

Divisions affected: *Witney South and Central*

## **CABINET MEMBER FOR HIGHWAY MANAGEMENT – 24 MARCH 2022**

### **WITNEY: AVENUE TWO – PROPOSED WAITING RESTRICTIONS AND CYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN SAFETY MEASURES**

Report by Corporate Director, Environment and Place

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

1. The Cabinet Member for Highway Management is **RECOMMENDED** to approve the proposed no waiting at any time restrictions on Avenue Two as advertised, and also the cycle and pedestrian safety measures as shown in the plan in **Annex 3**.

#### **Executive summary**

2. This report presents responses received to a statutory consultation on a proposal to introduce no waiting at any time restrictions on Avenue 2. The proposals are required to safely accommodate access to and from adjacent commercial land use, with planning consent – including in respect of the revised access arrangements as shown in the **Annex 1** - being recently given by West Oxfordshire District Council. Following a deferral of a decision on these proposals at the Cabinet Member for Highway Management meeting on 18 November 2021, and as requested at that meeting, further discussions were held with the consultants acting on behalf of the developer to identify options to ensure the safety of pedestrians and cyclists, in addition to the waiting restrictions a number of other measures are proposed, as shown in **Annex 3**.

#### **Financial Implications**

3. Funding for consultation on the proposals has been provided by the developers of the adjacent land who will also fund their implementation, should they be approved.

#### **Equality and Inclusion Implications**

4. No implications in respect of equalities or inclusion have been identified in respect of the proposals.

#### **Sustainability Implications**

5. The proposals will facilitate the safe movement of traffic including cyclists and pedestrians.

## **Statutory Consultation on proposed waiting restrictions**

6. The Formal consultation was carried out between 08 September and 08 October 2021, the consultation plan is available in **Annex 1**. A notice was published in the Witney Gazette newspaper, and an email sent to statutory consultees, including Thames Valley Police, the Fire & Rescue Service, Ambulance service, West Oxfordshire District Council, Witney Town Council, and the local County Councillor.
7. Ten responses were received during the formal consultation, with five objections, two raising concerns, two in support, and one non-objection. The responses are shown at **Annex 2**, and copies of the original responses are available for inspection by County Councillors.
8. The objections and concerns primarily related to the possible displacement of parking elsewhere in the road and area, but also specific concerns about how the arrangement of unrestricted waiting on both sides as proposed would in practice function.
9. Thames Valley police expressed no objection.
10. The Witney Town Council (Climate, Biodiversity & Planning Committee) expressed an objection to the proposed no waiting at any time restrictions (which is the focus of this specific consultation) on the grounds that the current on-street parking not only is an overflow from users of other established businesses on the Industrial Park but also provides social value, including for access to the Lake & Country Park and also occasionally for users of the bowls club at the Leys. While not opposed in principle to additional waiting restrictions, they requested that a full assessment of the impact of the loss of parking is carried out ahead of any decision being taken.
11. However, Witney Town Council's more fundamental concerns are the dangers and loss of amenity for pedestrians and cyclists arising from additional new HGV and commercial vehicle access on this section of Avenue Two, noting that it is not a dead-end, but rather a busy, well-used active travel route used by families and children and is the main route used by schoolchildren, pedestrians and cyclists from Ducklington. The Sustrans route that passes through this section of Avenue Two is a National Cycle Network Route (Route 577) and should be protected. Their response also noted that the vehicle tracking (as also shown in **Annex 1**) demonstrated that turning HGVs would obstruct the full width of the road.
12. The local member also expressed an objection to the proposals on the grounds that they will make pedestrian and cycle access much more dangerous for the busy and popular Witney Lakes & Country Park. Oxfordshire County Council should be prioritising the encouragement and

safety of pedestrians and cyclists wishing to visit this local beauty spot which is a haven for both wildlife and people.

