

Cabinet Member for City Services

24th September 2025

Name of Cabinet Member:

Cabinet Member for City Services – Councillor P Hetherton

Director Approving Submission of the report:

Director of Regeneration and Economy

Ward(s) affected:

Bablake

Title:

City Of Coventry (Watery Lane, Parish of Allesley)(Prohibition of Driving) Order 2024 - Objection Report and next steps

Is this a key decision?

No

Executive Summary:

Residents, with the support of Allesley Parish Council, have contacted the Council on several occasions over the previous 18 months+ regarding ongoing concerns associated with antisocial behaviour (ASB) and misuse of Watery Lane, Corley Moor. The concerns raised include fly tipping, late-night gatherings, antisocial behaviour and conflict between drivers and non-motorised road users.

In response to the concerns raised, a scheme proposing the introduction of restrictions preventing motor traffic from using a section of Watery Lane was developed in liaison with the Parish Council. The scheme proposed would use bollards to prevent motor vehicles from entering the section of Watery Lane between Oak Tree House and Hollyberry Hill Farm as shown in **Appendix 1**. The bollards would be removable, and keys provided for access to adjacent land. Through the scheme, adjoining sections of Watery Lane between Oak Tree House and Green Lane would also be subject to a prohibition of driving except for access restriction, however this would be signed only and remain physically open.

On the 7th March 2024 a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) proposing the introduction of prohibition of driving except for access on Watery Lane was advertised. This commenced a twenty-one (21) day statutory objection period. Six (6) objections were received. In accordance with the Council's procedure for dealing with objections to TROs, they were reported to the Cabinet Member for City Services for a decision on how to proceed.

The objections received raised several concerns associated with the impact and inconvenience of the restriction on residents and landowners and highlighted the risk facilitating other types of antisocial behaviour on Watery Lane and neighbouring roads.

Petition 50 24-25 was reported to the Cabinet Member on 9th April 2025. The 30-signature petition request Coventry City Council to “close the section of Watery Lane between Elkin Wood and the first house 'Hycott' with lockable bollards. This is to address safety concerns on the narrow section of lane with poor visibility for pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders.”

Following receipt of that petition it was agreed that it would be incorporated into an updated version of the previously deferred Watery Lane, Corley Moor – Objections to Proposed Prohibition of Driving Restriction Report from 2024. Included within the recommendation at that time was a proposal to utilise an Experimental Traffic Regulation Order (ETRO) and semi-permanent temporary traffic management to trial the proposed closure of Watery Lane for a duration between 12 to 18 months. This would allow any impact on the local community to be assessed before a decision was made on any permanent measures.

Recommendations:

Cabinet Member for City Services is recommended to:

- 1) Consider the objections to the proposed City of Coventry (Watery Lane, Parish of Allesley) (Prohibition of Driving) Order 2024.
- 2) Subject to recommendation 1, approve that the Order as advertised is not implemented and that objectors are informed.
- 3) Subject to recommendation 2, endorse officers introducing a 12-to-18-month trial using an ETRO with semi-permanent temporary traffic management measures at this location in order to test the impact of a Prohibition of Driving restriction at this location.

List of Appendices included:

Appendix A – Watery Lane TRO Location Plan.

Appendix B – Watery Lane TRO Objection Summary

Background Papers:

None

Other useful documents:

None

Has it been or will it be considered by Scrutiny?

No

Has it been 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: City Of Coventry (Watery Lane, Parish of Allesley) (Prohibition of Driving)
Order 2024 - Objection Report

