

Divisions affected: Barton, Sandhills & Risinghurst, Cowley, Didcot West, Iffley Fields & St Mary's, Isis

DELEGATED DECISIONS BY CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT

21 MARCH 2024

OXFORD & DIDCOT – EXPERIMENTAL SCHOOL STREETS ACTIVE TRAVEL MEASURES

Report by Corporate Director: Environment and Place

RECOMMENDATION

1. The Cabinet Member for Transport Management is **RECOMMENDED** to approve the introduction of Experimental Traffic Regulation Orders (ETROs) to facilitate the introduction of 'school streets' for the following schools:
 - St Mary and St John Church of England Primary School, Oxford,
 - Sandhills Community Primary School, Oxford,
 - Tyndale Community School, Oxford,
 - New Hinksey Church of England Primary School, Oxford, and
 - Manor Primary School, Didcot.

Executive Summary

2. This report sets out the proposal to trial temporary school streets for five schools in Oxford & Didcot, under an Experimental Traffic Regulation Order (ETRO). The proposals would see the school streets introduced during the school week (Monday to Friday) during the morning 'drop-off' & afternoon 'pick-up' peak periods within term time only (i.e. not during school holidays). Plans outlining the roads covered by the proposals can be found in **Annexes 1 to 5**.
3. A school street is an active travel initiative to create a safer and more welcoming environment around the school gate, and encourage walking, wheeling, cycling and scooting to schools, while reducing the level of motor vehicle traffic around the school gate during the morning drop off and the afternoon pick up times.
4. School streets help create places where children can thrive, be healthier and happier because they are: being more active, enjoying improved air quality, getting a boost to confidence from active travel, and getting more chances to be sociable.

5. During the school street operational times, the roads around the school sites would only be open to people walking, wheeling, scooting and cycling, and anyone in a vehicle who is exempt. Exempt motorists include the school street residents with vehicles registered to an address on the school street, blue badge holders, any businesses located on the school street, emergency vehicles, and council organised home to school transport for students with additional needs.
6. For the school streets trials, there will be trained volunteers from the school and local community to help operate the school street during the agreed school street trial time periods. They will do this by manually putting out temporary school street barriers and opening them for all exempt vehicles.
7. During the school street trials there will be no requirement for school street residents and their visitors, delivery drivers, any businesses located on the school street, and any other exempt vehicles to apply for a school street exemption, as the trial school street is manually operated.
8. During the school street trials there will be ongoing traffic and parking monitoring, and a full public consultation will be held to gather views and feedback on whether the school streets should become permanent school streets managed via Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) Cameras.

Financial Implications

9. If the trial school street proposal is approved, and the ETRO introduced, funding will come from school streets Phase 2 capital funding. The school streets Phase 2 Capital Business Case has been approved, and capital funding has been made available to support the delivery of the phase 2 school street trials.

Equality Implications

10. This proposal is not expected to disproportionately impact, discriminate or unfairly disadvantage individuals or groups within the community.
11. School street trial exempted motorists will include school street residents and their visitors, delivery drivers, local businesses, blue badge holders, emergency vehicles, and council organised home to school transport for students with additional needs. Officers will also continue to work with the schools and residents to ensure that anyone with specific needs is not adversely impacted by the school street trial measures. This will ensure that these needs can be considered with the residents and schools and accommodated appropriately.

Legal Implications

12. The school street trial scheme will be introduced using an Experimental Traffic Regulation Order (ETRO) in accordance with the powers and duties set out in the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984. Some, or all of the school street changes may be made permanent following the experimental trial phase, subject to a follow up full public Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) consultation, and the ongoing monitoring of the scheme's impacts.

Sustainability Implications

13. The school street trial scheme seeks to encourage higher levels of walking, wheeling, cycling and scooting, whilst simultaneously reducing the level of motor vehicle traffic in the vicinity of the schools during the morning drop off and afternoon pick up peak periods. The sustainability implications are improved air quality due to the reduced carbon emissions and reduced road safety risks due to the reduction in vehicles.
14. The school street trial scheme will be supported by school and parent volunteers and local stakeholders. There are sustainability implications on this limited resource, and officers will work closely with schools to support volunteers.

