
Cabinet Member for City Services

17th June 2024

Name of Cabinet Member:

Councillor P Hetherton

Director approving submission of the report:

Andrew Walster - Director of City Services and Commercial

Ward(s) affected:

Westwood, Foleshill, St Michael's, Lower Stoke, Henley

Title: Knights Templar Way Area School Street – Evaluation and Next Steps

Is this a key decision? No

No – although the proposals affect more than two electoral wards, the impact is not expected to be significant.

Executive summary:

In response to concerns raised by residents over school related parking and congestion, a School Streets restriction was introduced on Knights Templar Way, Lomsey Close and Monks Field Close in February 2023. This was the first restriction of its type introduced in the City.

A School Streets restriction creates a Pedestrian & Cycle Zone for specified times (typically between 30 minutes and 1 hour) at the start and end of the school day. During the times of the restriction, motor vehicles cannot drive into the zone unless they have a permit or valid exemption. The initiative seeks to improve the road environment by reducing congestion and obstructive parking. This makes it easier and safer for children to walk, cycle or scoot to school, whilst reducing air pollution.

School Streets are a new, innovative way to address historic traffic problems that many schools and communities experience at the start and end of the school day. School traffic and parking problems have been raised by residents of the three roads for several years, and despite steps being taken to address these, residents still report experiencing daily challenges associated with school traffic.

The Knights Templar Way Area School Street restriction was introduced using an experimental traffic regulation order (ETRO). This enables the Council to trial the initiative for 18 months before deciding whether to make the scheme permanent or revoke it. With the scheme having now been in place for over 15 months, a decision needs to be taken on its future.

To help inform that decision, monitoring of the School Street restriction has been undertaken and feedback sought from the local community regarding its effectiveness over its first year of operation. From this, concerns over a lack of compliance have been raised, with the restriction currently enforceable by colleagues at West Midlands Police, there has been only limited enforcement visits.

In February 2022, Cabinet approved an application to the Secretary of State for the powers to enforce moving traffic offences to help improve road safety and reduce congestion. The DfT approved the Council's application and in July 2023 made a Designation Order allowing the Council to adopt the powers and undertake camera-based Moving Traffic enforcement of certain restrictions such as School Streets.

Based on observations and feedback from residents, it is now recommended that camera-based monitoring commences from September 2024. This would then transition into camera-based enforcement, subject to a final 6-week monitoring and consultation period, should the evidence continue to support this course of action at that stage.

Recommendations:

Cabinet Member for City Services is recommended to:

1. Approve making the City of Coventry (Knights Templar Way Area) (Prohibition of Driving) (Experimental) Order 2023 permanent.
2. Subject to recommendation 1, approve the deployment of an Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) camera to enable camera-based compliance monitoring of the School Streets restriction in the Knights Templar Way Area.
3. In recognition of the findings from the Knights Templar School Street scheme, approve the deployment of ANPR cameras to enable camera-based compliance monitoring of the four School Streets restrictions being introduced as part of the second phase of Coventry's School Street programme as detailed in **Appendix C**.
4. Subject to the findings from recommendation 3 approve the commencement of a six-week public consultation on the principle of carrying out camera-based enforcement of the sites referenced in recommendation 2. and 3., to run alongside the monitoring activities referenced commencing in September 2024.
5. Approve where monitoring shows poor compliance of School Street restrictions, that following consultation Moving Traffic Enforcement should be undertaken at schemes of this type.

List of Appendices included:

The following appendices are attached to the report:

Appendix A – Location plan for the Knights Templar Way Area School Streets Project

Appendix B – Resident Consultation Summary

Appendix C – Location plans for the second phase of Coventry's school streets programme

Background papers:

- School Streets Update – Communities and Neighbourhood Scrutiny Board (4) Board Report of 8th February 2024.

Other useful documents

- Department for Transport - Traffic Management Act 2004: Statutory guidance for local authorities outside London on civil enforcement of bus lane and moving traffic contraventions – 21st October 2022.
- Seeking approval to apply to the Department for Transport for Moving Traffic Enforcement powers - Cabinet Report of 15th February 2022
- 2024/25 Transportation and Highway Maintenance Capital Programme – Cabinet Report of 12th March 2024

Has it or will it be considered by Scrutiny?

Yes - The School Streets initiative was originally considered at the Neighbourhoods and Communities Scrutiny Board (4) on 23rd March 2023 and the Board was further updated on the 8th February 2024.

Has, or will it be considered by any other Council Committee, Advisory Panel or other body?