13. Sustrans – a national group facilitating active travel – also objected on the grounds that the proposal will essentially put new HGV entry and exit points on to/across the National Cycle Network Route 577 which is a well-used pedestrian and cycle route. The proposal will undermine the provision of safe active travel routes across Witney, which will be reinforced in the emerging Witney Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP).
14. Two objections and two expressions of concern were received from members of the public in respect of the loss of parking, with the respondents noting that the road leads to Lake and Country Park and also Witney Foodbank is based here. Parking, particularly for those with disabilities is needed here for both these activities.
15. One expression of support was received from a member of the public.

### **Further proposed measures to improve pedestrian and cycle safety**

16. The importance of Avenue 2 as an active travel route and the concerns over the risks posed by the use of the southern part of Avenue 2 by heavy goods vehicles was the principal reason for the deferral of the decision on the proposed waiting restrictions at the Cabinet Member for Highway Management meeting on 18 November 2021.
17. Following the above meeting, officers requested the consultants acting for the developer consider options for further measures to improve pedestrian and cycle safety. It was requested that the developers apply guidance from the Cycle Infrastructure Design guide (LTN 1/20) which recommends segregation of cyclists from those walking and motorised traffic.
18. In considering if a segregated cycleway, or a shared footway/cycleway could be provided along Avenue 2, the developer concluded there was insufficient space within the land controlled by the developer and the highway to achieve this. In light of this, other measures have been presented as shown in **Annex 3**.
19. The following is agreed with the developer for delivering via S278:
  - No waiting at any time restrictions (double yellow lines) on both sides of the road in the vicinity of the development site (southern section of Avenue Two) with the exception of the retention of 1 car parking space, due to suitable visibility splay being achieved.
  - Introduction of painted on-road cycle markings within the carriageway for the length of Avenue Two, to make motorised traffic aware of the cycle route and presence of cyclists in the carriageway and to encourage cyclists to ride in the primary position in their lane.

- Introduction of an uncontrolled crossing point (dropped kerb & tactile paving) just north of the development to aid people walking to cross the road where the footway ends on the eastern side of Avenue 2.
- Improved signage - clean and reinstate existing "no through road" sign on new post, with solar powered VAS (Vehicle Activated Sign) road sign warning drivers approaching from the north/Station Lane of cyclists. Standard "HGVs turning" sign here too, as a warning for cyclists approaching from the north.
- Signage at the access/egress gates to the development warning of cyclists.
- Signage on the path from the lake/Ducklington warning cyclists of the road ahead.

The design prioritises the need for cycle safety over the demand for extra parking or even for time-limited restrictions. Officers consider the proposed additional signing and road markings will enhance cycle safety over what is currently there; or what would be present should the not waiting restrictions not be approved.

20. In addition to the physical infrastructure measures above officers have also suggested the developer considers the following:

- a) Use of a Banksman for HGV turning movements to ensure that the HGV driver is aware of those walking or cycling in the vicinity whilst manoeuvring on/off the site.
- b) Limit the times of site operation.
- c) Request HGV drivers undertake specific cycle awareness training.
- d) Request to engage with Windrush Bike Project, a local not for profit enterprise who conduct a range of cycle training and other initiatives.

21. We understand, irrespective of the proposed measures, the objections remain. Witney Town Council have reaffirmed their concerns (see **Annex 4**) in light of the revised proposals.

22. Cyclist safety remains a county council priority, where there is the presence of both heavy goods vehicles and cyclist and/or pedestrians an element of risk of serious collision will exist. Officers consider the measures outlined above, within the control of the developer, seek to lessen the risk. The emerging Witney LCWIP is likely to review this route to consider, if through third party land assembly, a segregated cycleway could be delivered.