Pre-ETRO Consultation

15. The school streets Pre-ETRO Consultation was carried out with local residents, the schools' parent groups, the schools and local residents, businesses and stakeholders between 2 February and 1 March 2024. An email was sent to statutory consultees and key stakeholders, including (but not exclusively) Thames Valley Police, Oxfordshire Fire & Rescue Service, South Central Ambulance Service, local bus operators, countywide transport/access and disabled persons user groups, Oxford City Council, South Oxfordshire District Council, local city & district councillors, county councillors representing Barton, Sandhills & Risinghurst, Cowley, Didcot West, Iffley Fields & St Mary's, and Isis wards, Didcot Town Council, Risinghurst & Sandhills Parish Council, the Oxford Preservation Trust, and other local interest and advocacy groups.
16. Letters were also sent to addresses in the immediate vicinity of each proposed school street trial (1368 in total), complemented by the school's circulating information to their school communities (in particular parents/carers of pupils attending the respective schools).
17. As this has been an informal, preliminary ETRO engagement focused specifically on small groups of streets, and it has not made use of a wider public formal survey structure (although wider public formal surveys on the school street proposals will be conducted at the appropriate stages).

18. 109 responses were received during the consultation period. These responses have been reviewed, with the overarching general themes identified. These themes, and the officer responses, and any mitigations required as a result of the general themes raised are detailed below.

Consultation Feedback & Key Themes

19. School communities, local residents and businesses adjacent or near to the school street, and key stakeholders were written to with provisional details of the school street trial proposals. They were invited to email and write back with any comments they had on the school street trial proposals.

20. The comments received have ranged from those who are fully supportive of the school street trial proposals, to those who oppose the school street trial. The responses have ranged in length depending on the level of context provided in a response.

21. Every response has been reviewed to capture the key themes raised by each respondent. The analysis of the key themes is listed below, in table 1, accompanied by the overall level of support or opposition indicated by the respondent to the trial school street proposal. Where respondents have not clearly indicated if they support or oppose the proposals, they have been listed as 'neither' i.e: not supporting or opposing. Some responses have cited multiple key themes and so the total numbers of key themes shown below is higher than the individual number of responses received.

Table 1: Table of general themes raised by consultation respondents.

Theme category heading	Fully Support	Partially support with some concerns	Neither	Partially oppose with some concerns but I support some elements	Fully Oppose	Total
Traffic displacement / issues		16	7	1	13	37
Parking displacement	1	15			14	33
Safer	14					14
Excessive / unnecessary scheme		1			12	13
Expand the scheme	1	6	3		1	11
Access for tradespeople / deliveries		2	2		3	9
Access for residents / their visitors		3	2		4	9
No feedback reason given	6					6
reduces congestion / Traffic Volume / Speed / Rat running	4					4
Aids Active Travel / promotes health	3					3
Civil liberties concerns					3	3
Park and Stride needed		2				2
Increased journey time / will be late					2	2
Use of ANPR / ANPR concerns			1			1
Access for carers			1			1
Need for non-electronic/internet exemption applications				1		1
Access for taxis /issue that taxi may abuse system		1				1
TOTALS	29	46	16	7	52	150

Summary of Key Themes and Concerns

22. Traffic and parking displacement are the two main concerns raised by respondents, both for those opposing and those partially supporting the school street trial proposals. Concerns have also been raised that the school street proposals are unnecessary / excessive schemes compared to the number of children affected, and access for residents and tradespeople and deliveries have also been raised as concerns.
23. There are also a high number of respondents who support the school street trial proposals, stating it will be safer for their school, and believe it will help reduce congestion and support active travel. A number of those in support of the proposals did not give a key theme or give further narrative to their support in general.

Officer Response

24. The consultation was sent to residents and parents for each individual school, so it has been possible to identify which trial school street proposal each respondent was commenting on. The main items raised by respondents for each school are detailed below, and this allows for more detailed officer responses.
25. It is important to note that each of the school street proposals is different, due to the geographical positioning of the school and its local surrounding areas. As a result, the officer responses to the consultation feedback have been set out below specifically to address items raised for each school.

St Mary and St John Church of England Primary School:

26. Use of the Falcon Boat Club car park, as a potential park & stride location.

Officer response: Falcon Boat Club car park is an Oxford City Council owned car park. We are continuing to work with our Oxford City Council colleagues regarding the potential use of the Falcon Boat Club car park as a park and stride location and will liaise directly with the school on any further developments.

27. Parking difficulties for residents on adjacent streets who use Bedford Street,

Officer response: The school street trial will be monitored to capture any parking or traffic displacement, and we will work with our parking and highways colleagues to ensure any illegal parking or traffic displacement is managed. All vehicles can leave and drive out of the school street area at any time during the school street operational times. We will be asking for resident's feedback during the trial period to understand the scheme impacts.