No

Will this report go to Council? - No

Report title: Knights Templar Way Area School Street – Evaluation and Next Steps

1. Context (or background)

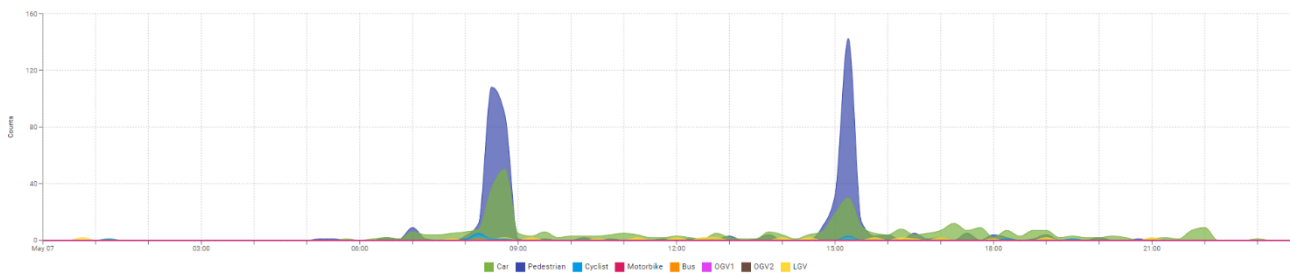
- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to evaluate the effectiveness of the Knights Templar Way, Lomsey Close and Monks Fields Close School Streets Scheme. An examination of resident feedback and camera monitoring equipment has been used to assess the effectiveness of the scheme and to assist in determining whether to make the scheme permanent or not. This report also explores how we can learn from the experiences of the Knights Templar Way Area Scheme to optimise the effectiveness of future phases of the School Street initiative, the overall aim being to create a more pleasant and safer environment outside schools at the start and end of the school day and encourage modal shift.

2. Options considered and recommended proposal

- 2.1. Many schools experience significant road traffic problems at school start and finishing times. This can result in residents' frustration, increased vehicle emissions and road safety concerns. Traditional means of dealing with such issues have included the use of school keep clear markings and single and double yellow line restrictions. Whilst such measures can be effective, we are increasingly seeing reduced levels of driver compliance at some locations which places an unsustainable burden on civil enforcement resources. Due to the level of demand and number of schools across the city regular visits to all sites is impractical.
- 2.2. School Streets is an innovative solution to historic problems associated with school gate parking. It seeks to solve the problem by restricting school related traffic from specified roads at the start and end of the school day. They are typically introduced using an experimental traffic regulation order (ETRO). This trials the effectiveness of a restriction for up to 18 months before a decision is taken as to whether to make it permanent. By restricting school related traffic it is intended to create an environment with fewer vehicles, to encourage and enable walking and cycling.
- 2.3. Residents are still permitted to access/egress their property during the times of the restriction using a permit system. Residents can also register for additional permits including for their visitors. Exemptions exist for a range of services that may need to access a road including emergency services, waste, and recycling collections etc.
- 2.4. Following support from residents, the City of Coventry (Knights Templar Way Area) (Prohibition of Driving) (Experimental) Order 2023 was introduced on the 27th February 2023. Through the scheme non-resident vehicular movements are prohibited between 8:30-9:30am and 2:45-3:35pm each weekday. **Appendix A** contains a plan of the restriction extent.
- 2.5. The School Street project was installed in collaboration with West Midlands Police (WMP) and features prominent signage at the gateway to ensure people entering the road are aware of the restriction. Prior to launching the scheme engagement took place with residents, and parents via the school, to raise awareness of the initiative.
- 2.6. At the time of the schemes launch only the Police (outside of London) were able to enforce a restriction of this type. Mindful of the pressures that their service finds itself under, understandably despite initial support for the scheme, the Police have been unable to commit to regular visits. As such the scheme has largely relied on self-enforcement through driver compliance with the on-street signage since launch.
- 2.7. Although many residents supported the project at its inception, it has become evident over the course of the last 12 months that residents are dissatisfied with the current level of (or lack of)

enforcement. Whilst no objections were formally received during the initial six-month consultation period, email communications and video footage regularly provided by residents over the course of the first 12 months of the scheme clearly demonstrated a lack of compliance by non-residents. The feedback received during this time was that whilst residents supported the principles of the scheme, they were keen to see a transition to full time camera-based enforcement, which they considered was the only viable deterrent.

- 2.8. Observations by Council Officers, supported by Local Ward Councillors have confirmed the concerns of residents. At present there appears to be sporadic driver compliance, with many drivers taking the decision to overlook the restriction and continue to use the street during the hours of operation. It should be noted that this is not a situation unique to Coventry, with feedback from other authorities who have introduced this type of restriction experiencing similar issues with a lack of regular Police enforcement and a reliance on self-compliance.
- 2.9. As part of our monitoring process of the School Streets restrictions, monitoring sensor were installed on Tile Hill to monitor the Knights Templar Way gateway in May 2024. The data collected demonstrates that there is a clear am and pm peak of vehicular traffic entering the road at the start and end of the day. The graph below shows a typical total day (traffic entering and leaving the road) and clearly validates the concerns of residents.