Bill Cotton  
Corporate Director, Environment and Place

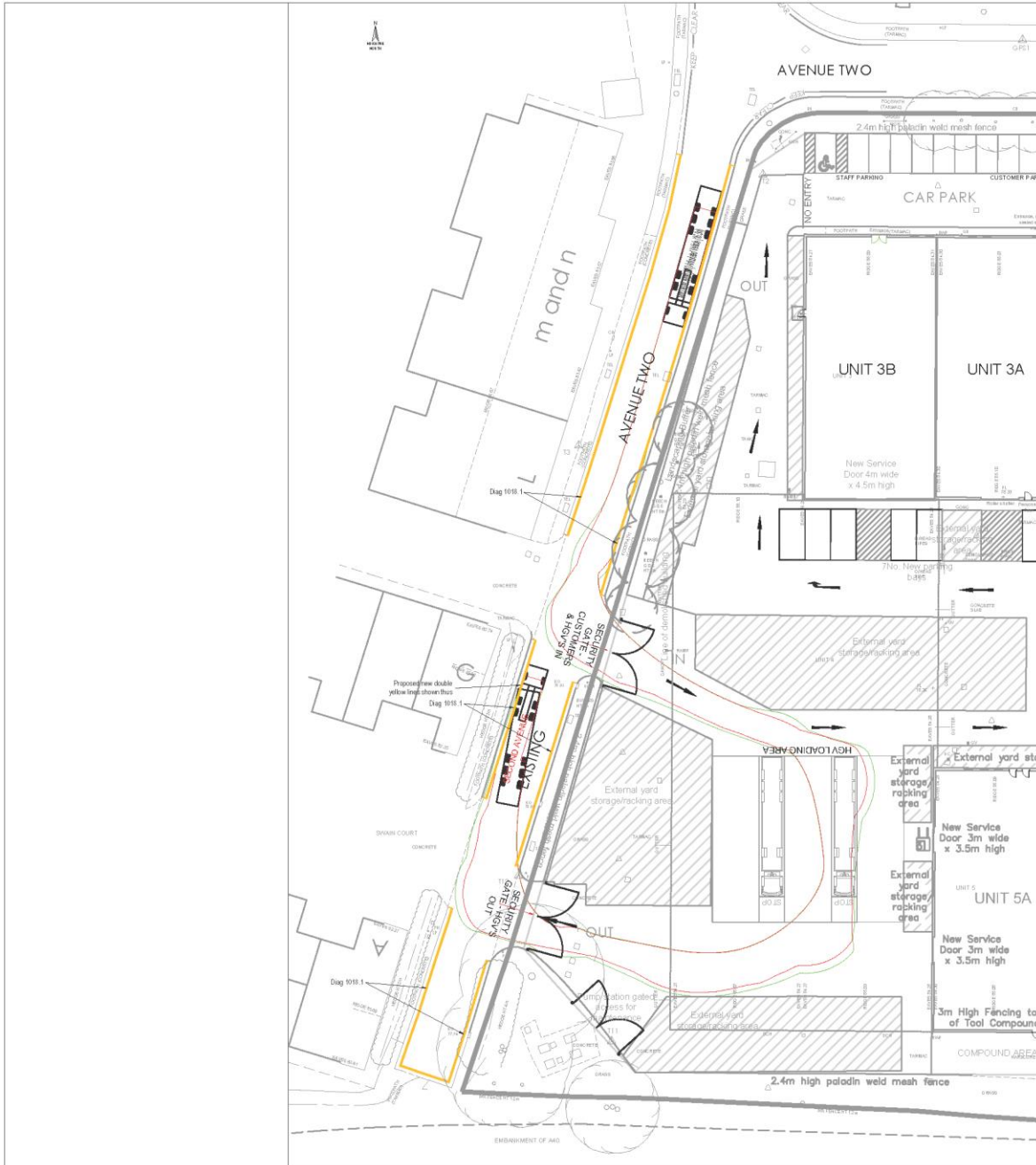
Annexes

- Annex 1: Consultation Plan (July 2021)
- Annex 2: Consultation responses
- Annex 3: Revised measures plan
- Annex 4: Witney Town Council Response to Revised Proposal

Contact Officers:

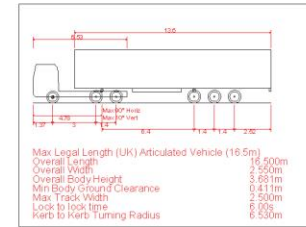
Tim Shickle 07920 591545  
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March 2022