28. The proposed school street area is too small and should include all of Iffley Fields.

Officer response: The school street trial will be monitored to understand whether the expansion of the geographic area is necessary to the effectiveness of the scheme. This will be reviewed at the end of the school street trial and analysed as part of the TRO consultation for a permanent school street.

29. The narrowness of roads due to existing residents parking.

Officer response: The school street trial will be monitored to capture any parking or traffic displacement, and we will work with our parking colleagues to ensure any illegal parking is managed.

30. Concern of taxi's accessing the school street for private trips.

Officer response: The school street trial will be monitored to capture any taxi use that is not permitted and steps taken to address this if it is identified.

Sandhills Community Primary School:

31. Traffic and parking displacement (particularly onto Delbush Avenue)

Officer response: The school street trial will be monitored to capture any parking or traffic displacement, and we will work with our parking and highways colleagues to ensure any displaced parking or traffic displacement is managed.

32. Access for residents, carers, deliveries, hire vehicles.

Officer response: The school street trial will be allowing full access for all residents, their carers, deliveries, hire vehicles. The trial will be monitored to capture any access issues for residents, carers deliveries, and / or hire vehicles. We will be sending out surveys to all residents as part of the school street trial to capture their experience of the trial period and ask for their feedback and comments.

33. Need to promote/ incentivise use of park and ride better.

Officer response: As part of the school street trial, we will be working with the school and parents to support and encourage park and stride from Thornhill Park and Ride, and are currently exploring options for re-painting the underpass entrances so that they are more appealing to walk through.

Tyndale Community School:

34. Access for residents, carers, deliveries, hire vehicles

Officer response: The school street trial will be allowing full access for all residents, their carers, deliveries, hire vehicles. The trial will be monitored to capture any access issues for residents, carers deliveries, and / or hire vehicles. We will be sending out surveys to all residents as part of the school street trial to capture their experience of the trial period and ask for their feedback and comments.

35. Displacement (particularly onto Horspath Road)

Officer response: The school street trial will be monitored to capture any parking or traffic displacement, and we will work with our parking and highway colleagues to ensure any displaced parking or traffic is managed.

36. Wide catchment area – distance some parents travel it is not possible to travel actively, especially with additional time pressures such as getting to work.

Officer response: We are working with the school to develop their travel planning and will work with the school to support parents who may have to travel longer distances. Any issues such as these that are raised during the trial will be addressed to find workable solutions. They will need to be addressed on a case-by-case basis.

Manor Primary School:

37. Displacement (particularly onto Manor Road and sections of Lydalls Close not included in scheme plan,

Officer response: The school street trial will be monitored to capture any parking or traffic displacement, and we will work with our parking and highway colleagues to ensure any displaced parking or traffic is managed.

38. Adverse impact on Foxhall Road (congestion, road safety issues, verge / pavement parking)

Officer response: The school street trial will be monitored to capture any parking or traffic displacement, and we will work with our parking and highway colleagues to ensure any displaced parking or traffic is managed.

39. Unrealistic / unfeasible option for parents/ carers who drive onto work after dropping children off.

Officer response: We are working with the school to develop their travel planning and will work with the school to support parents who may have to travel to work after dropping of children to school. Any issues such as these that are raised during the trial will be addressed to find workable solutions. They will need to be addressed on a case-by-case basis.

New Hinksey Church of England Primary School:

40. Concerns raised regarding traffic displacement and adverse impacts (particularly in relation to road safety) on Lake Street and Summerfield Road (with access and turning concerns raised also).

Officer response: Following the road safety concerns raised regarding Lake Street and Summerfield, the New Hinksey School Street layout is currently being reviewed to see if these additional roads can also be included within the school street layout. Officers are recommending as part of this CMD report, the possible expansion of the New Hinksey School Street to include Lake Street and Summerfield. Officers will separately contact residents and local businesses regarding this.

41. Concerns raised regarding traffic displacement and subsequently increased road safety risk on Wytham Street and Norreys Avenue (a key walking/ cycling corridor) with calls to expand the school street to cover these areas.

Officer response: The school street trial will be monitored to capture any parking or traffic displacement in the surrounding areas, and we will review the school street layout as part of the trial.

42. Concerns raised regarding access for delivery drivers, carers, and trades people.

Officer response: The school street trial will be allowing full access for all residents, delivery drivers, carers, and trades people. The trial will be monitored to capture any access issues for residents. We will be sending out surveys to all residents as part of the school street trial to capture their experience of the trial period and ask for their feedback and comments.

43. The scheme is excessive for a small issue / volume of children.

Officer response: The purpose of a school street is to encourage active travel choices for children, regardless of the size of their school.