- 2.10. Despite the scheme being clearly signed and operational since February 2023, the scheme continues to see a high level of non-compliance by school related non-resident traffic. The data shows that the AM peak has the highest number of non-compliance where typically 30 rising to up to 50 vehicles enter and leave the cul-de-sac each morning at school drop-off times. In the afternoon, these numbers reduce to between 23 and 38 vehicles, but still show as a significant increase over what would be expected if we were seeing full compliance with the School Street restriction.
- 2.11. However, it should also be noted that the data is also showing a high number of pedestrian movements along both the east and west footways of the road. This demonstrates that whilst we are still seeing non-compliance by some, many others are actively travelling to school each day by foot. By improving compliance with the school streets restriction, we will not only make this part of the journey for those already walking to school both safer and more pleasant, but also hope to encourage and enable more walking, cycling and scooting by removing the obstacles and hazards that parked cars can pose.
- 2.12. These sensors will remain in place for the next three years as they monitor levels of active travel and will be used as part of our ongoing monitoring and evaluation of the scheme to determine the long-term influence of this initiative on travel behaviours.
- 2.13. In May 2024 to support our site observations and monitoring of the restriction a consultation was undertaken to ascertain and assess the views of residents on the scheme and to establish how they would like the scheme to move forward. Positively this consultation was well received,

with a response rate of approximately 53% suggesting residents are engaged and bought into the initiative.

- 2.14. The results indicate that of those responding, 97% (all but one) were aware of the school streets initiative, with just under 75% saying that they were supportive of the scheme when it launched.
- 2.15. The feedback shows that at present residents do not consider that the scheme has made a material difference to the environment around the school gate, with only 10% of those responding suggesting that the scheme had done so. The data also indicates that 75% of those responding consider that the scheme has resulted in no improvements to parking issues, enforcement or resulted in a reduction in traffic. Residents' greatest concerns continue to be related to parking issues and traffic with over 90% of those responding believing that enforcement of the scheme needs to be improved.
- 2.16. The feedback from residents corroborates the site observations of Officers and the monitoring data summarised above. It demonstrates that concerns over ineffective enforcement continue to be the overriding concern of residents and that its resolution is important to ensuring the long-term success of the initiative. The data also shows that whilst residents do not yet consider that the scheme has met its objectives in reducing the impact of school related parking and traffic, residents remain committed and supportive of the initiative, with 75% of those responding remaining supportive of the scheme, despite the challenges experienced over its first year of operation. A full summary of the survey results is provided in **Appendix B**.
- 2.17. It is recognised that enforcement of School Streets is a key priority for residents and a critical factor to enable the overall success of these schemes. Recent changes in legislation enable authorities (on application) for the first time to support the Police and carry out camera-based enforcement of restrictions of this type. To do so, it needs to be demonstrated that traditional non-camera-based enforcement is or would be ineffective before its use is considered. The review of the first year's scheme operation as set out above, is considered to have provided this evidence. It establishes the principle of School Streets as a mechanism to address school related parking and traffic concerns, which is supported by the local community and as such should in principle be continued and expanded. The review also recognises that such initiatives typically only work where effective monitoring and enforcement takes place and as such establishes a clear path to commence the journey to camera-based monitoring and enforcement of this and future School Street restrictions.
- 2.18. Before implementing camera-based enforcement, statutory guidance on bus lane and moving traffic contraventions updated by the Department for Transport, requires Local Authorities to carry out a 6-week consultation before commencing moving traffic enforcement activities at any new location.
- 2.19. Whilst it is recognised that cameras can effectively monitor and enforce this type of restriction, as a new deployment of the technology, it has certain limitations and would require minor amendments to the existing Knights Templar Way Area School Streets restriction, which include the introduction of a virtual permit system, for it to be utilised effectively.
- 2.20. To benefit from the experiences of other authorities who have been trialling the use of this technology to effectively manage School Street schemes, discussions are currently ongoing with colleagues at Derby City Council around the use and deployment of a digital ANPR camera-based monitoring and enforcement solution.
- 2.21. With the implementation of the City's first School Streets, we continue to see requests from communities across the city keen to see School Street restrictions introduced at other locations to address ongoing school parking and traffic concerns. Mindful of the national, regional and

local support for the principle of School Streets; funding has now been secured to bring forward a further phase of the School Streets programme in the city. Utilising this funding, four further School Street schemes will be introduced in September 2024 to coincide with the start of the new school year. These schemes, funded through the Transport for West Midlands (TfWM) Active Travel Fund 3 Walking and Cycling Programme will make up the second phase of the School Streets programme in the city, and will be located around the schools set out below and shown in **Appendix C**:

- a. Stanton Bridge Primary School (Foleshill Ward)
- b. Southfields Primary School (St Michael's Ward)
- c. Ravensdale Primary School (Lower Stoke Ward)
- d. Cardinal Wiseman Catholic School (Henley Ward)

2.22. The lessons learned from the implementation of the Knights Templar Way Area School Street scheme clearly demonstrate that police-based enforcement/self-enforcement of School Street restrictions is likely to result in low levels of driver compliance which restricts the benefits that can be achieved through the scheme whilst creating residential frustration and generating complaints.

2.23. As such it is proposed that the lessons learned from the Knights Templar Way Area scheme are adopted for the second phase of our School Streets programme, and that camera-based monitoring, transitioning to enforcement if the evidence supports, will be the most effective way to support and enable this type of scheme.

2.24. By introducing the schemes using camera-based monitoring enables the schemes to operate under a digital virtual permit system. This aids the operation and administration of the scheme for the Parking Services team who will administer and manage the process on behalf of the Council.

2.25. In considering the findings of the monitoring undertaken and feedback received as set out above, the options available for consideration at this stage are to:

- i. Not make the experimental order currently in place permanent
- ii. Make the experimental order currently in place permanent, retaining the current self-compliance/Police only enforcement regime.
- iii. Make the experimental order currently in place permanent, with the intention of moving to ANPR camera-based monitoring and enforcement.

2.26. Option i. would remove the current restriction and is considered a backward step. Whilst the current restriction, relying on self-compliance has seen low levels of compliance, feedback from the most recent resident's consultation has shown strong levels of support for the principle of the scheme. As such this option is not recommended.

2.27. Option ii. would maintain the status quo. The current experimental order would become a permanent restriction, but no changes would occur on site or from a user's perspective. This option would continue to rely on a paper-based permit system which creates a greater administrative burden for residents, the Council and Police and would continue to rely on self-enforcement with occasional Police attention. As such this option is unlikely to address the main concerns of residents which focuses on the lack of enforcement of the current restriction and reduced compliance that this perpetuates. As such this option is also not recommended.

- 2.28. Option iii. most closely aligns to the feedback received from consultation responses and is likely to have a positive impact in terms of encouraging improved compliance and operation of the scheme. The lessons learned from the first 12 months of operation demonstrate that this type of restriction is less effective when it relies on self-enforcement. It is therefore important to implement the lessons learned to date at both the Knights Templar Way Area scheme and the four (4) new locations forming part of the second phase of the scheme. By adopting a consistent approach, we will aid the overall operational management of the schemes, enable the transition to digital permits and bring forward an effective camera-based monitoring and enforcement regime that will benefit local communities. Such an approach will address many of the concerns raised regarding the performance of the current scheme and significantly benefit residents of the roads affected.
- 2.29. As set out in paragraph 2.18, prior to introducing moving traffic contravention enforcement at any new location, the Local Authority is required to carry out a final 6-week consultation exercise. To aid efficiency it is proposed that this consultation exercise is combined to cover school street locations (current and proposed). This exercise would commence in September when the schemes go live at the start of the new school year and run concurrently with an initial 6-week monitoring period. The feedback from the consultation would then be considered along with the data from the monitoring cameras and subject to the findings, provide confirmation that camera enforcement should commence from as early as mid-October 2024.
- 2.30. It is recognised that there continues to be significant interest from communities across the city who experience daily issues with school related parking and traffic, and who may benefit from a School Streets type restriction in the future. As such it is intended that requests for additional schemes received in 2024/25 will now be collated over the coming months to enable a proposal to be put forward as part of the 2025/26 City Service budget setting priority process for a future phase of the School Streets programme, to be funded through the 2025/26 allocation of the Local Network Improvement Programme (LNIP).