NOTES

1. Markings to comply with Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions 2016



P1	19.07.21	Preliminary issue	JH	MB
Rev	Date	Description	By Apvd	

**PROJECT:**  
TRAVIS PERKINS, WITNEY

**TITLE:**  
TRAFFIC REGULATION  
ORDER PLAN

**CLIENT:**  
TILSTONE MANAGING WAREHOUSE  
REIT PLC

**SCALE@A3:**  
1:500

**PROJECT REF:**  
21198  
**DRAWING No:**  
001  
**REV:**  
P1

*Revision Referencing*  
P = Preliminary A = Approval T = Tender C = Construction

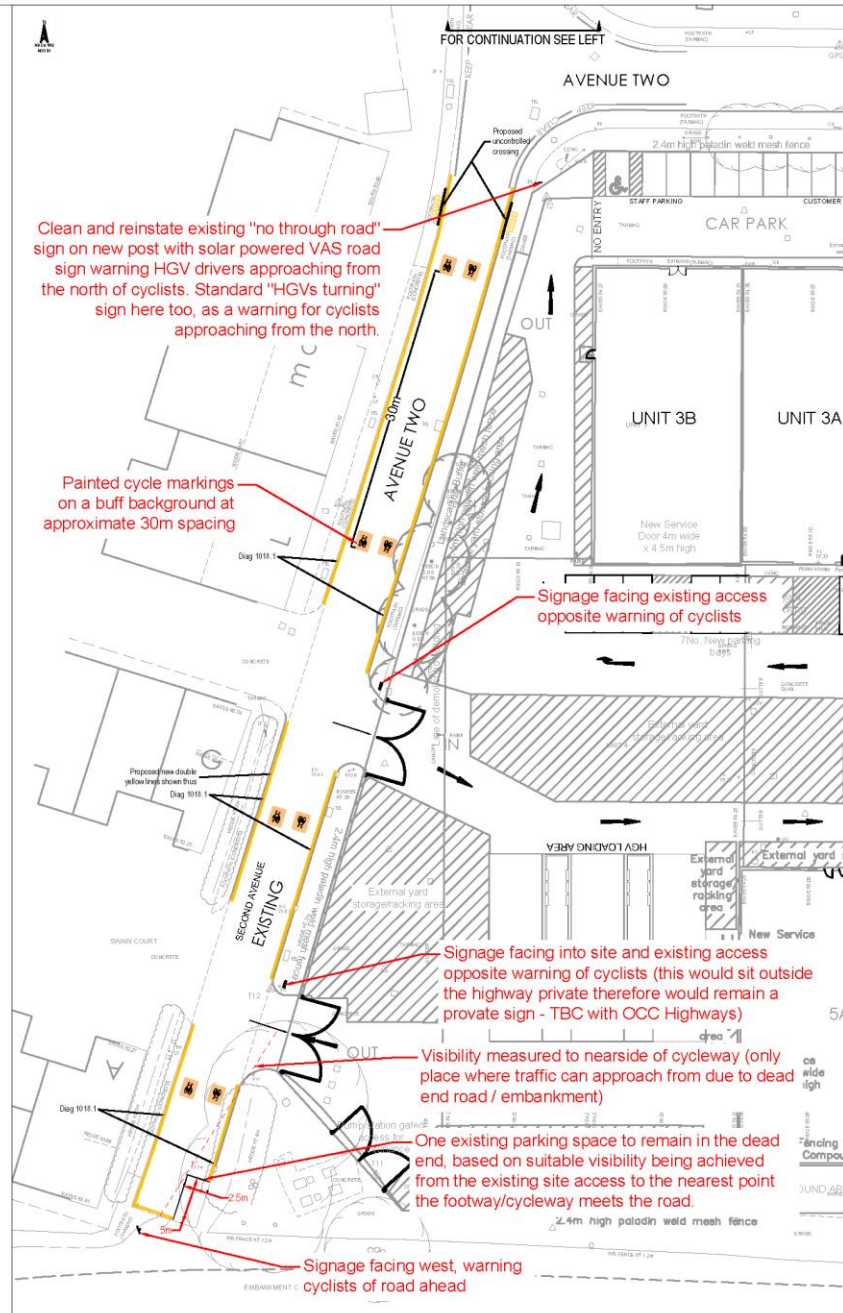
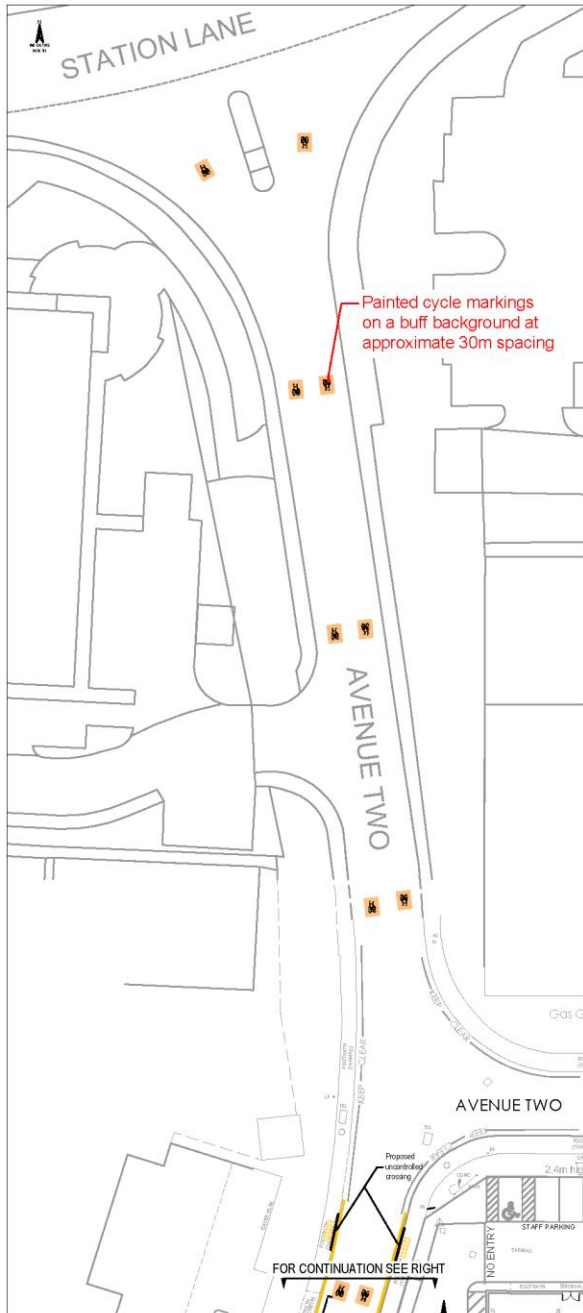


