 2035 under current proposals, as they are the least technologically advanced in terms of low and zero emission alternatives. At the moment, for example, electric recycling trucks do not exist. Weight and time restrictions would be considered as means of reducing their impact in the Zero Emission Zone.

Light Commercial Vehicles (LCV) that emit pollution will be excluded from the centre of Oxford from an early stage of the ZEZ, does that mean HGVs can be used instead?

We do not wish to replace LCV in the city centre with HGVs and we would therefore consider other measures such as time limits and weight restrictions to discourage a

switch to HGVs. There are a number of zero emission delivery companies already operating in Oxford and it is anticipated this market will develop to accommodate deliveries within the zone. We have also consulted companies such as Pedal and Post to understand how their business model can be used to make deliveries in the centre of Oxford.

Will Emergency vehicles be banned from entering the zone if they are not zero emission?

Currently there are no zero emission alternative emergency vehicles available to switch to as such emergency vehicles will not be banned from entering the zone.

Will refuse vehicles be banned from entering the zone if they are not zero emission?

We are exploring how and when vehicles can meet zero emission standards and whether or not they need to be exempt in the early stages of implementation.

Will non-zero emission vehicles be allowed into the Westgate car park in 2025?

Under current proposals non-zero emission vehicles will be allowed to enter the Westgate car park.

What about St. Giles fair, will non-zero emission vehicles associated with the fair be banned?

Further work will be required to understand how vehicles associated with specific events are treated in the proposed zone.

Will catering vans around Oxford be banned from the city centre?

Under current proposal LCV, cars, taxis and buses will be required to be zero emission in the city centre core from 2020. Most catering vans will fall in the LCV category and will hence be excluded from entering the city centre under current proposals.

Are motorbikes and mopeds excluded from the zone?

Motorcycles are not currently included in the proposals. The consultation questionnaire seeks views on whether people think mopeds and motorcycles should be exempt from the zero emission zone. We also welcome your evidence on air quality impacts of motorcycles and suggestions on the role they can play in creating clean air in our city.

How will the ZEZ be enforced?

Various technologies could be used to enforce the ZEZs, including on street monitoring, bollards and cameras. The mechanisms deployed could vary depending

on the vehicles. Traffic regulation orders would most likely be used to enforce the zones. Enforcement for hybrid vehicle users requires further consideration.

Will hybrid vehicles be allowed in the ZEZ?

Under current proposals hybrid vehicles will be allowed in the ZEZs if they are operating in electric mode.

How will you enforce and check whether a hybrid vehicle is operated in electric mode?

We are currently investigating options for enforcement of the zone as a whole, including on street monitoring and cameras.

What are the next steps for implementation?

Once we have reviewed the responses and considered all issues raised, a further study and formal consultation will be needed to take forward implementation of the ZEZ. This really is a consultation to understand the impacts on businesses and individuals and their specific concerns with a ZEZ. We urge responses from all parties.