Next steps

44. If the recommendation is approved, officers will arrange the Phase 2 trial School Street ETRO implementation – currently planned for early April 2024.

45. Following trial scheme implementation, stakeholders and members of the public under the ETRO will then have a minimum six-month statutory consultation period to comment on the school street trial proposal. Within this period, the trial scheme can be modified or changed to take account of any issues raised or alterations required.

46. Within the 18-month period of the ETRO, a decision on whether to make some or all of the school streets permanent will be taken, following a statutory permanent school street TRO Consultation. In light of responses to this consultation, and depending on funding available, and the results of the

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KEY



SCHOOL STREET RESTRICTED AREA -

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Project title
**ANPR School Street Enforcement
St Mary & St John Primary**

Drawing title
**School Streets
Bedford Street
Oxford**

Drawing Status

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Project title
**ANPR School Street Enforcement
Sandhills Community Primary**

Drawing title
**School Streets
Terrett Avenue
Headington**

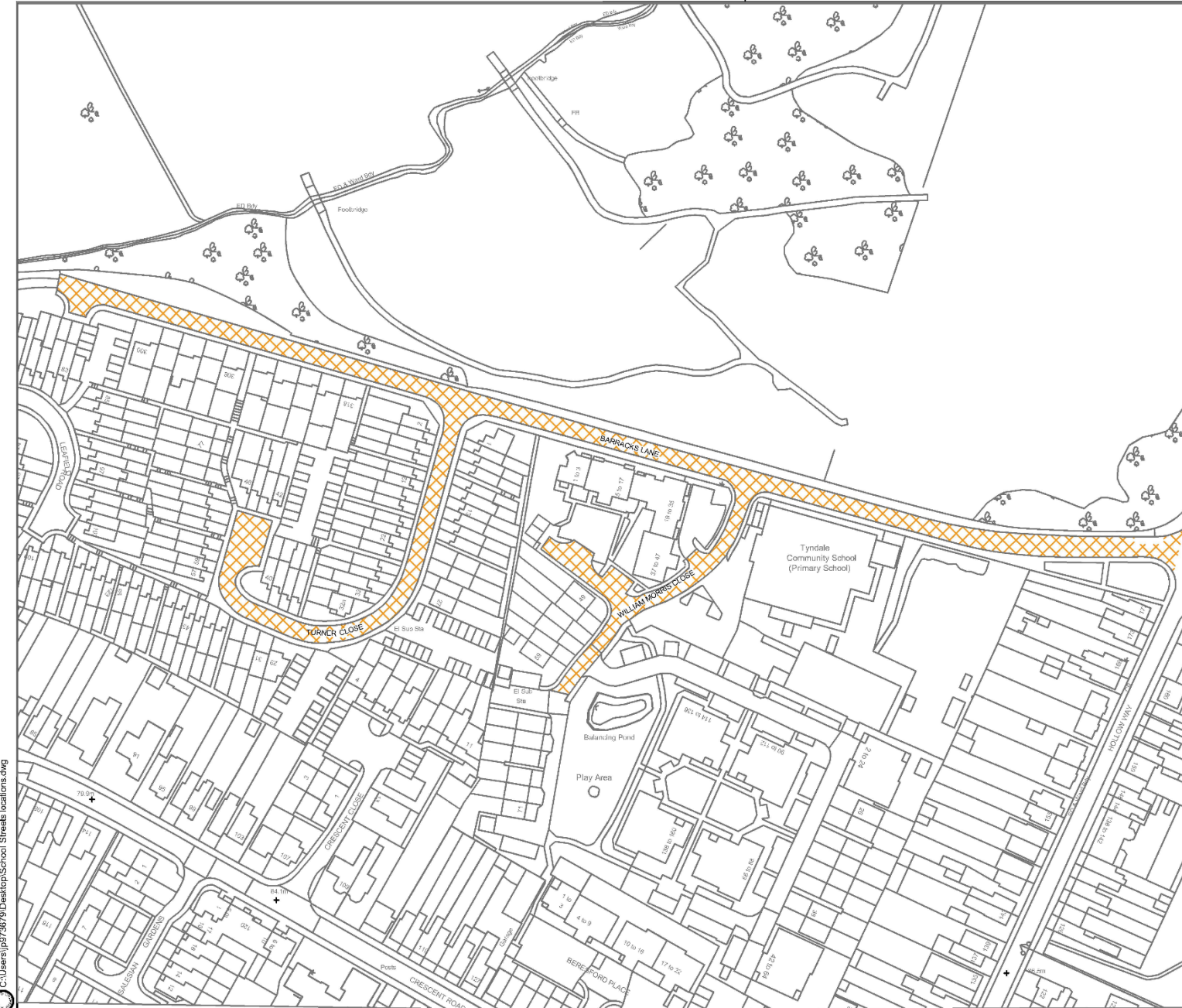
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**ANPR School Street
Enforcement
Tyndale Community School**