RESPONDENT	COMMENTS
(1) Traffic Management Officer, (Thames Valley Police)	<b>No objection</b>
(2) Witney Town Council (Climate, Biodiversity & Planning Committee)	<p><b>Object</b> – Since the proposal is taking away on-street parking, reason 2 is flawed. Witney Town Council reject the premise of the proposed parking restrictions - These proposals are being made primarily to facilitate transit of HGVs at the expense of on-street parking. This proposal doesn't remove danger, it facilitates an extra danger that wasn't present before. Any new appropriate development should plan site access entirely on the East/West spur of Avenue Two.</p> <p>Witney Town Council oppose all new HGV and commercial vehicle access on this section of the North/South spur. The Southern end of Avenue Two is not a dead-end. It is a busy, well-used active travel route used by families and children, it is the main route used by schoolchildren, pedestrians and cyclists from Ducklington. The Sustrans route that passes through this section of Avenue Two is a National Cycle Network Route (Route 577) and should be protected.</p> <p>A primary concern for Witney Town Council is the provision of a safe active travel route for our residents. Witney is embarking on an LCWIP (Local Cycling, Walking and Infrastructure Policy) and this proposal undermines this. This section of Avenue Two needs developing as an active travel route, providing safe connections to and across Station Lane, not hampering by the introduction of more HGVs and commercial vehicle (LGV and van) movements.</p> <p>Further, Avenue Two is the main access to Witney Lake and Country Park - a Witney Town Council amenity for leisure and enjoyment of nature. The Park also provides popular off-road through routes to Cogges and Ducklington. The current parking on this section of the North/South spur is the only parking available for users of the Lake and Country Park, particularly for those of limited mobility who cannot enjoy it by entirely active means of transport. Members are concerned that the plans are not taking in to account that this is a busy thoroughfare for those users. The on-road parking has a wide-ranging community benefit and should not be removed for the advantage of one business.</p> <p>The plans give an indication of the incredibly tight turning route/movement of HGVs entering and exiting the site, even</p>

