

Traffic Management Sub-Committee

26 November 2025



Reading
Borough Council
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Title	Civitas Academy School Street Scheme
Purpose of the report	To make a decision
Report status	Public report
Executive Director/ Statutory Officer Commissioning Report	Emma Gee, Executive Director Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services
Report author	James Turner, Senior Transport Planner
Lead Councillor	Cllr John Ennis, Lead Councillor for Climate Strategy and Transport
Ward(s)	Abbey
Corporate priority	Healthy Environment
Recommendations	<p>The Sub-Committee is asked to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Note the content of this report., including the consultation feedback in Appendix 1.2. Agree to the Officer recommendations and authorise the Assistant Director of Legal and Democratic Services to make permanent the existing Experimental Traffic Regulation Order.3. Agree that that no public inquiry be held into the proposal.

1. Executive summary

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek approval from the Traffic Management Sub Committee to make permanent an Experimental Traffic Regulation Order for the School Street scheme on Great Knollys Street for the Civitas Academy.

2. Policy context

- 2.1 The Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 (RTRA) sets out the legal basis for making TROs. It gives local authorities the power to make TROs to regulate or restrict traffic as needed for:
- (a) avoiding danger to persons or other traffic using the road or any other road or for preventing the likelihood of any such danger arising, or
 - (b) preventing damage to the road or to any building on or near the road, or
 - (c) facilitating the passage on the road or any other road of any class of traffic (including pedestrians), or
 - (d) preventing the use of the road by vehicular traffic of a kind which, or its use by vehicular traffic in a manner which, is unsuitable having regard to the existing character of the road or adjoining property, or

- (e) preserving the character of the road in a case where it is especially suitable for use by persons on horseback or on foot, or
 - (f) preserving or improving the amenities of the area through which the road runs or
 - (g) any of the purposes specified in paragraphs (a) to (c) of subsection (1) of section 87 of the Environment Act 1995
- 2.2 The Council Plan for the years 2025/28 includes priorities of delivering a sustainable and healthy environment and to reduce our carbon footprint, which aligns closely with the provisions of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 (RTA), as both seek to improve public wellbeing and sustainable development.
- 2.3 Full details of the Council Plan and the projects which will deliver these priorities are published on the [Council's website](#). These priorities and the Corporate Plan demonstrate how the Council meets its legal obligation to be efficient, effective and economical.
- 2.4 Reading Borough Council's Local Transport Plan, the Reading Transport Strategy 2040, is a statutory document that sets a vision to make Reading a greener and healthier town by providing better sustainable travel choices, including buses. The transport strategy also contributes towards the vision of a net zero carbon Reading by 2023, as set out in the Reading Climate Emergency Strategy. It also includes guiding policies and principles including those related to Network Management (RTS17), Parking (RTS20), Enforcement (RTS21) and Demand Management (RTS22).
- 2.5 The Civitas School Street scheme aligns with the principles of the Council's Local Transport Plan (LTP), Local Cycling, Walking and Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP), Climate Emergency Strategy and Health and Wellbeing Strategy by addressing safety and parking issues that can impact in pupils and parents during drops-off and picks-up as well as promoting active and sustainable travel.

3 The proposal

- 3.1 The Council launched a School Street application process and guidance in 2020 and has subsequently engaged with several schools which have expressed an interest in the potential implementation of a School Street outside their school. By the summer 2025 the Council had 6 school street schemes in operation across the borough although it should be noted that the Exbourne Road scheme has discontinued since the start of the autumn 2025 school term leaving 5 in operation.
- 3.2 The Civitas School Street scheme was introduced in June 2024 through an Experimental Traffic Regulation Order. The scheme involves the closure of Great Knollys Street to all but eligible vehicles immediately to the east of its junction with Bedford Road. The closure is from this point eastward for the length up to the point of Great Knollys Street where there is an existing traffic restriction and pedestrian and cycle link through to the eastern end of Great Knollys Street. There is no change to access to Reading Buses depot as this is already inaccessible to motor vehicles from this side of Great Knollys Street.
- 3.3 Other than the school the only properties that are affected within the closure area are residential and their vehicles retain access under the 'eligible vehicle' category. There are 2-hour free parking bays adjacent to the school which would be unable to be accessed by ineligible vehicles during the closure although vehicles already parked here are able to exit the area during the closure.
- 3.4 The time of the road closure is 08.30 to 09.00 for morning drop-off and 14.55 to 15.40 for afternoon pickup, Monday-Friday and during school term time only.
- 3.5 A Road Safety Audit (RSA) was undertaken by an independent road safety auditor on the proposed School Street. The only safety concern raised regarded the amount of

advanced warning signage which has subsequently been addressed in the traffic management plan (see Appendix 2).