3. Results of consultation undertaken

- 3.1. Details of the consultation results undertaken as part of the decision-making process considered in this report are set out in the main body of the report, namely in sections 2.13 to 2.16 and in **Appendix B**, respectively.
- 3.2. The consultation undertaken has demonstrated that there is broad support for the School Streets initiative in the Knights Templar Way Area, but that more effective enforcement is required to ensure the long terms support and success of the scheme. The findings from the consultation undertaken have been used to inform the recommendations proposed in this report and as detailed in sections 2.25 to 2.29.
- 3.3. In preparation of the launch of the second phase of the Schools Streets initiative, Coventry City Council has engaged and consulted schools, parents, local Councillors, and residents of all four school locations. Engagement has taken place using email communications, letters and by distribution of a "Street news" leaflet.
- 3.4. The Head Teachers at each of the schools selected to be involved in the second phase of the initiative (Stanton Bridge Primary School, Southfields Primary School, Ravensdale Primary School, and Cardinal Wiseman Catholic School) have all been consulted and are supportive of being part of a School Street scheme.

- 3.5. Further engagement is scheduled to take place over the next two months in the run up to the launch of the scheme at these locations. Once the schemes go live, a statutory 6-month consultation (objection) period will commence which will give residents, parents, businesses, and any other effected stakeholder the opportunity to make representation and influence how the scheme progresses with any formal objections to the scheme being considered by the Cabinet Member for City Services for a decision on how to proceed.

4. Timetable for implementing this decision

- 4.1. The City of Coventry (Knights Templar Way Area) (Prohibition of Driving) (Experimental) Order 2023 will be made permanent from the 27th August 2024. Alongside this order new ETRO's will be made which will cover the four (4) new sites to be progressed as part of the second phase of the initiative. This Order will become operational on the 29th August 2024 before effectively going live on Tuesday 2nd September 2024, the first day of the new 2024/25 academic school year.
- 4.2. Once live, a consultation about moving traffic enforcement and a monitoring period will run for a minimum of 6 weeks over which time driver compliance with the restrictions will be monitored. If this monitoring demonstrates that there is a consistent level of non-compliance with the restriction, then this would trigger the step to practical enforcement of the restrictions moving forward. It should be noted that each location will be assessed on its own merits, and should we see good levels of compliance it will not be necessary to move to an enforcement-based regime.
- 4.3. An ETRO has a maximum duration of 18 months. During the first 6 months of the Order a statutory consultation (objection) period will operate. In the proceeding 6 months any amendments identified can be implemented before a final decision is taken on whether to make the Order permanent by month 18. It should be noted that if a decision fails to be made by month 18 the order would elapse and ceases to be.

5. Comments from Chief Operating Officer (Section 151 Officer) and Chief Legal Officer

5.1. Financial Implications

The delivery and implementation of the Knights Templar Way Area School Street initiative is an identified priority for the Council, funding for which has been identified in 2024/25 as part of the Vulnerable Users interventions within the Local Network Improvement Programme, which itself forms part of the Highways Maintenance and Investment Capital Programme budget, funded via the City Region Sustainable Transport Settlements (CRSTS).

Additionally to support the roll out of the second phase of the School Streets Programme at the four (4) new locations set out in paragraph 2.21 above, funding of £190,700 has been awarded to the Council from the Active Travel Fund 3 fund, administered by Travel for West Midlands.

5.2. Legal Implications

The Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 allows the Council to make a Traffic Regulation Order on various grounds e.g. improving safety, improving traffic flow and preserving or improving the amenities of an area provided it has given due consideration to the effect of such an order.

In accordance with Section 122 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, when considering whether it would be expedient to make a Traffic Order, the Council is under a duty to have regard to and balance various potentially conflicting factors e.g. the convenient and safe movement of traffic (including pedestrians), adequate parking, improving or preserving local amenity, air quality and/or public transport provision.

There is an obligation under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 to advertise our intention to make Traffic Orders and to inform various stakeholders, including the Police and the public. The Authority is obliged to consider any representations received. If representations are received, these are considered by the Cabinet Member for City Services. Regulations allow for an advertised Order to be modified (in response to objections or otherwise) before a final version of the Order is made.

The 1984 Act provides that once a Traffic Order has been made, it may only be challenged further via the High Court on a point of law (i.e. that the Order does not comply with the Act for some reason).

6. Other implications

6.1. How will this contribute to the One Coventry Plan?

<https://www.coventry.gov.uk/strategies-plans-policies/one-coventry-plan>

The proposed introduction of the School Streets scheme will contribute to the City Council's aims of ensuring that citizens, especially children and young people, are safe and the objective of working for better pavements, streets and roads.

6.2. How is risk being managed?

No direct risk identified as part of the decisions recommended by this report. Any project risk will be managed through internal project governance processes.

6.3. What is the impact on the organisation?

The implementation of additional ANPR enforcement cameras will inevitably result in an increase in workloads within Parking Services and staff resources will be closely monitored and reviewed to ensure they are suitable and sufficient.

