

CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT – 6 AUGUST 2020

OXFORD: WALTON STREET - EXPERIMENTAL PROHIBITION OF MOTOR VEHICLES

Report by Director for Community Operations, Communities

Recommendation

1. **The Cabinet Member for the Environment is RECOMMENDED to end the experimental order and return the road layout and signage to its original configuration as designed prior to the Walton Street closure.**

Executive summary

2. Formal consultation recently concluded for the experimental order prohibiting access to and from Walton Street at its junction with Beaumont Street and Worcester Street (Oxford).
3. In July 2020 the Cabinet Member for the Environment deferred the decision to amend the experimental order following officer recommendations.
4. Due to the recent Active Travel proposals, as part of transport Recovery plans, initiatives are being brought forward that will no longer require the physical closure of Walton street (at the junction of Worcester Street/ Beaumont Street)., Other measures under this programme are expected to enable similar benefits to the Walton manor and Jericho area that the existing physical closure has afforded.

Reasoning for the decision

5. Analysis of the formal consultation phase found that 51% of respondents expressed support for the measure whilst 43% expressed an objection. These formal responses were furthermore supported by a number of petitions both for and against the closure that indicated an almost equal final figure of 50/50 in favour/against the trial.
6. The results of the formal consultation stage together with the ongoing wider traffic movement impacts of COVID-19 resulted in an officer recommendation for deferral of a decision on the Walton Street Closure. This recommendation was approved at Cabinet Member Decisions (CMD) on 16th July.
7. Since the CMD decision there have been a number of developments, namely;
 - Further traffic surveying undertaken in Walton Manor area has found that local mitigation measures implemented to try and ease congestion for certain streets including St Bernard's Rd during the trial have continued to

be unsuccessful The county council has confirmed Tranche 1 Covid 19 Active travel measures include the proposal to install a temporary bus gate within the Worcester Street/Beaumont Street area, which will have the effect of restricting through traffic through the Walton Manor / Jericho area (the restriction is proposed to allow local movements with proposed exemptions. Further details are currently being developed).

- The county council is considering detailed consultation into the development of a wider Low Traffic Neighbourhoods (LTN) through application to the Tranche 2 Covid 19 Active Travel funding. These are for measures across the city but could include the Jericho and Walton Manor area.
- The need to aid local businesses in recovery after a four-month (COVID-19) period of economic uncertainty.

What next?

8. If cancelation of the order is approved the barriers and restrictions at St Bernard's Rd/ Walton St and at the Walton St/ Worcester street junction will be removed during (or shortly after) the week commencing 17 August 2020.
9. As part of the COVID-19 recovery plans and the Active Travel programme, an experimental bus gate in the Worcester St/ Beaumont Street/Hythe Bridge Street is currently undergoing an engagement and stakeholder consultation phase, with a possible decision and implementation in Sept 2020.
10. At the 16 July 2020 CMD a presentation from a local residents group indicated that there was an initial local appetite to amend the street scape to develop a balanced solution for reducing traffic flow across the local area, that is equitable for all of the residents/businesses. These measures will be considered further by the county council through the development of its Local Connectivity Transport Plan 5. A recent topic paper for the development of the plan set out an agenda for Low Traffic Neighbourhoods. In the meantime, the county council will explore whether there are suitable opportunities through the Active Travel programme as part of the second Tranche of activity (if the County Council's funding proposal is agreed by the Department for Transport). Tranche 2 will consider the progression of development and consultation for a potential Low Traffic Neighbourhood concept for Jericho/ Walton Manor. This will be developed in conjunction with local residents and business groups to ensure that it meets everyone's needs and will be developed to ensure strategic fit as part of wider highway initiatives being brought forward for the city.

JASON RUSSELL

Interim Director for Community Operations

Background papers: Plan of prohibition of access by motor vehicles.
Consultation responses

Contact Officers: Tim Shickle 07920591545

August 2020



Walton Street - Proposed Prohibition of Motor Vehicles

© Crown copyright. All rights reserved
 Oxfordshire County Council
 Licence No. 0100023343 2019

SCALE	1 : 1000
DATE	20/09/2019
DRAWING NO.	
DRAWN BY	

CMDE4