	<p>with the removal of parking. The plans do not illustrate that these vehicle movements include any safety features to protect pedestrians and cyclists, users of the footpath and cycle route would be at unacceptable risk of harm.</p> <p>The current on-street parking is an overflow from users of other businesses on the Industrial Park. Has the developer carried out an assessment or consultation with the business owners and employers in the neighbouring units who undoubtedly use the current on-street parking that is available? Is there a wider travel and transport plan for neighbouring businesses? Any assessment needs to be inclusive of the potential impact of the proposed Travis Perkins development as well as users of other business units at this site.</p> <p>The current parking arrangements for Avenue Two provides far greater social value to Witney residents than 2 new HGV accesses to the commercial site and builders' yard. Particularly since the yard could be designed with access from the East/West spur. The social value is primarily for access to the Lake &amp; Country Park but also occasionally for users of the bowls club at the Leys and also for workers at the assorted established businesses on Avenue Two.</p> <p>Whilst Witney Town Council do not commit to supporting parking in this location in perpetuity, we strongly oppose removal of parking for the sake of introducing HGV access for one business. If a scheme came forward that incorporated improvements for safe access to the Lake &amp; Country Park, as well as better connectivity to promote active travel, then perhaps it might be more acceptable to Witney residents. However, Witney Town Council can't support a proposal for removal of on-street parking for the sole purpose of making the route more suitable for accommodating HGVs, and frequent commercial vehicle movements.</p> <p>Since the sole motivation for this proposal to introduce new parking prohibitions is to facilitate a planning application, Witney Town Council would like Oxfordshire County Council to consider our serious concerns and to reflect them in their response to the related planning application (West Oxfordshire District Council reference 21/02210/FUL), so that HGV's are not introduced to the route.</p> <p>Witney Town Council would like the developer to re-consider the layout in order that HGV access is limited to the East/West spur road where there is less likelihood of pedestrian and cyclist conflict.</p>
<p>(5) Local County Cllr, (Witney South &amp; Central Division)</p>	<p><b>Object</b> – The proposals for double yellow lines, to make access easier for HGVs at the old Fabulous Baking Boys site, will make pedestrian and cycle access much more dangerous for the busy and popular Witney Lakes &amp; Country Park. Oxfordshire County Council should be prioritising the encouragement and safety of pedestrians and cyclists wishing to visit this local beauty spot which is a haven for both wildlife and people.</p>