6.4. Equalities / EIA?

The introduction of a School Streets restriction is intended to aid and encourage accessible and active forms of travel. It will address the impacts of obstructive parking which will directly help those individuals with specific mobility issues including wheelchair and mobility scooter users. Blue badge holders requiring access to a property within a school streets restriction can apply for an exemption permit which will allow them to continue to access the street and the reduction in traffic and obstructive parking will aid access once on site.

6.5. Implications for (or impact on) climate change and the environment?

The measures to be adopted are intended to contribute towards the Council's air quality targets by reducing the reliance on private motor vehicle use and encouraging and enabling active forms of travel to school. It is hoped that by restricting traffic on roads immediately fronting school gates, the environment will be improved which will benefit air quality.

To assess the impact of the initiatives on travel behaviour, a three-year monitoring programme will be conducted at each site to assess the long-term impact from the schemes.

6.6. Implications for partner organisations?

Coventry School Streets initiative has been implemented in partnership with West Midlands Police. The form of restrictions introduced as part of this initiative historically can only (outside of London) be enforced by a Police Officer. Mindful of limited Police resources, whilst in support of the initiative they have been unable to regularly attend site to drive compliance with the scheme. Transitioning to a camera-based monitoring and enforcement regime will reduce the burden on Police resources whilst enhancing our ability to improve compliance and the operation of the scheme which will be to the benefit of all parties.

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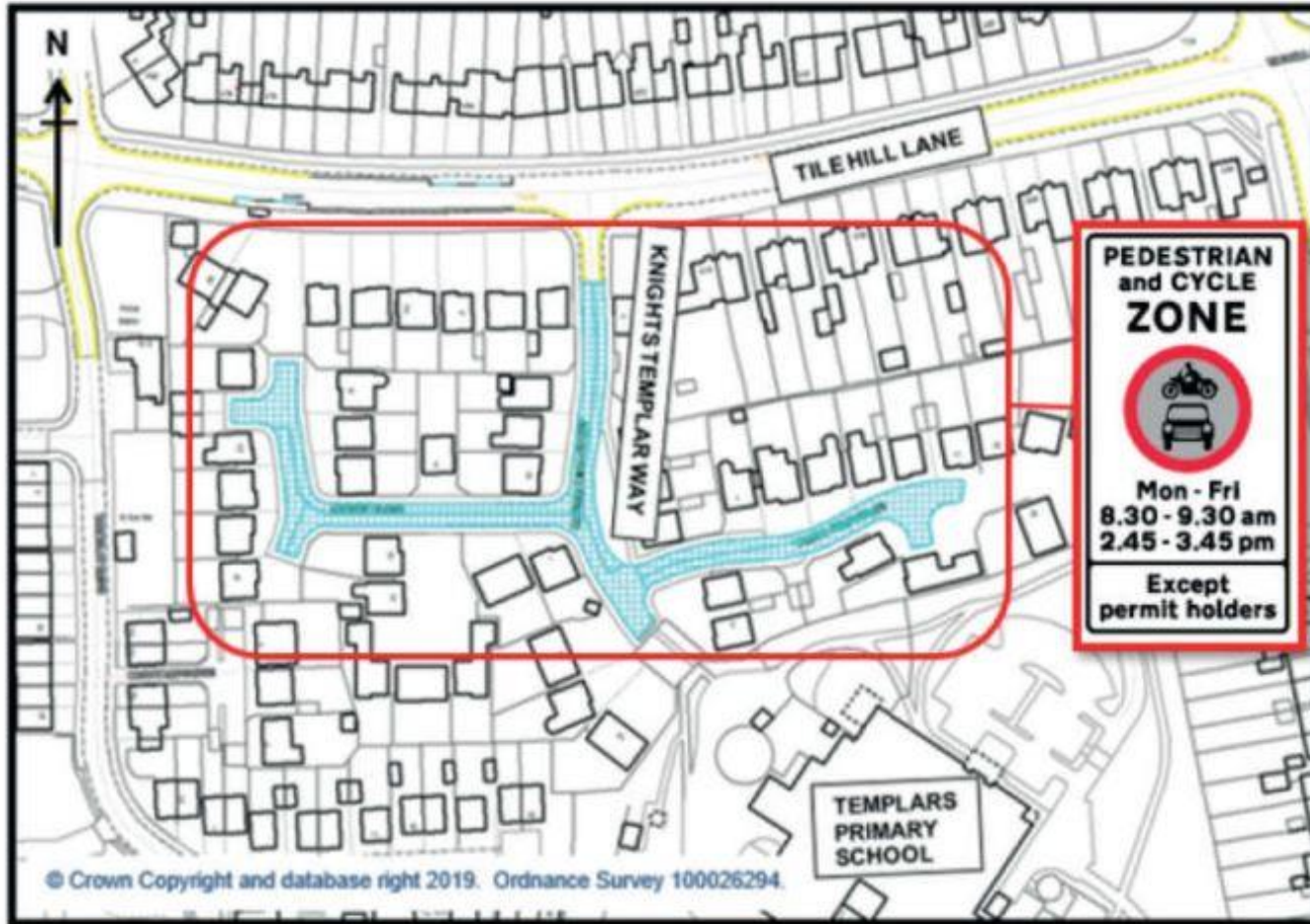
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Members: Councillor P. Hetheron	Cabinet Member for City Services	-	03/06/24	03/06/24

