



Oxfordshire County Council
Equalities Impact Assessment

Byways 19/06/25

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Section 1: Summary details

Directorate and Service Area	Countryside & Waste Countryside Access
What is being assessed (e.g. name of policy, procedure, project, service or proposed service change).	Motor Vehicle Seasonal Width Restriction (1.6m) Traffic Regulation Order Green Road Letcombe Bassett & West Challow (Byway Open to all Traffic) between 1 st October – 30 th April. Motor Vehicle width restriction (1.6m) Traffic Regulation Order (Byway Open to all Traffic) Letcombe Regis & West Challow (399/13/10 & 275/3/10).
Is this a new or existing function or policy?	Existing function as Highway Authority
Summary of assessment Briefly summarise the policy or proposed service change. Summarise possible impacts. Does the proposal bias, discriminate or unfairly disadvantage individuals or groups within the community? (following completion of the assessment).	<p>As a public authority, the Council must have due regard to eliminating discrimination, advancing equality of opportunity, and fostering good relations across protected groups (the Public Sector Equality Duty). OCC guidance requires assessments to be evidence-based, iterative, and to consider both positive and negative impacts across protected characteristics and relevant community groups.</p> <p>We recognise that some residents who are disabled use vehicles for mobility and will continue to be able to do so outside of the seasonal restriction for Green road. The TROs are designed to preserve access for mobility devices (e.g., wheelchairs, mobility scooters/trampers) while addressing the disproportionate surface damage and safety risks associated with larger recreational 4x4s on an unsurfaced byway. This distinction is consistent with OCC’s equalities approach: we enable access for disabled users by restricting uses (such as off-roading) that undermine safe and equitable access for the majority disabled and non-disabled users.</p> <p>This report presents responses received to a statutory consultation on proposals to introduce a ‘Prohibition of Motor Vehicles over 1.6m wide restriction seasonally on Green road, which is a BOAT (Byway Open to all Traffic) and all year round along the bisecting Byway. The proposals are being put forward due to the unsurfaced nature of the Public Rights of Way, and it being highly vulnerable following damage caused by motorised vehicles and the subsequent extensive works undertaken to repair the route. The proposals seek to prohibit motor vehicles wider than 1.6m</p>

	<p>seasonally along Green road and permanently along the bisecting byway , whilst use would continue to be permitted for pedestrians, cycles, horses, disabled persons wheelchairs and powered mobility conveyances, motorcycles, and horse drawn carriages.</p> <p>The Council's intention is to keep these Byways open and accessible to the widest possible range of users, including those with mobility challenges. It recognises the importance of inclusive countryside access and aims to balance the needs of all lawful users. However, this TRO will prohibit less abled who use larger motorised vehicles for recreational use during the wetter winter months on Green Road and all year round along the bisecting byway.</p>
Completed By	Steve Tabbitt
Authorised By	
Date of Assessment	19/06/2025

Section 2: Detail of proposal

<p>Context / Background</p> <p>Briefly summarise the background to the policy or proposed service change, including reasons for any changes from previous versions.</p>	<p>The proposals seek to prohibit motor vehicles seasonally from using Green Road, and all year round on the bisecting byway, whilst use would continue to be permitted for pedestrians, cycles, horses, disabled persons wheelchairs and powered mobility conveyances, motorcycles, horse drawn carriages less than 1.6m.</p>
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<p style="text-align: center;">Proposals</p> <p>Explain the detail of the proposals, including why this has been decided as the best course of action.</p>	<p>1. The surface damage caused by motorised vehicles has necessitated the prolonged use of Temporary Traffic Regulation Orders (TTROs) to close the lane to all stakeholders for repairs. These repairs often involve soft landscaping techniques that are sympathetic to the natural environment and require time to settle and become effective.</p> <p>The Council's intention is to keep these Byways open and accessible to the widest possible range of users, including those with mobility challenges. It recognises the importance of inclusive countryside access and aims to balance the needs of all lawful users.</p>															
<p style="text-align: center;">Evidence / Intelligence</p> <p>List and explain any data, consultation outcomes, research findings, feedback from service users and stakeholders etc, that supports your proposals and can help to inform the judgements you make about potential impact on different individuals, communities or groups and our ability to deliver our climate commitments.</p>	<p>Consultation Process Green Road seasonal width restriction TRO and Bisecting Byway width restriction</p> <p>Formal consultation was conducted between 13 May to 12 June 2026 with notices published in local newspapers and emails sent to statutory consultees and key stakeholders, including emergency services, transport groups, district councils, parish councils, and local councillors.</p> <p>Public notices were displayed on-site, and local representatives were encouraged to publicize the proposals among residents.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="801 906 2177 1262"> <thead> <tr> <th>Proposal</th> <th>Support</th> <th>Partially support / concerns</th> <th>Object</th> <th>No objection / No opinion</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Green Road BOAT (Seasonal)</td> <td>17 (68%)</td> <td>2 (8%)</td> <td>3 (12%)</td> <td>3 (12%)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Letcombe Regis & West Challow BOAT</td> <td>16 (64%)</td> <td>3 (12%)</td> <td>5 (20%)</td> <td>1 (4%)</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>non-objections.</p> <p>Thames Valley Police (no objection if prohibition is physically enforced but questioned motorcycle access).</p>	Proposal	Support	Partially support / concerns	Object	No objection / No opinion	Green Road BOAT (Seasonal)	17 (68%)	2 (8%)	3 (12%)	3 (12%)	Letcombe Regis & West Challow BOAT	16 (64%)	3 (12%)	5 (20%)	1 (4%)
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Oxford Trail Riders Fellowship (Local group/organisation).