1. Context (or background)

- 1.1** Watery Lane is a rural unclassified road located in the Parish of Allesley. The road is a continuation of Clay Lane to the south and connects to Wall Hill Road in the north. The most northerly 75m section of the road, where it links to the village of Corley Moor, sits outside of the City boundary within Warwickshire.
- 1.2** Watery Lane is predominately a single-track road, narrowing to 3m in places with no footway and limited passing places. The section of Watery Lane, which is subject to the proposed prohibition of driving that was advertised, is the southern section commencing from its junction with Clay Lane and running in a northerly direction for a distance of 1.07km to its junction with Green Lane. Of this length only the initial 660m section of the lane would be subject to physical restrictions (bollards) with the remainder relying on signage. The 660m section proposed to be physically closed is the section of lane that does not provide direct access to any residential property, but is used to access adjacent agricultural land, in various ownerships, including equine stabling.
- 1.3** Whilst there are a small number of properties and commercial enterprises on Clay Lane, Green Lane, Windmill Lane and Watery Lane which sit outside of the restriction area and who would use Watery Lane as the primary means of access to Corley Moor, Allesley and surrounding areas, overridingly, Watery Lane remains lightly trafficked with only limited use when compared to the surrounding network.
- 1.4** A review of the personal injury collision history for Watery Lane has shown that there have been no recorded personal injury collisions in the last three (3) years (the time period that is used when assessing and prioritising local safety schemes).
- 1.5** Concerns have been raised over the use of the Watery Lane / Clay Lane corridor by through traffic. The narrow width and high banks in the central section presents issues to oncoming drivers as forward visibility is reduced. Furthermore, the route is popular with non-motorised road users (NMUs) such as pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders; the narrow width of much of this route may present a hazard to NMUs when encountering oncoming motor vehicles, however it is noted as referenced above in section 1.4 of this report, that there are no recorded instances of such hazards resulting in an injury causing collision. It is also noted that this central section of the route is relatively remote from properties and as such is vulnerable to instances of antisocial behaviour such as fly-tipping and late-night congregations.
- 1.6** A higher-quality parallel alternative route avoiding the proposed restriction is available via Wall Hill Road and Bridle Brook Lane.
- 1.7** Having reviewed the location and the availability of alternative routes, a scheme consisting of a prohibition of driving, except for access, restriction was developed in consultation with the parish council in response to the issues raised.

- 1.8** As part of the statutory procedure, the TRO necessary to facilitate the installation of that restriction was advertised in the local press on 7th March 2024, advising that any formal objections should be made in writing by 29th March 2024. Notices were also posted on site and a land registry search conducted to identify landowners. Letters were then sent to those it was considered would be directly affected.
- 1.9** Six (6) objections were received during the statutory consultation period. It is also noted that Allesley Parish Council are supportive of the introduction of the restriction proposed.

2. Options considered and recommended proposal

- 2.1** The six (6) objections received to the proposals are summarised in **Appendix B**. This sets out the grounds on which the objections received have been made. Having reviewed each in detail, all cover a range of topics which can broadly be grouped into the following four (4) themes:
- I. Inconvenience and impracticality associated with the need to regularly remove bollards to permit access, including the impact on farming practices, land value and emergency response times.
 - II. The suggestion that the extent of fly tipping and ASB is not that significant at this location and therefore doesn't warrant the measures proposed.
 - III. Risk of displacing and concentrating ASB and fly tipping to other locations in the area, notably Clay Lane.
 - IV. The impact of increased traffic and parking on Clay Lane as vehicles visit Elkin Wood and the separation to rural communities that the loss of this link would create.
- 2.2** The concerns raised associated with inconvenience and impracticality are noted. Whilst keys would be issued to any person with a valid need to access land within the closure point; Officers are aware that every journey into and out the restriction would require the bollards to be unlocked, removed, driven through, replaced and locked. It has been highlighted that during peak farming periods there may be a requirement to access the lane on numerous occasions each day which will increase the impact and burden. There is a risk that the bollards will be removed and not replaced if they are found to be inconvenient which would create an ongoing maintenance and operational burden. It is noted that at other locations in the city where keys are issued to members of the public where access is needed, locks are frequently not returned/locked which can cause local tension and an ongoing administrative burden for the Authority as it seeks to manage and maintain access.
- 2.3** One objector suggests that the closure does not always operate and is only in place over night when farming activities are reduced and ASB activities are more likely to take place. Whilst the benefits of this arrangement are recognised, it would be impractical and unaffordable for the Authority to operate such an arrangement and therefore could not be progressed. Whilst it is possible that a local member of the parish may offer to undertake the opening and closing of the lane on behalf of the Council, this is not something that could be supported from a risk and liability standpoint.

