Oxford traffic filters

September 2022

About Logistics UK

Logistics UK is one of Britain's largest business groups and the only one providing a voice for the entirety of the UK's logistics sector. Our role, on behalf of over 19,000 members, is to enhance the safety, efficiency and sustainability of freight movement throughout the supply chain, across all transport modes. Logistics UK members operate over 200,000 goods vehicles - almost half the UK fleet - and some one million liveried vans. In addition, they consign over 90 per cent of the freight moved by rail and over 70 per cent of sea and air freight.

We seek to ensure that our industry can continue to supply businesses and consumers with the goods they require every day whilst reducing any social impacts – including carbon dioxide emissions and air pollution. The logistics industry wishes to play a positive role in helping reduce emissions.

Logistics UK's policy positions are determined by the members of its Councils. Over 300 managers and leaders from across road freight attend Logistics UK's Freight Councils throughout the UK every quarter. These Policy Councils meet in 13 locations across the UK. Nominated members are then able to participate in the UK-level Road Council where our policy positions on road issues are ratified. There are also Air, Rail and Water Councils that all members can join, as well as Shippers Council for logistics customers and a Strategic Council to address long-term issues.

About the Logistics industry

The logistics industry plays an indispensable role servicing our towns and cities, supplying communities and supporting local economies. To enable the industry to operate as efficiently as possible, logistics must be considered part of the UK's essential infrastructure, with appropriate local and national policies and regulatory frameworks in place to support its crucial role.

The impact of logistics operations in urban areas can be minimised through careful consideration of road space reallocation, supportive urban planning and appropriate steps to support future vehicle and mobility technologies.

There is an inherent transport cost in everything we buy. As the UK recovers from the global pandemic, we are now faced with a cost-of-living crisis. According to Logistics UK's Manager's Guide to Distribution Costs, total operating costs for a 44-tonne articulated truck increased by 13.4% in 2021, due to increased fuel prices (our members' biggest cost) and upward pressure from wages as the industry experienced an acute driver shortage. At the same time, there was a 5.9% increase in the Retail Prices Index (RPI) inflation rate in the year to December 2021, which raised most other input costs.

This is putting an unsustainable burden on logistics businesses, which traditionally operate on very low margins. Smaller operators are likely to be disproportionally affected by the increase in driver salaries and fuel costs.

Supporting an efficient supply chain and minimising unnecessary regulatory barriers is essential in keeping the cost of goods and services as competitive as possible for Oxfordshire's residents, businesses and visitors.

Logistics UK supports measures to improve air quality and reduce CO_2 emissions.

Response to consultation

Logistics UK strongly welcomes the recognition by Oxfordshire County Council of the essential role of freight by excluding HGVs and vans from the proposals for traffic filters in Oxford.

Congestion causes significant inefficiencies in the logistics sector in terms of delivery times and operating costs, but it also contributes to further CO_2 emissions through tailpipe emissions as vehicle engines idle whilst in traffic.

Congestion is predominantly caused by passenger cars: In 2021, 222.3 billion vehicle miles (bvm) were driven by cars, compared to 55 bvm for vans and 17.8 bvm for lorries.[1] Given the economic importance of road freight traffic, Oxfordshire County Council should focus on keeping road freight moving.

If the traffic filters were to apply to HGVs and vans, the impact of traffic displacement would result in lengthy diversions, increasing journey times and potentially resulting in the need for additional vehicles to complete the same level of work - increasing costs, emissions and congestion.

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[1] Provisional road traffic estimates, Great Britain: October 2020 to September 2021