

I am employed as a Counter Terrorism Security Advisor and work for the North East Counter Terrorism Police. I oversee counter terrorism protected security in York district and am a permanent member of the CYC Counter Terrorism Task Group.

For some years I have been advising the council and private businesses on Hostile Vehicle Mitigation (HVM) for both the city centre and some outlying venues.

HVM is an effective and proven security measure for protecting crowded places such as the centre of York, many examples of HVM can be seen at other large city and town centres throughout the UK. They have been put in place to protect the public from the various terrorist attack methodologies using vehicles. This includes vehicles that contain explosives as well as everyday vehicles that are used to drive into crowded areas (known as Vehicle as Weapon attacks).

When considering a vehicle access scheme involving the use of security hardware which mitigates or prevents a vehicle gaining access to the designated protected area, it is necessary to create a sterile zone free from all vehicles at times when the area is a crowded place. Entry to such areas must be restricted to emergency response vehicles which can be done during the planning phase of any such scheme.

I am aware that CYC have a well-developed plan to introduce such a vehicle access scheme to the centre of York, it has been subject to consultation and has received advice from the likes of myself as well as my colleagues from CPNI (Centre for the Protection of National Infrastructure) who have advised on other projects nationally.

To have an effective scheme in place it would be necessary to exclude **all vehicles** from access to the sterile area when it is operational ie when it is busy with pedestrians, this unfortunately includes 'blue badge' holders. Terrorists plan attacks meticulously and hold no regard to blue badge holders, they do not follow the everyday rules that you and I would and would see the use of a vehicle displaying a blue badge as an opportunity rather than something that is in place to assist others.

I therefore would advocate that any vehicle having 'blue badge' status should be excluded from entry to the vehicle access zone within the city centre during the times when it is operational.

I understand that the council is consulting to find alternative parking for such vehicles as close to the city centre as is possible and this hopefully will enable parking for 'blue badge' holders and their vehicles.