

STATEMENT OF REASONS

The Council in the Traffic Management Sub-Committee meeting on 15th June 2022 has approved Wilson Primary School Experimental Traffic Regulation Order (ETRO) for the School Street Scheme to become a Permanent Traffic Regulation Order.

On the 19 May 2021 Reading Borough Council made an experimental Traffic Regulation Order. The effect of which prohibited any motor vehicle, except eligible vehicles as agreed by Reading Borough Council, to enter into or proceed in the length of Wilson Road (between Oxford Road and Westbourne Terrace) from 8.20am to 9.05am and 2.35pm to 3.20pm, Monday to Friday term time only. Wilson Road (between Oxford Road and Westbourne Terrace) shall become a Pedestrian and cycle zone.

On the 25 August 2021 Reading Borough Council made adjustments to the Experimental Traffic Regulation Order. The effect of this Variation Order was to amend the definition of “prescribed hours” in Article 2, of the Experimental Order to 8.15am - 9.15am and 2.45pm - 3.45pm, Monday to Friday term time only.

The Council approved this scheme after reviewing a report on the scheme operation

During the period of the Experimental Order one objection was received referring to a lack of information provided to residents and their concerns in relation to access to Wilson Road during the closure period. Residents of Wilson Road are entitled to enter Wilson Road at any time during the closure period and were provided with stickers to help the marshals easily identify them.

Since implementing the Experimental School Street, Council Officers have continued to undertake parking and traffic surveys on Wilson Road and neighbouring roads, to determine the current baseline usage of the streets. The results of the surveys are as follows:

- Analysis from the parking following the School Streets introduction survey has shown a significant reduction in cars parked on the roads near the school street specially, during the afternoon pick-ups
- Officers have undertaken traffic surveys in relation to pedestrians and vehicles. The analysis has shown that once the School Street begins there is an increase in number of pedestrians on the surrounding roads nearby the school.
- It also can be seen a reduction in vehicles on the School Street Wilson Road, Wantage road and Lundy Lane.

A Stage 1 Road Safety Audit (RSA) was undertaken on 18th of December 2020 by an independent road safety auditor, followed by a further RSA Stage 2 on 23 April 2021. Some recommendations were made during the RSA Stage 2 (relating to PPE, signage, marshalling and training), all of which were addressed as part of the RSA Stage 3 and prior to implementation of the scheme.

This School Street will directly support the Councils vision for a Healthy Environment, and will have a positive impact for students, school staff, parents and residents, providing a safer environment during school drop off / collection. School Streets supports long term behaviour changes towards more sustainable modes of travel Transport is integral to the

functioning of business and the economy and monitoring of the Experimental School Street scheme suggests that this measure has had a positive impact in promoting active travel.

The Council recognises there are many benefits from having a permeant School Streets Scheme. School Streets reduces the volume of traffic using roads past school gates, both school-run and through traffic; improves air quality in and around school gates; increases number of pupils walking and cycling to school; and reduces the number of pupils arriving at the school gate by car.

There are also many benefits when children use more active modes, some of which result from increased physical activity while others come from a decrease in traffic around schools.

Healthier Children

- Active school travel helps school-aged children meet the recommendation to accumulate at least 60 minutes per day of moderate to vigorous physical activity, which is linked with improved physical health.
- Active school travel is associated with mental health benefits including reduced stress, depression and anxiety; as well as increased happiness.
- Reduces childhood obesity.

Less Traffic and Pollution

- Reducing the number of children being driven to school reduces particulate air pollution around the school; this improves air quality and reduces associated risks of lung and cardiovascular diseases.

Healthier and Safer Communities

- Reducing traffic volumes creates safer school zones. Improving walking and cycling routes to school also enhances the safety, connectivity and quality of life for the community as a whole.

Better Academic Performance

- The increased physical activity specifically associated with the school journey has been found to increase alertness and attention during the school day.
- Physical activity supports healthy brain development, which can lead to improved learning and academic outcomes

The scheme has created a 'pedestrian and cycle' zone under the TRO for Wilson Primary School. Relevant signing and temporary barriers/cones have been placed in the highway at the closure point to the School Street zone, which is always attended by trained marshals, to ensure that the scheme is achieved as intended. Page 3 The Council will continue to review, monitor and assess the scheme so that the Council can quickly react if circumstances change.

The Council will continue to encourage the School to actively participate and consider complementary measures such as Modeshift STARS, Bikeability cycle training, cycle/scooter parking, park and stride, walking buses and the Living Streets WOW scheme.