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Appendix A – Location plan for the Knights Templar Way Area School Streets Scheme

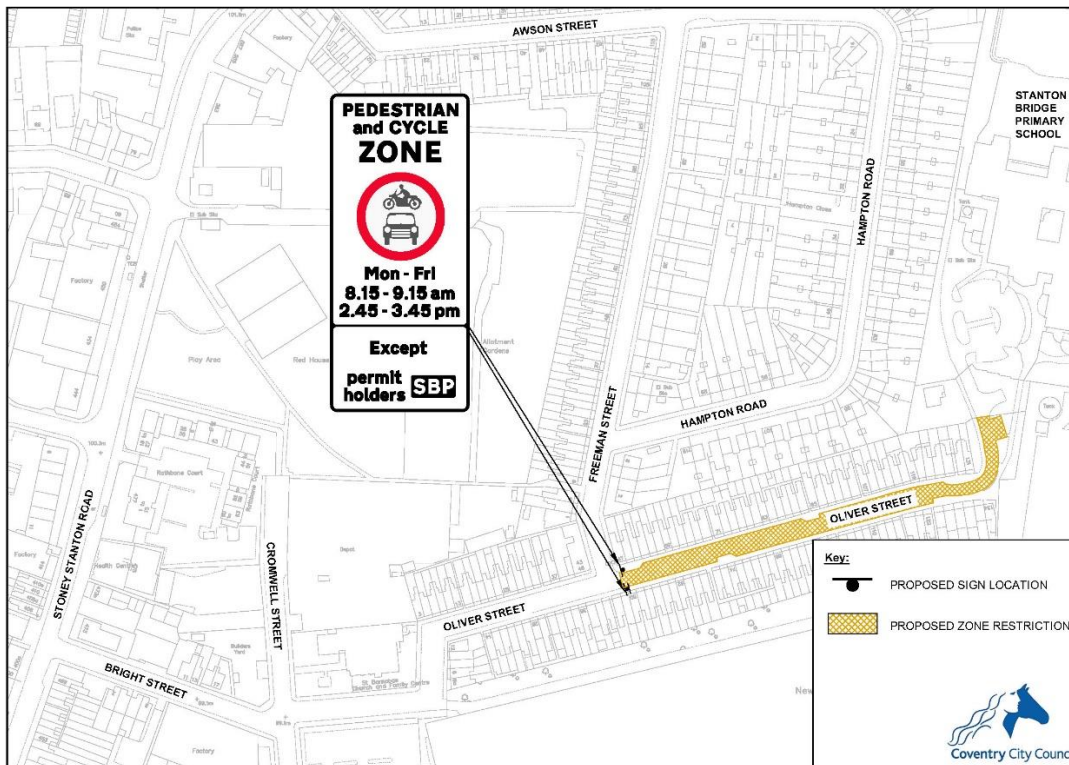


Appendix B – Resident Consultation Summary

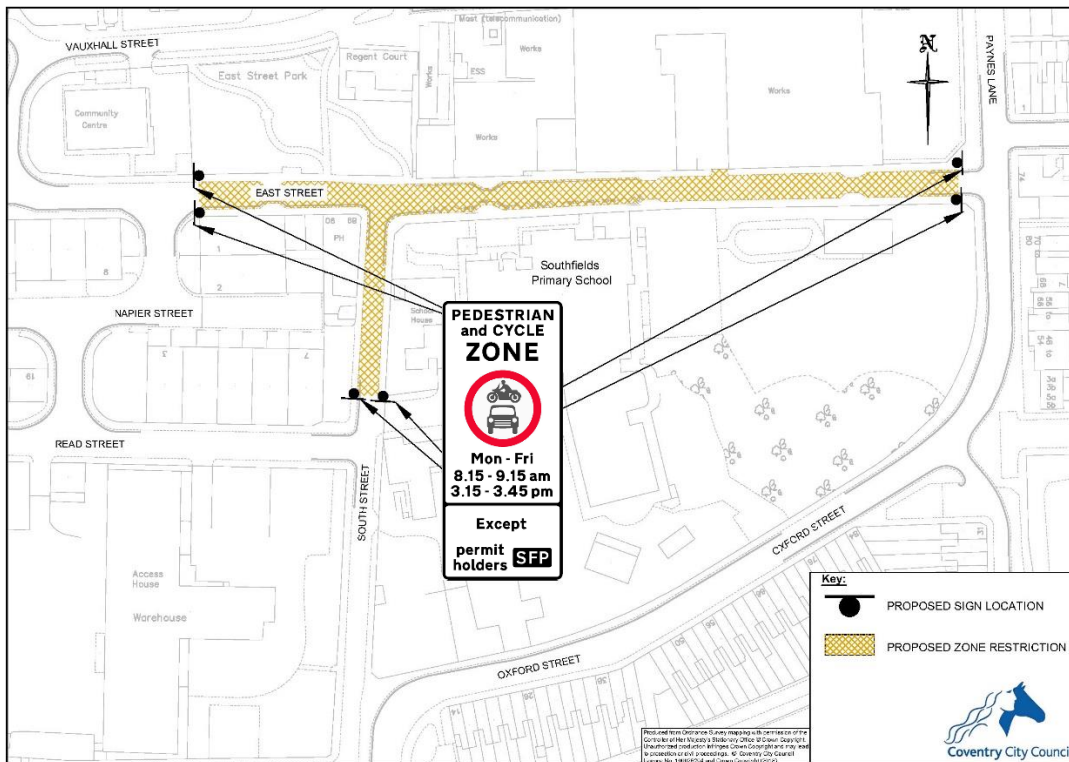