- 2.4** The comments associated with land value and emergency response times are noted. It is not considered that the introduction of this restriction would affect land values. Watery Lane is not an emergency response route and therefore is not expected to impact emergency response times. It is acknowledged that an emergency service or vet attending land accessed from the closure point would be restricted and access may need to be co-ordinated with a key holder in such instances.
- 2.5** To assess the extent of ASB related activities and fly tipping that occurs on Watery Lane, colleagues in Environmental Services and the Police have been engaged.
- 2.6** Whilst historically the level of ASB and fly tipping captured for this location shows a steady decline from a peak in 2022, it is noted that there is a suggestion from the local community that there is a high level of under reporting and recording and as such the levels seen on site do not match the relatively low levels being reported.
- 2.7** Regardless of the actual levels, ASB and fly tipping remain a concern for the local community. Given the reported locations of fly tipping that occurs on the lane, it is unclear currently whether the proposed restriction would positively reduce the number of instances or lead to displacement to other locations within the vicinity. Such displacement would need to be monitored if a scheme was to be introduced.
- 2.8** It has been suggested that the introduction of the restriction would isolate residents south of the restriction with the community of Corley Moor. Whilst this impact would be dictated by the start and end points of any journey; it is anticipated that a typical journey between Clay Lane and Corley Moor will increase by approximately 1.3km, which would typically add around an extra minute or two to a vehicle journey. The impact of such an increase will vary depending on the circumstances of the individual, however it is recognised that for some, the impact could be significant.
- 2.9** Following the end of the statutory objection period, the Parish Council contacted the Council to reiterate their concerns over the use and associated risk posed to vulnerable road users because of the use of the lane by through traffic. Following a site meeting with representatives of the local community and parish council a petition was received requesting that measures to prevent through traffic using Watery Lane be introduced.
- 2.10** The petition read as follows: *"We the undersigned petition the Council to close the section of Watery Lane between Elkin Wood and the first house 'Hycott' with lockable bollards. This is to address safety concerns on the very narrow section of lane with poor visibility for pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders. The city council officers who were initially in agreement, are now recommending not to proceed with the closure following objections from just 6 people. Coventry City Council rejected the change.org petition previously presented. Please therefore, can you resign this online version. There have been numerous reports of near misses and even some accidents involving vehicles encountering other road users, and we believe that it is no longer safe to have motorised and non motorised road users sharing this section. It is actually quicker to drive around via Wall Hill Road, Bridle Brook Lane and Oak Lane than to travel through the narrow*

section. If meeting a vehicle travelling the other way it is necessary to reverse a considerable distance. Improve road safety for Allesley Parishioners and other users including pedestrians, horse riders, cyclists, vehicles.”

- 2.11** The petition was designated as 50 24-25 and reported to the Cabinet Member meeting of 9th April 2025. It was resolved at that time a determination letter be sent to the lead petitioner to inform them that that the matter would be included in this report to the Cabinet Member, and that a proposal to introduce an ETRO as an alternative way forward would be considered.
- 2.12** Officers have subsequently met with representatives from Allesley Parish Council to walk the route and to discuss a range of questions and concerns raised by their representatives. Matters such as the method of closure, key holding, extents of the closure, anti-social behaviour, provision of litter bins and how vehicle use can be surveyed and monitored were discussed. Officers have committed to working collaboratively with the Parish Council to bring forward proposals to address the matters raised and have undertaken to involve them as much as feasible in the process going forward to create a community led and focused solution.
- 2.13** In considering the objections received and the subsequent discussions with stakeholders the following options have been identified and considered:
- a. make the proposed Order as advertised,
 - b. not to proceed with the making of the Order as advertised,
 - c. not to proceed with the making of the order as advertised, and in its place advertised an ETRO where the principle of the closure can be trialled using temporary traffic management.
- 2.14** The introduction of the restriction (order) as proposed is intended to address the concerns raised by residents of Watery Lane. The proposal will restrict access to through traffic, reducing traffic flows on the lane and the likelihood of conflict with NMU users using the lane. The restriction also has the potential to reduce future instances of fly tipping and antisocial behaviour in the closed section of road by preventing access and reducing the permeability of the network. This could discourage late night gathering in cars which it has been suggested occurs at this location.
- 2.15** Six (6) objections have however been received in response to this proposal and have highlighted a range of concerns regarding the implications of the closure. Valid concerns have been raised regarding the impact of the closure on operational activities for local members of the community who use Watery Lane to access land and nearby amenities.
- 2.16** Questions have also been raised regarding the current reporting levels, frequency and potential for displacement and impact on ASB and fly tipping activities because of the implementation of the restriction.