<p>(3) Local Group/Organisation, (Sustrans)</p>	<p><b>Object</b> – The proposal will essentially put new HGV entry and exit points on to/across the National Cycle Network Route 577 which is a well-used pedestrian and cycle route. The proposal will undermine the provision of safe active travel routes across Witney, which is reinforced in the Witney LCWIP.</p>
<p>(4) Technical Traffic Officer, (Oxfordshire County Council)</p>	<p><b>Support</b> – Support the proposal but ideally, we need the new restrictions to include the "advisory keep clear markings" which currently exist at the junction just north of the proposal. These were put in for the same purpose to keep the junction clear for large vehicle movements but in the absence of funding for a TRO, only the advisory lines were possible at that time. This would be an ideal opportunity to formalise the situation.</p>
<p>(6) Local Resident, (Witney, Gloucester Place)</p>	<p><b>Object</b> – This road leads to Lake and Country Park and also Witney Foodbank is based here. Parking, particularly for those with disabilities is needed here for both these activities.</p>
<p>(7) Local Resident, (Witney, Northfield Farm Lane)</p>	<p><b>Object</b> – Restricts access for using the lake if needing to drive there</p>
<p>(8) Local Resident, (Witney, Woodley Green)</p>	<p><b>Concerns</b> – I walk my dog at the lake and rely on parking in the area to do so. There is no other provision of parking and what is in the roads at station lane is often inadequate, especially if you happen to coincide with times when martial arts classes are on in the area. Without parking I, and other residents, would be unable to access the lake and use it.</p>
<p>(9) Local Resident, (Witney, Apley Way)</p>	<p><b>Concerns</b> – 1 People like to park near the lake to walk their dogs. 2 It is convenient to park for access to the post office facility.</p>
<p>(10) Local Resident, (Ducklington, Witney Road)</p>	<p><b>Support</b> – Walk that way to town</p>



**COMMENTARY**  
As discussed with Witney Town Council, further enhancements are proposed in the form of signage on all the entry points to this stretch of road, refer to the locations called out opposite.

The extent of double yellow lines will make this road safer for cyclists (ie avoids the need for cyclists to navigate parked cars, fewer cars turning around in the road).

The crossing introduced to the northern end of the road gives pedestrians a safer route down the west side footway. The DYLS also contribute to increased pedestrian safety due to the improved visibility.

Assessment of visibility on the existing site access has been carried out based on the layout of the road. Due to the road being a dead end, visibility has been measured to the nearest side of the cycle path through the underpass (as this is the only place that traffic can approach from). This makes it possible to save the corner parking bay, as desired by Witney Town Council, without compromising the safety of cyclists.

It is not considered practical to create a designated cycleway in this location due to the limited width of road available.

P5	16.12.21	Updated to OCC Comments	MB	MB
P4	16.12.21	Updated to OCC Comments	MB	MB
P3	06.12.21	Updated to WTC Comments	MB	MB
P2	18.11.21	OCC Issue	MB	MB
P1	17.11.21	Preliminary issue	MB	MB

Rev Date Description By Apvd

**PROJECT:**  
TRAVIS PERKINS, WITNEY

**TITLE:**  
TRAFFIC REGULATION  
ORDER PLAN - ALTERNATIVE

**CLIENT:**  
TILSTONE MANAGING WAREHOUSE  
REIT PLC

**SCALE@A3:**  
1:500

**PROJECT REF:**  
21198  
**DRAWING No:**  
001-1

**REV:**  
P5

**Revision Referencing**  
P = Preliminary A = Approval T = Tender C = Construction



**Avenue Two – Traffic Regulation Order**  
**Witney Town Council Response to Revised Proposal**  
4 March 2022

Witney Town Council would like to re-affirm its earlier comments on the proposed Traffic Regulation Order for Avenue Two, Witney, due for decision later in March.

The Town Council thanks the applicants for their engagement on this matter and for their willingness to discuss the objections raised to the original application.

The provision of a parking space, improved signage, and road markings together with the provision of an uncontrolled crossing are all welcomed by the Town Council, providing they are deemed satisfactory to make this area safe by Oxfordshire County Council Highways.

On safety however, the Town Council must reiterate its previous concerns regarding pedestrians and cyclists and remain of the view that this should be the main priority on a busy active travel route; recent examples in Oxford have shown the safety of pedestrians and cyclists is compromised when in the vicinity of HGV's or larger vehicles. If the revised scheme is approved, the Town Council requests that measures to maximise safety continue to be investigated by Oxfordshire County Council through the LCWIP.