Member of the public.

Key Issues Raised and Officer Responses

Motor Vehicle Prohibition

Thames Valley Police supported the prohibition if physically enforced, expressing concern about motorcycle access. Officers noted no evidence of dangerous motorcycle use or surface damage attributable to motorcyclists but will keep this under review.

Vegetation, Signage, and Barriers

Annual vegetation clearance has been documented since 2011, with further measures planned in line with ecological sensitivities.

TTRO Signage was checked but is vulnerable to removal.

Concrete blocks are positioned to avoid obstructing private access.

Width Restrictions and Disabled Access

Concerns were raised about the width of access for carriages, especially for disabled users. Officers propose to amend the gap from 1.5m to 1.6m gap to balance access for carriages and still prevent larger vehicle entry. The TRO will be amended accordingly.

Surface Damage and Maintenance

Persistent surface damage, particularly from 4x4 vehicles, has necessitated temporary closures for safety. There is no evidence of farm traffic causing damage. The width restriction targets larger vehicles most likely to cause harm.

Ecological and Environmental Considerations

Complete vegetation clearance is avoided to protect the cambered slopes and maintain a green corridor, supporting biodiversity and landscape health.

	<p>Other Public Rights of Way</p> <p>Issues raised about other routes are outside the scope of this consultation but will be prioritised based on safety and usage .</p> <p>Conclusion</p> <p>The Council aims to keep Green Road and the bisecting Byway accessible to the widest range of users, including those with mobility challenges, while prioritising public safety and managing the environmental. The proposed TROs, with amendments to accommodate disabled access, seeks to prevent further damage by restricting larger motorised vehicles, balancing the needs of all lawful users and the sustainability of the route.</p> <p>The Byways will be continually monitored including correspondence with local community and the Parish Council.</p>
<p>Alternatives considered / rejected</p> <p>Summarise any other approaches that have been considered in developing the policy or proposed service change, and the reasons why these were not adopted. This could include reasons why doing nothing is not an option.</p>	<p>Surface repair works have been undertaken to this byway on several occasions. Using sympathetic to the environment repairs to the surface of the byway and clearance works has left the Byway in good condition. If the Byways are reopened without traffic regulations, the surface will soon deteriorate making it potentially dangerous to all users, subsequently we will be forced to temporarily close the Byway with a temporary traffic regulation.</p> <p>Given the topography of the landscape, with Green road sitting within the North Wessex Downs an all year round Traffic Regulation was dismissed, by keeping vegetation clear it is thought that Green Road will be able to accommodate larger motorised vehicles during dryer summer months for six months of the year.</p> <p>Voluntary restraints are considered unrealistic, as not all the off-road community are affiliated to a club or society. Signage is not a reliable deterrent (as shown by other examples such as the ‘Code of Respect’ signage that was used on the Ridgeway Nat Trail). The entire length of the route is not immediately visible, which could also lead to vehicles beginning their journey and subsequently becoming stuck further down, resulting in further damage as they extricate themselves. The skill and experience of individual drivers and their perceptions of their own capabilities also vary.</p>