- 2.17** Considering the objections that have been received and the uncertainty over the impact of the restriction once implemented it is recommended that option A, to make the order as advertised is not supported.
- 2.18** It is also recommended that option B in isolation is not supported as the concerns raised by the local community regarding the current use of the lane remain valid. It is for this reason that option C has been developed and is now proposed.
- 2.19** Utilisation of an ETRO will enable the restriction to be trialled in a real-world environment. This will allow data to be collected and the operation of the restrictions to be assessed prior to reporting back to the Cabinet Member for a decision on whether to make the change permanent. This allows a robust set of evidence to be collected on whether the proposed measures address the concerns raised by the local community, and whether the suggested impact for those residents who have raised objections are realised. This evidence led approach where data can be collected and amendments to the scheme can be introduced in response to emerging issues, is considered to provide a positive way forward that enables residents to reflect on the scheme whilst live and provides an extended period (over the first six months of the scheme) to raise objections and other concerns that will be critical to determining whether the scheme is considered successful and should be continued.
- 2.20** Alongside the proposed trial restriction of Watery Lane, it is also proposed to review speed limits on the network of connected rural roads located within the Allesley Parish; a number of which are subject to historic national speed limits which are no longer considered appropriate as a result of the roads layout, and current usage. Proposals are currently being prepared which will be shared with the Parish Council in Autumn 2025 and will subsequently be taken forward in 2026. These will include a new reduced speed limit on the rural section of Wall Hill Road which has seen several requests for a reduced limit following a collision between a vehicle and a horse and rider in July of this year.

3. Results of consultation undertaken

- 3.1** A statutory consultation period took place between the 7th and 29th March 2024. During this time notices were posted on site, properties and land identified as being affected were written to and a copy of the notice was deposited for public inspection and available to view on the Councils website. Six (6) objections were received, as summarised in Appendix 2.
- 3.2** If an ETRO is advertised, a 6-month objection period will commence from the first day that the scheme goes live. During this time, feedback will be invited from stakeholders, including the Parish Council and adjacent landowners, supported by on site monitoring to assess the impact of the scheme in place. All feedback received will be collated over the first 12 months of the scheme before a decision is taken to either revoke, amend or make permanent the measures introduced.

4. Timetable for implementing this decision

- 4.1** If the recommendations of this report are approved, the order as advertised will be abandoned and will not be implemented. That objectors will be informed and

subsequently work will commence on the introducing an ETRO which will run for a minimum of 12 months, initially, possibly extended to 18 months as necessary. The introduction of the ETRO is dependent upon several factors, including, but not restricted to, liaison with Allesley Parish Council and residents, baseline data collection, site inspection regularity, survey methods, closure type, Road Safety Audits and available road space and resources. It is therefore anticipated that the scheme will go live during April 2026 to tie in with the easter holiday period and longer days which is more conducive to the introduction of the proposed scheme, as it will aid users awareness of the closure and provides the greatest opportunity for schemes success.

5. Comments from the Director of Finance and Resources and the Director of Law and Governance

5.1 Financial implications

The cost of introducing the proposed ETRO is anticipated to be in the region of £17,500 and if approved, would be funded as part of the Traffic Management allocation from the Local Network Improvement Programme (LNIP) for 2025/26 which itself forms part of the Highways Maintenance and Investment Capital Programme budget, funded via the City Region Sustainable Transport Settlements (CRSTS).

As necessary any funding identified will be carried forward into the 2026/27 financial year as necessary mindful of the likely start period of the scheme in April 2026.

