

Divisions affected: *Witney South and Central*

CABINET MEMBER FOR HIGHWAY MANAGEMENT – 18 NOVEMBER 2021

WITNEY: AVENUE TWO – PROPOSED WAITING RESTRICTIONS

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, Witney as advertised.

Executive summary

2. This report presents responses received to a statutory consultation to introduce no waiting at any time restrictions on Avenue 2, Witney as shown at Annex 1. 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 - being recently given by West Oxfordshire District Council.

Financial Implications

3. Funding for consultation on the proposals has been provided by the developers of the adjacent land who will also fund 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 safe movement of traffic including cyclists and pedestrians.

Consultation

6. Formal consultation was carried out between 08 September and 08 October 2021. A notice was published in the Witney Gazette newspaper, and an email sent to statutory consultees, including Thames Valley Police, the Fire &

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Rescue Service, Ambulance service, West Oxfordshire District Council, Witney Town Council and local County Councillor.

7. Ten responses were received during the formal consultation. Five objections, two raising concerns, two in support and one non-objection. The responses are shown at Annex 2 with copies of the original responses available for inspection by County Councillors.
8. The objections and concerns primarily relate to the possible displacement of parking elsewhere in the road and area but also raise specific concerns about how the arrangement of unrestricted waiting on both sides as proposed would function in practice.
9. Thames Valley police did not object.
10. Witney Town Council (Climate, Biodiversity & Planning Committee) objected 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 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 at 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 a well-used pedestrian and cycle route and undermine the provision of safe active travel routes across Witney, which is reinforced in the Witney 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

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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.
16. While noting the above concerns over the access arrangements as shown at Annex 1, planning consent has been granted by West Oxfordshire District Council and the proposed waiting restrictions, which are the subject of the current consultation are considered essential for their safe operation.
17. The importance of Avenue 2 as an active travel route is acknowledged, and the County Council's Road Agreements Team will be engaging with the developer to identify and implement measures to highlight the presence of cyclists and pedestrians.

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Corporate Director, Environment and Place

Annexes

Annex 1: Consultation Plan

Annex 2: Consultation responses

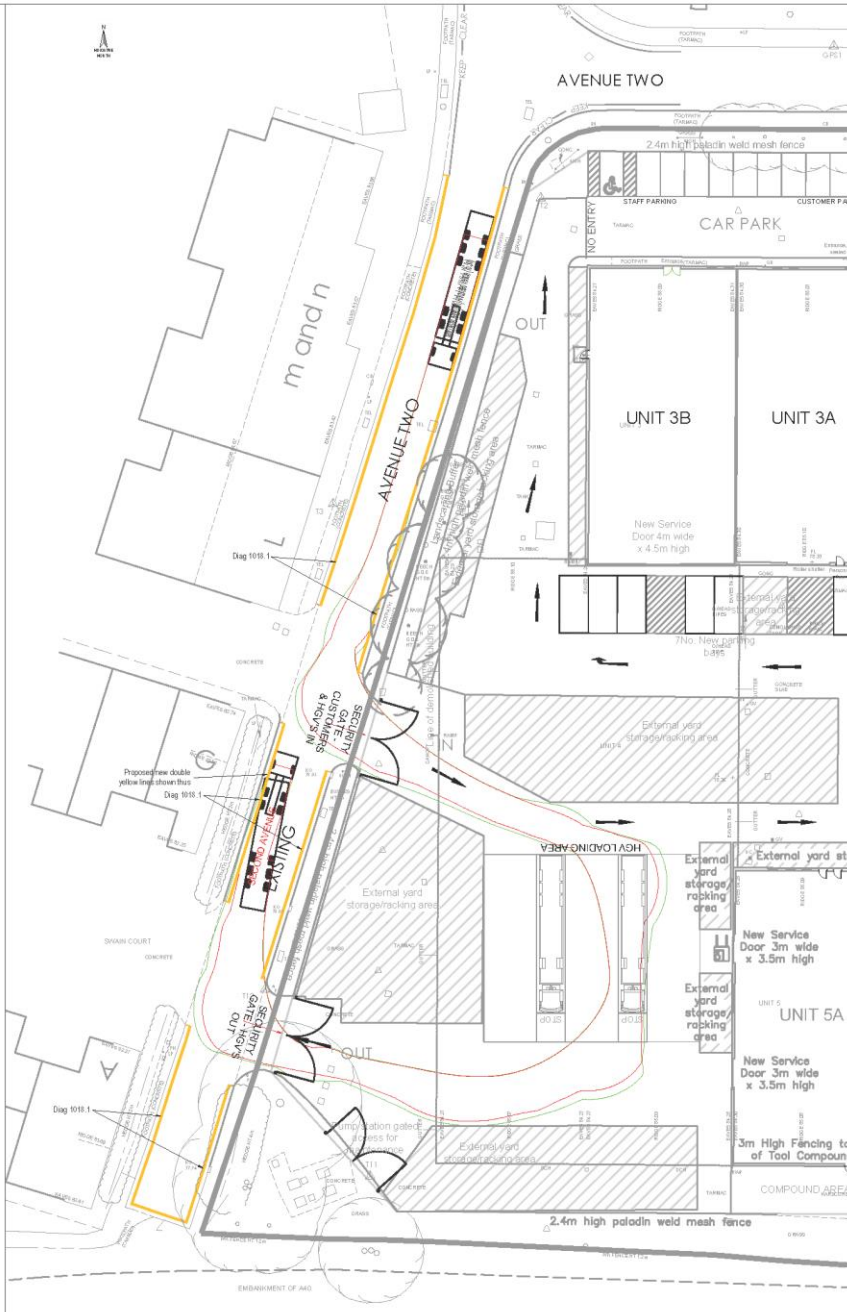
Contact Officers:

Tim Shickle 07920 591545

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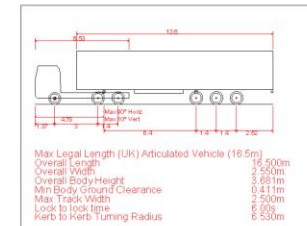
Odele Parsons 07974 002860

November 2021



NOTES

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



Rev	Date	Description	By	App'd
P1	19.07.21	Preliminary issue	JH	MB

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

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RESPONDENT	COMMENTS
(1) Traffic Management Officer, (Thames Valley Police)	No objection
(2) Witney Town Council (Climate, Biodiversity & Planning Committee)	<p>Object – 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 but 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>

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	<p>The plans give an indication of the incredibly tight turning route/movement of HGVs entering and exiting the site, even 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 & 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 & 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 HGVs 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 & Central Division)</p>	<p>Object – 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 & 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>

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(3) Local Group/Organisation, (Sustrans)	Object – 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.
(4) Technical Traffic Officer, (Oxfordshire County Council)	Support – 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.
(6) Local Resident, (Witney, Gloucester Place)	Object – 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.
(7) Local Resident, (Witney, Northfield Farm Lane)	Object – Restricts access for using the lake if needing to drive there
(8) Local Resident, (Witney, Woodley Green)	Concerns – 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.
(9) Local Resident, (Witney, Apley Way)	Concerns – 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.
(10) Local Resident, (Ducklington, Witney Road)	Support – Walk that way to town