- 3.6 Following the introduction of the scheme the school has experienced a positive improvement in the environment outside of the entrance. This is now more relaxed and safer as the removal of vehicles from this section of Great Knollys Street has removed much of the conflict points. This was previously a chaotic and, at times, dangerous environment with many vehicles trying to access or making dangerous turning movements in the road.
- 3.7 There is continued support from the school's leadership and senior management team for the scheme however, as with all school street schemes, there is some concern over the ongoing resourcing requirement.
- 3.8 Despite the resourcing issue the school is keen that the scheme continues but also that Reading Borough Council investigate alternative approaches to enforcement that may remove this requirement in the future, such as through camera enforcement.
- 3.9 Officers have recently engaged the services of transport consultants to undertake a review of the Council's wider approach to school streets and road safety near schools. This review will include assessing feasibility of alternative options for enforcing school streets, such as camera enforcement, but will also review alternative traffic calming measures that can improve road safety outside of schools. This work is expected to report back to members in 2026 and may offer a solution to the current resourcing issues being faced by schools.
- 3.10 A consultation was held and details of this are outlined in this report in Section 6 – Community Engagement.

Recommendations

- 3.11 Officers recommend making the Experimental Traffic Regulation Order, into a Permanent Traffic Regulation Order for the Civitas School Street Scheme on Great Knollys Street, Reading.

4 Contribution to strategic aims

- 4.1 The Council Plan has established five priorities for the years 2025/28. These priorities are:
 - Promote more equal communities in Reading
 - Secure Reading's economic and cultural success
 - Deliver a sustainable and healthy environment and reduce our carbon footprint
 - Safeguard and support the health and wellbeing of Reading's adults and children
 - Ensure Reading Borough Council is fit for the future
- 4.2 In delivering these priorities, we will be guided by the following set of principles:
 - Putting residents first
 - Building on strong foundations
 - Recognising, respecting, and nurturing all our diverse communities
 - Involving, collaborating, and empowering residents
 - Being proudly ambitious for Reading
- 4.3 Full details of the Council Plan and the projects which will deliver these priorities are published on the Council's website - [Council plan - Reading Borough Council](#). These priorities and the Council Plan demonstrate how the Council meets its legal obligation to be efficient, effective and economical.

- 4.4 The recommendations in this report align with the Council's priorities, namely, to **Deliver a sustainable and healthy environment and reduce our carbon footprint**
- 4.5 The Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 enables the Council to introduce measures like speed limits, one way systems, bus lanes, or restrictions on certain vehicles such as at school streets. These provisions directly support reducing pollution, improving air quality and creating spaces where people feel the benefits of clean air and active travel like walking and cycling.
- 4.6 By implementing TROs, the Council can create more green spaces and pedestrian friendly areas, aligning with its goal of promoting a healthy environment which has a positive impact on the life of every resident – making Reading a greener, more attractive place to live, with a tangible impact on physical and mental health and life expectancy.
- 4.7 These actions also support accessibility and mobility, which are key to thriving, connected communities, ensuring everyone including the vulnerable and excluded can safely use public spaces, regardless of age or ability.
- 4.8 By managing traffic to reduce congestion and improve public transport flow, the Council can boost local economic activities and make it easier for everyone to access education, skills and training and good jobs.

5 Environmental and climate implications

- 5.1 The Council declared a Climate Emergency at its meeting on 26 February 2019 (Minute 48 refers).
- 5.2 Transport is the biggest greenhouse gas emitting sector in the UK accounting for around 27% of total carbon emissions. As set out in the Reading Climate Emergency Strategy 2020-25, this figure is lower in Reading with transport accounting for around 20% of carbon emissions. However, significant investment in sustainable transport solutions is vital in order to respond to the Climate Emergency declared by the Council in February 2019 and to help achieve our target of a carbon neutral Reading by 2030.
- 5.3 A climate impact assessment has not been considered necessary for the recommendations in this report. If the recommendations are agreed, and the experimental TROs made permanent, there will be no expected changes to on street signing or lining – the recommendations do not seek to change the restrictions from how they are currently presented – and there will be negligible negative impact from the creation of some weatherproof on street notices required to be displayed when making the TRO.

6 Community engagement

- 6.1 Traffic Management Sub-Committee is a public meeting. The agendas, reports, meeting minutes and recordings of the meetings are available to view from the Council's website.
- 6.2 The consultation was conducted from 13 September 2024 to 13 March 2025, during which residents were invited to complete the questionnaire and provide any additional comments.
- 6.3 There were 4 responses to the consultation through the online questionnaire. Of these 2 responses supported the scheme, 1 response was in objection and 1 response 'Did not Know' but left no comment.

- 6.4 The comment accompanying the objection to the scheme is in regard to vehicles being displaced to other areas of Great Knollys Street and subsequent impact with parents and carers dropping off. There is also a comment regarding vehicles parking on double yellow lines or obstructing driveways.
- 6.5 Transport officers have monitored the area during the school street periods and are content that there is capacity within the wider area to facilitate the required access to the school. Officers have also requested enforcement officers to attend the area during the closure to encourage legal and considerate parking. It is also anticipated that the scheme encourages mode shift with more walking and cycling active travel trips to be made to the school instead of those made by car.
- 6.6 The full comments can be seen in appendix 1.