Drawing title
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Barracks Lane
Oxford**


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Project title
**ANPR School Street Enforcement
New Hinksey C of E School**

Drawing title
**School Streets
Vicarage Rd & Surrounding Streets
Oxford**

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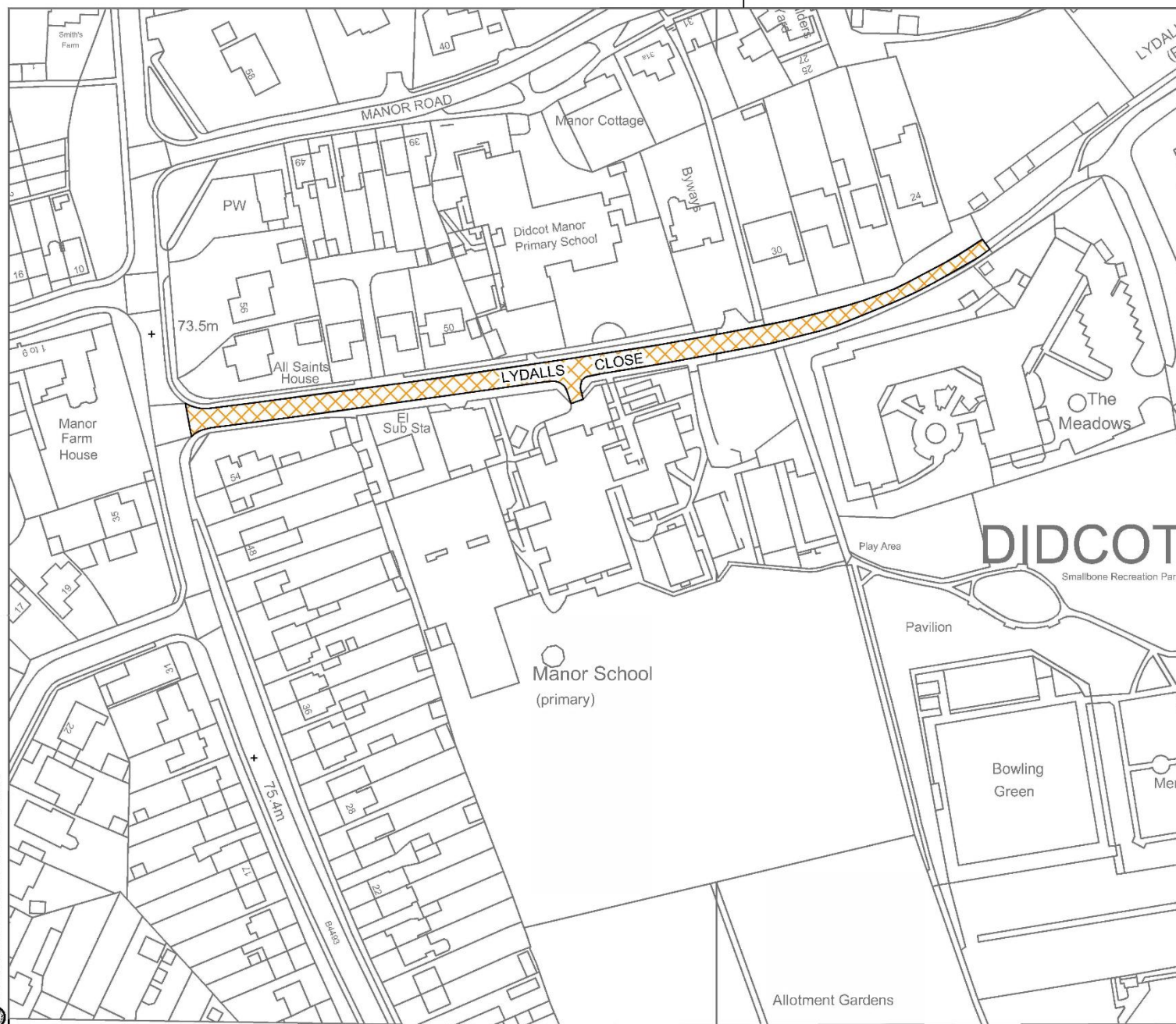
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Manor Primary School**

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Lydalls Close
Didcot**

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