Section 3: Impact Assessment - Protected Characteristics

Protected Characteristic	No Impact	Positive	Negative	Description of Impact	Any actions or mitigation to reduce negative impacts	Action owner* (*Job Title, Organisation)	Timescale and monitoring arrangements
Age	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Walking surfaces without undue damage from vehicles will have a positive affect on potential use of the route by older people, who are more likely to be negatively affected by an uneven or rutted surface, owing to lower mobility or balance and also more likely to be affected by anxiety caused by using isolated rural routes where there is a risk of falls or trips, or where they could come into direct conflict with a vehicle whilst using the route at the same time.	Mitigations are an important part of inclusive decision making. We haven't identified any group that is disproportionately impacted by the TRO, but will remain open to feedback and will review this EIA and any requirement for adjustment as the plan proceeds	Steve Tabbitt	12 months, based on feedback

Disability	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<p>Width restriction TRO will allow safer and easier access for many disabled or less able stakeholders to the byway all year round. This not only includes disabled ramblers, but also covers groups such as the partially sighted, those with restricted mobility or the hearing impaired who are less likely to be aware of vehicles behind them. All of these groups are also placed at greater risk by coming into direct conflict with a vehicle using the track at the same time.</p> <p>The restriction will exclude disabled people during the winter months of the year on Green Road and all year round along the bisecting byway who use larger motorised vehicles such as 4x4s primarily for recreation.</p> <p>On balance however, it is assessed that the positive impacts for users with disabilities outweigh the negative impacts</p>	Mitigations are an important part of inclusive decision making. We haven't identified any group that is disproportionately impacted by the TRO, but will remain open to feedback and will review this EIA and any requirement for adjustment as the plan proceeds	Steve Tabbitt	12 months, based on feedback
Gender Reassignment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Marriage & Civil Partnership	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				

Pregnancy & Maternity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Greater use of the route by pregnant individuals or those with strollers / push chairs is more incentivised if the surface is unaffected by vehicle damage and there is less likelihood of direct conflict with vehicles using the route at the same time.	Mitigations are an important part of inclusive decision making. We haven't identified any group that is disproportionately impacted by the TRO, but will remain open to feedback and will review this EIA and any requirement for adjustment as the plan proceeds	Steve Tabbitt	12 months, based on feedback
Race	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Sex	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Sexual Orientation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Religion or Belief	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				

Section 3: Impact Assessment - Additional Community Impacts

Additional community impacts	No Impact	Positive	Negative	Description of impact	Any actions or mitigation to reduce negative impacts	Action owner (*Job Title, Organisation)	Timescale and monitoring arrangements
Rural communities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<p>Safe routes for walking and enjoying the countryside should be provided for all to use.</p> <p>It is recognised that for a minority of 4x4 users, (both leisure and utility) the exclusion of motorised vehicles would have a negative impact.</p>	Mitigations are an important part of inclusive decision making. We haven't identified any group that is disproportionately impacted by the TRO, but will remain open to feedback and will review this EIA and any requirement for adjustment as the plan proceeds	Steve Tabbitt	12 months, based on feedback
Armed Forces	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Carers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Good access to the countryside should benefit those caring for others by providing a safe and	Mitigations are an important part of inclusive decision	Steve Tabbitt	12 months, based on feedback

Additional community impacts	No Impact	Positive	Negative	Description of impact	Any actions or mitigation to reduce negative impacts	Action owner (*Job Title, Organisation)	Timescale and monitoring arrangements
				pleasant area for informal recreation, respite and a place to visit with those being cared for.	making. We haven't identified any group that is disproportionately impacted by the TRO, but will remain open to feedback and will review this EIA and any requirement for adjustment as the plan proceeds		
Areas of deprivation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				

Section 3: Impact Assessment - Additional Wider Impacts

Additional Wider Impacts	No Impact	Positive	Negative	Description of Impact	Any actions or mitigation to reduce negative impacts	Action owner* (*Job Title, Organisation)	Timescale and monitoring arrangements
Staff	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Other Council Services	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Providers	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Social Value ¹	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				

¹ If the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 applies to this proposal, please summarise here how you have considered how the contract might improve the economic, social, and environmental well-being of the relevant area

Section 4: Review

Where bias, negative impact or disadvantage is identified, the proposal and/or implementation can be adapted or changed; meaning there is a need for regular review. This review may also be needed to reflect additional data and evidence for a fuller assessment (proportionate to the decision in question). Please state the agreed review timescale for the identified impacts of the policy implementation or service change.

Review Date	19 June 2027
Person Responsible for Review	Steve Tabbitt
Authorised By	Teresa Kirkham