

Divisions Affected – Jericho and Osney, St Margaret’s, University Parks

CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT – 29 APRIL 2021

**JERICO AND WALTON MANOR AREA PILOT SCHEME AND
WALTON STREET EXPERIMENTAL PROHIBITION OF MOTOR
VEHICLES**

Report by Assistant Director Growth and Place, Communities

RECOMMENDATION

1. The Cabinet Member for Environment is RECOMMENDED to:
 - a) Terminate the current Experimental Traffic Regulation Order on Walton Street, to not make the trial scheme permanent and remove all traffic management measures associated with the trial.
 - b) Not proceed with the Jericho and Walton Manor area pilot scheme consulted on by the county council, in recognition of local opinion provided during the consultation phase.
 - c) Note the wide range of important issues raised by those opposing, supporting, and neutral about the Jericho and Walton Manor area pilot scheme proposals.

Executive Summary

2. In November 2019, the Cabinet Member for Environment implemented an Experimental Traffic Regulation Order (ETRO) to restrict motor vehicle access on Walton Street at its junction with Worcester Street. The 18-month period for this trial concludes on 17 May 2021. Prior to this date, a decision is required on whether to make the trial measure permanent or whether it should be removed.
3. Following formal consultation on the trial measures between November 2019 and May 2020, the Cabinet Member decided to continue the experimental order at a Cabinet Members Decisions meeting in August 2020 pending consultation and progress on a local traffic neighbourhood scheme. Following receipt of Department for Transport (DfT) Active Travel funding in late 2020, an area pilot scheme for the Jericho and Walton Manor area, aimed at promoting active travel for the area, was consulted on between 5 March 2021 and 19 March 2021. The area pilot was proposed as an alternative to the

current ETRO arrangements (see annex 1 for proposals plan) This report details the outcomes of the area pilot scheme consultation.

4. Following feedback from residents, wider public, local businesses, and other stakeholders on both the area pilot consultation and through the previous Walton Street ETRO consultation, officers recommend that neither of the measures is progressed as their benefits do not outweigh their impacts. Instead, it is recommended that work to secure active travel benefits for the area are advanced through the wider programme of measures being led by the council, including:
 - Connecting Oxford
 - Oxford Zero Emission Zone
5. Certainty regarding the traffic management measures to be in place from the date of expiry of the Walton Street ETRO (17 May 2021 onwards) is required. It is therefore considered critical that a decision on the Walton Street ETRO is made at the same time as a decision on the area pilot scheme to give definitive clarity to onwards traffic arrangements in the area. A delay in decision making on the area pilot, would potentially also result in abortive works. It is for these reasons that both matters are being considered at Cabinet Members Decision on 29 April 2021.
6. If it is decided to terminate the ETRO, removal of current traffic management measures would take place after 7 May 2021.

Background

7. Following a period of maintenance works on Walton Street, which commenced in July 2019, a trial closure of Walton Street via an ETRO was implemented in November 2019, close to its junction with Worcester Street. The aim of the trial closure was to deliver Local Transport Plan policy through assessing the impacts of an environment that enhanced the attractiveness of active travel modes in the area, reduced local traffic congestion and improved air quality.
8. A 6-month statutory consultation on the trial closure commenced on 7 November 2019 and concluded on 29 May 2020. In response, 51% of respondents expressed support for the trial, while 43% of respondents expressed an objection, 6% expressed no opinion. 630 separate responses were received during the course of the 6-month consultation period.
9. More extensive reporting on this consultation held on the current Walton Street ETRO measures was reported to the Cabinet Member Decision meeting in July 2020. The report is available to view here; https://mycouncil.oxfordshire.gov.uk/documents/s51936/CMDE_JUL1620R15%20-%20Oxford%20Walton%20Street.pdf
10. In light of the ongoing COVID-19 situation, together with the split public response for the ETRO measure, in July 2020 the Cabinet Member decided to defer a final decision on the trial measures. This decision was reconfirmed at a Cabinet Member Decision meeting in August 2020, where it was determined

to continue with the Walton Street experimental order pending consultation and progress on a local traffic neighbourhood scheme for the area.