Subsequent funding would need to be identified, most likely as part of the 2027/28 LNIP programme should the ETRO be found to be successful, or to remove the measures if it is not. This would need to be considered as part of the budget setting process for the 2027/28 period which would take place in Q1 of 2027.

5.2 Legal implications

The Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 allows the Council to make a TRO, including an ETRO, 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.

An ETRO takes effect 7 days after public notice is given and can remain in force for up to 18 months. Objections may be made during the first 6 months of operation, and any objections must be considered before any decision to make the order permanent.

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 measures identified within this report link with the delivery priority of improving outcomes and tackling inequalities within our communities. The recommendations set out have been developed mindful of the concerns and feedback that were initially raised by residents and have been balanced against the feedback received following the statutory consultation process on the scheme. The recommended way forward seeks to address concerns raised whilst providing opportunities for the scheme to be revisited in the future should this be necessary.

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?

None.

6.4 Equalities / EIA?

The introduction of a physical restriction on Watery Lane would apply to all road users (except for designated key holders) and is not intended to impact any one group over another. Notwithstanding this, the statutory consultation undertaken for the permanent TRO has highlighted that the installation of physical restrictions has the potential to isolate members of this rural community and reduce opportunities to access local facilities. These matters will be considered and assessed as part of the implementation of the ETRO where restrictions will be trialled and their impact assessed before a final decision is taken as to whether to proceed with the restriction permanently.

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 promoting, encouraging and enabling active forms of travel. The introduction of a promoted quiet lane will highlight to other motorists the primary use of the lane and direct through traffic on to more appropriate corridors which will improve the local environment and aid NMU use of the lane.

6.6 Implications for partner organisations?

Allesley Parish Council are supportive of the proposal that has been advertised having highlighted the concerns of residents of Watery Lane living within the

proposed restriction. The parish council consider that the measures proposed will benefit residents and address the concerns raised.

Warwickshire County Council Officers will need to be consulted on the ETRO proposal.

Report author

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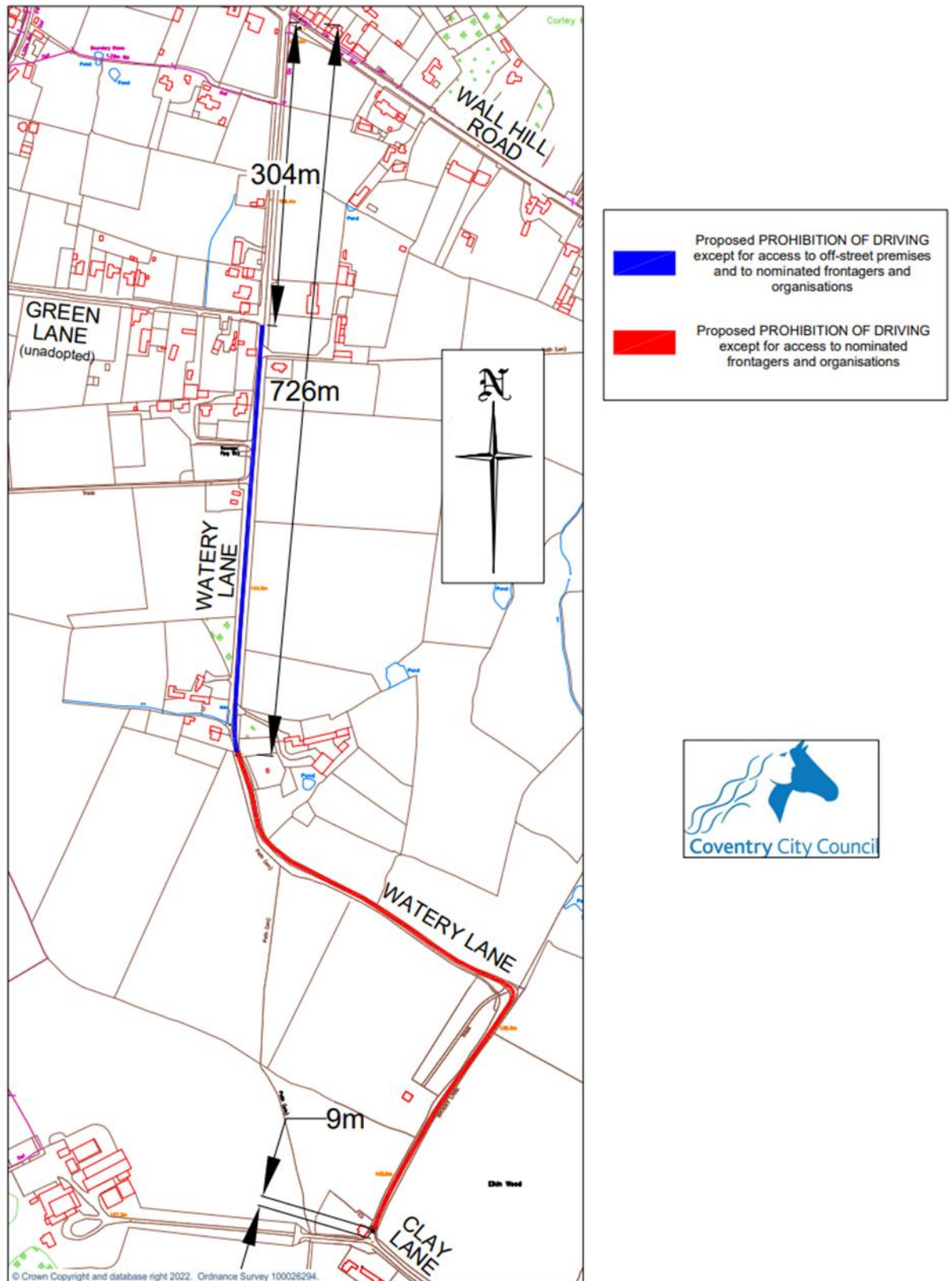
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Councillor P Hetherton	Cabinet Member for City Services	-	29/08/25	01/09/2025

This report is published on the council's website: www.coventry.gov.uk/council-meetings

Appendix A – Watery Lane TRO Location Plan

LOCATION PLAN - PROPOSED PROHIBITION OF DRIVING WATERY LANE, PARISH OF ALLESLEY



Appendix B – Watery Lane TRO Objection Summary

Summary of representations received to Watery Lane TRO

Ref	Description
Objection 1	Lived locally for several years. Not witnessed significant fly-tipping and ASB over this time. Comments that the only conflict is occasionally and mainly between cars and horses on a Saturday, when there is a little more traffic. Suggests that cars can reverse, and that restricting horse access would be an alternative option. Believes that residents are pushing for this restriction as they believe it will create a private/restricted road that will increase property value.
Objection 2	Concerns that this will result in more fly tipping on Clay Lane. Suggests that the lane may be misused by motorbikes if the restriction is introduced. It is a useful route for moving livestock and will not be convenient to open multiple barriers. Believes this is being driven by a desire to create a private road for the benefit of a few.
Objection 3	Concerned that bollards would reduce usefulness and asset value of land accessed from it. Equine business in this section would be impacted. Emergency response rates would be slowed.
Objection 4	Concerned that 24-hour presence of physical bollards and their frequent removal / replacement would be impractical and would impact those managing land and looking after livestock. Suggests the bollards need only be in place between 6pm to 8am.
Objection 5	Comments that ANPR cameras have already been in place at both ends of the road to tackle the issue, however no enforcement action takes place. Anti-social behavior is not restricted to this location and the proposed closure would just concentrate the problem elsewhere, including Elkin Wood on Clay Lane. It will make Clay Lane busier which may impact residents on the lane and those that use this for dog walking. Closure would inconvenience their day-to-day journeys and at present do not consider there is a conflict with oncoming motorists or NMU users. Suggests that balance is not being shown and more regular police patrols are needed to combat the issue.
Objection 6	Concerned that restriction would detach residents of Clay Lane from the Corley Moor community. Walking is impractical for some and a significant detour on the alternative driving route. It is noted that Elkin Wood is popular with dog walkers and during 'bluebell season', the closure would further limit parking which would create greater demand on Clay Lane. Flags access issues with positions of bollards and driveways.