7 Equality impact assessment

- 7.1 Under the Equality Act 2010, Section 149, a public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to—
- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
 - advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
 - foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- 7.2 It is not considered that an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) is required at this time as the proposals are not deemed to be discriminatory to persons with protected characteristics, and the proposals will help the travel needs of users. The Statutory Consultation provided an opportunity for the content of objections/support/concerns to be considered prior to a decision being made on whether to implement the proposals.
- 7.3 Further EIA assessments, where necessary, may be undertaken once the schemes are developed in detailed design.

8 Other relevant considerations

- 8.1 None

9 Legal implications

- 9.1 The Council has considered all of its legal obligations when seeking to make Traffic Regulation Orders.
- 9.2 The Experimental Traffic Regulation Order came into force on 12 June 2024 and has now been in operation for approximately 17 months. Under Section 9 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, such order can only remain in force for a maximum of 18 months, so a decision is required before expiry.
- 9.3 If approved to become permanent, the Traffic Regulation Order will be made under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 and advertised in accordance with the Local Authorities Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996.

- 9.4 The Experimental Traffic Regulation Order was made under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 and advertised in accordance with the procedure laid down by Local Authorities Traffic Orders (Procedure)(England and Wales) Regulations 1996. Any comments or objections to the order could be made during the first 6 months of operation during the consultation period, after which the Council can consider and decide to either continue with the experiment for a further 12 months, remove the experiment or make the scheme permanent.
- 9.5 If once the permanent TRO is made the school is no longer able to marshal the school street, Officers will decide in consultation with Legal Services and the School as to whether the Order should be revoked, or whether this is a temporary situation. Officers will also consider whether alternative methods of enforcement can be introduced, such as camera enforcement, however this would be subject to an updated Road Safety Audit being conducted, as well as funding being secured.
- 9.6 The Council has considered its Network Management Duty under the Traffic Management Act 2004 and its Section 122 duty under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984.

Network Management Duty

- 9.7 Part 2 Section 16 (1) of The Traffic Management Act 2004 places a duty on the Council as a local traffic authority to manage their road network with a view to achieving, so far as may be reasonably practicable having regard to their other obligations, policies and objectives, the following objectives—
- (a) securing the expeditious movement of traffic on the authority's road network; and
 - (b) facilitating the expeditious movement of traffic on road networks for which another authority is the traffic authority.
- (2) The action which the authority may take in performing that duty includes, in particular, any action which they consider will contribute to securing—
- (a) the more efficient use of their road network; or
 - (b) the avoidance, elimination or reduction of road congestion or other disruption to the movement of traffic on their road network or a road network for which another authority is the traffic authority;

and may involve the exercise of any power to regulate or co-ordinate the uses made of any road (or part of a road) in the road network (whether or not the power was conferred on them in their capacity as a traffic authority). This duty places an ongoing obligation in ensuring overall traffic efficiency and network performance and not only applies to vehicles but all to pedestrians and cyclists.

Section 122 duty

- 9.8 Further Section 122 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 places a duty on the local authority so far as practicable to secure the expeditious, convenient and safe movement of vehicular and other traffic (including pedestrians) and the provision of suitable and adequate parking facilities on and off the highway. In carrying out this exercise the Council must have regard to the following:
- Desirability of securing and maintaining reasonable access to premises.
 - The effect on the amenities of any locality effected and (without prejudice to the generality of this paragraph) the importance of regulating and restricting the use of roads by heavy commercial vehicles, so as to preserve or improve the amenities of the areas through which the road(s) run.
 - The strategy prepared under Section 80 of the Environment Act 1995 (the national

- air quality strategy).
 - The importance of facilitating the passage of public service vehicles and of securing the safety and convenience of persons using or desiring to use such vehicles.
 - Any other matters appearing to the local authority to be relevant.
- 9.9 Each of these duties has been considered in detail in relation to the scheme identified in this report.
- 9.10 Patricia Tavernier has cleared these Legal Implications.

10 Financial implications

- 10.1 Funding for the Civitas Academy School Street has been allocated from the Department for Transport's Active Travel Capability Fund allocation for Reading.
- 10.2 A small amount of funding will be required to advertise the order but this is not envisaged to be more than £1,000.
- 10.3 The Council will continue to provide the necessary PPE, signage, marshal training and any ancillary equipment required and general Transport Officer support to maintain the School Street. This is not expected to exceed £10k.

11 Timetable for implementation

- 11.1 Subject to approval by this committee to make the Experimental Traffic Order permanent this is required to be complete by 24th December 2025.

12 Background papers

- 12.1 Policy Committee report – 18th May 2020.
- 12.2 Traffic Management Sub Committee report – 6th March 2024

Appendices

- 1. Appendix 1 – Consultation Results**
- 2. Appendix 2 – Civitas School Street Plan**