11. As well as receiving a split opinion through the formal consultation, it is acknowledged that the existing Walton Street ETRO creates a number of unintended consequences, including local concerns about increased traffic volumes on smaller residential streets in the area, which despite a number of localised measures, have not been easy to mitigate against.
12. In November 2020, Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) learnt that it had secured £2.98m of Active Travel funding from DfT, to deliver measures aimed at promoting active travel across the city, including in the Jericho and Walton Manor area.
13. To help develop proposals for the Jericho and Walton Manor area two workshops were held with identified local stakeholders in early 2021. The process informed and developed a set of active travel proposals for the area that could be consulted upon publicly. These measures, promoted as an area pilot, were put forward as an alternative to the existing Walton Street ETRO. Further details of the optioning process for the development of the area pilot consulted upon is provided in Annex 2.
14. It should be noted that over recent history, the Jericho and Walton Manor area has been the subject of a number of county council led road safety and traffic calming schemes. These include measures on Kingston Road, St Bernard's Road and restricted traffic access measures on Hayfield Road/ Aristotle Lane. The area also has a strong base for active travel choice. Over 50% of households (Jericho) do not have a car/ van (33% Oxford), and 49% of journeys to work from Jericho are also by cycle or foot, (34% Oxford - Census 2011).
15. It is critical that measures aimed at promoting active travel across the Jericho and Walton Manor area complement the wider package of measures being advanced by the council to improve air quality, support house and jobs growth, assist with moving people sustainably around the wider city, including:
 - Connecting Oxford
 - Oxford Zero Emission Zone
 - Extensive programme of sustainable travel schemes across the city;
 - £9.1m - Botley Road
 - £2.4m - Banbury Road + remaining £9.6m currently being agreed
 - £12.5m for Woodstock Road
 - £10.6m for other city cycling and walking schemes
 - £2.98m Tranche 2 Active Travel funding
16. This report summarises the output of the consultation for a Jericho and Walton Manor area pilot scheme and details, in the context of a highly ambitious programme of sustainable transport projects for Oxford, why officers consider

it is not appropriate to advance either the Jericho and Walton Manor area pilot scheme or the Walton Street ETRO measures.

Consultation and feedback on area pilot scheme

17. Consultation on the Jericho and Walton Manor area pilot scheme, was carried out between 5 March and 19 March 2021. 815 responses were received during the consultation period, comprising;
 - 721 questionnaires submitted via the county council's online portal
 - 96 emails or letters received by the county council.
18. An independent external research agency provided resource to meet the reporting deadline for Cabinet Member Decisions, whilst also providing a thorough, robust and independent analysis of the consultation results. A full in-depth report of the consultation is provided in Annex 3, whilst a summary note of the consultation and officer response is provided in Annex 4.
19. When asked about overall feelings about the area pilot proposal, a majority (62%) of respondents indicated that they had negative feelings. Meanwhile 27% of respondents indicated positive feelings towards the proposals. When asked about each individual motor vehicle restrictions put forward by the area pilot, there was largely an equal split in opinion.
20. The main reasons given for negative feelings on the proposals were:
 - General concern about traffic levels in residential streets / redistributing traffic to other roads (mentioned in 23% of all responses received)
 - Concern about access issues on Walton Street (23%)
 - That proposals do not go far enough/ are not a proper Low Traffic Neighbourhood (22%)
 - Preference for the current Walton Street ETRO measures to remain (13%)
 - Preference for an alternative Low Traffic Neighbourhood scheme (13%)
21. Both the area pilot consultation and previous formal consultation on the Walton Street ETRO (reported to Cabinet Member Decisions in July 2020) generated a strong response. Strong arguments and legitimate concerns were expressed by those both for and against the proposals. The polarised response both to the area pilot and previous consultations, suggest that developing a scheme which is both deliverable and has a broad consensus of support in the area is challenging.
22. Officers acknowledge that removing the ETRO trial and not advancing the area pilot is considered to both negatively impact upon protected groups/ sustainability outcomes (see annex 5) and conflict with Local Transport Plan objectives in the short term. However on balance, it is recommended that terminating the ETRO and not advancing the area pilot is an appropriate step, given there is a lack of local support for either measure and that over the short

to medium term there is a commitment to bringing forward a wider programme of robustly evidenced measures that can be expected to bring both positive active travel enhancements to the area and also address negative impacts that are forecast for protected groups and sustainability outcomes as a result of the recommendation Measures include;

- 2021 - Consultation and delivery of active travel improvements to Banbury and Woodstock Road corridors
- 2022 - Potential expansion of the Oxford Zero Emission Zone area
- 2023 onwards – Delivery of Woodstock Road/ Banbury Road Corridor Improvement schemes
- 2023 onwards - Implementation of Connecting Oxford

23. In addition to the above measures being actively planned for, officers are also aware of the following initiatives, which could have relevance to future development of active travel priority schemes in the area;

- Proposed national amendments to allow local highway authorities, powers to enforce moving traffic restrictions. Such powers would allow for implementation of a camera enforced (ANPR) schemes which, for example, could prohibit vehicle access except for specific identified users. The use of such camera enforcement was suggested by a number of respondents.
- Recommencement of the Thames Valley Polices Community Speedwatch scheme, including greater opportunities for community involvement. Further details available at: <https://www.thamesvalley-pcc.gov.uk/get-involved/speedwatch/>. A number of respondents directly responded to the area pilot consultation that measures would do little to address concerns of vehicle speeding in the area.

Risk Management

24. Risks associated with not implementing either the Jericho and Walton Manor area pilot scheme or current Walton Street closure ETRO measures are:

- Enhancements to active travel in Jericho and Walton Manor are not realised. It is for this reason officers recommend that advancement of the wider committed programme of measures including Connecting Oxford and the Zero Emission Zone is pursued if a decision is taken not to progress either the area pilot scheme or ETRO measures.
- Perception that active travel enhancements have been tested with public and stakeholders and rejected. This can be challenged as a number of those with negative feelings on the proposals sought a more ambitious active travel scheme for the area. Active travel schemes in other areas of the city have also got wider public support.
- Adverse impacts upon protected groups and upon sustainability outcomes, as identified in the Equality and Climate Impact Assessment (ECIA) see Annex 5 and paragraphs 30, 31.

Financial Implications

25. The area pilot scheme measures consulted upon form part of the wider Oxford active travel programme and budget. Funding has been provided through an allocation of £2.98m via the DfT Active Travel Tranche 2 Fund.
26. In the Jericho and Walton Manor area an initial allocation was made to implement either;
 - A permanent fixing of the Walton Street ETRO - £40k.
 - Area pilot scheme proposals - £55k.
27. Funding identified for advancing a Jericho and Walton Manor active travel scheme is not lost if measures in this area are not progressed. Instead, it is proposed that the funding will be re-provided back to the wider Active Travel Tranche 2 programme of measures for the city. A modest allocation of funding has to-date been spent on developing area pilot scheme proposals to their current form.

Comments checked by:

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Staff Implications

28. The recommended decision to not advance either the area pilot scheme or implement as permanent the Walton Street ETRO measures, would have no staffing implications.

Equality & Inclusion Implications

29. A combined ECIA has been undertaken which covers both the recommended decision to terminate the Walton Street ETRO, as well as options to make the ETRO permanent, or to remove the ETRO and implement the area pilot proposal (see annex 5). This assessment identified negative impacts, should the recommended decision be followed, to a number of groups with protected characteristics. These impacts will be monitored in line with the process set out in the ECIA. These negative impacts on protected groups were not identified for the alternative options of making the ETRO permanent or implementing the area pilot proposal.
30. On balance, officers are content that equality implications of the recommended decision to remove the ETRO are justified, on the basis that there is an existing strong commitment to implement a range of other measures (see paragraph 16) that would mitigate negative impacts upon protected groups.

Sustainability Implications

31. A combined ECIA has been undertaken which covers both the recommended decision to terminate the Walton Street ETRO, as well as options to make the ETRO permanent, or to remove the ETRO and implement the area pilot proposal (see annex 5). This assessment identified negative climate and sustainability impacts should the recommended decision be followed. These

impacts will be monitored in line with the process set out in the ECIA. These negative impacts on sustainability outcomes were not identified for the alternative options of making the ETRO permanent or implementing the area pilot proposal.

32. On balance, officers are content that the sustainability implications of the recommendation are justified, on the basis that there is an existing strong commitment to implement a range of other measures (see paragraph 16) that would mitigate anticipated negative sustainability impacts.

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Annexes:

Annex 1: Area pilot proposals plan

Annex 2: Summary of optioning development for area pilot

Annex 3: Area pilot consultation report

Annex 4: Area pilot consultation summary and officer response

Annex: ECIA - Walton Street Experimental Prohibition of Motor Vehicles ETRO

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