Templars Primary School – School Streets Consultation Report – May 2024 Annexed to this report

Appendix C – Location plans for the second phase of Coventry’s school streets programme

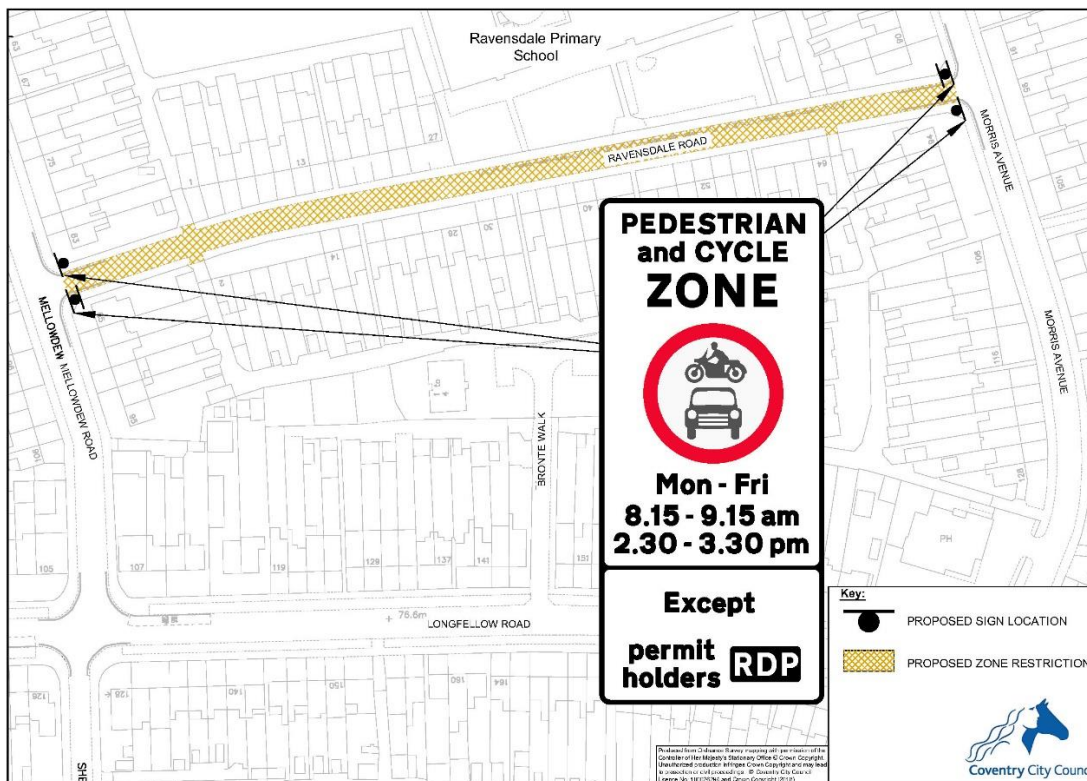
Stanton Bridge Primary School:



Southfield Primary School:



Ravensdale Primary School:



Cardinal Wiseman RC School:

