

OFFICER DECISION REPORT - TRAFFIC REGULATION ORDER (TRO)

5a

OUTCOME OF ETRO PROCESS – DECISION (following objections)

PREPARED BY: Traffic Management Team, Highways and Traffic Group

TITLE OF REPORT:	Queen Charlton Lane, Queen Charlton – Liveable Neighbourhood Scheme
PROPOSAL:	Modal Filter (prohibition of motor vehicles)
SCHEME REF No:	22 – 015

1. DELEGATION

The delegation to be exercised in this report is contained within **Part 3, Section 4** of the Constitution under the **Delegation of Functions to Officers**, as follows:

Section A	The Chief Executive, Strategic Directors, Divisional Directors and Heads of Service have delegated power to take any decision falling within their area of responsibility....”
Section B	Without prejudice to the generality of this, Officers are authorised to: serve any notices and make, amend or revoke any orders falling within his/her area of responsibility.
Section D9	An Officer to whom a power, duty or function is delegated may nominate or authorise another Officer to exercise that power, duty or function, provided that Officer reports to or is responsible to the delegator.

For the purpose of this report, the Director of Place Management holds the delegated power to make, amend or revoke any Orders.

2. LEGAL AUTHORITY

This proposal is made in accordance with the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, which under Section 1 provides, generally, for Orders to be made for the following reasons, and in the case of this report specifically for the reason(s) shown below:

(a)	for 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	X
(b)	for preventing damage to the road or to any building on or near the road, or	
(c)	for facilitating the passage on the road or any other road of any class of traffic (including pedestrians), or	X
(d)	for 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,	X
(e)	(without prejudice to the generality of paragraph (d) above) for preserving the character of the road in a case where it is specially suitable for use by persons on horseback or on foot, or	X

(f)	for preserving or improving the amenities of the area through which the road runs, or	X
(g)	for any of the purposes specified in paragraphs (a) to (c) of subsection (1) of section 87 of the Environment Act 1995 (air quality)	

3. **PROPOSAL**

The introduction of a Modal Filter in Queen Charlton Lane, Queen Charlton, on an experimental basis in the first instance. A Modal Filter is, essentially, a road closure which prevents through traffic from using a route, whilst maintaining access for walking, wheeling and cycling. The filters will be porous and emergency vehicles will have access through the bollards including farm vehicles.

The location and extent of the proposed Modal Filter can be seen within report number 3.

4. **BACKGROUND**

Liveable Neighbourhoods are part of our toolkit to tackle the climate and ecological emergency, act on our Health and Wellbeing Strategy and ensure social justice. All schemes will require changes in travel behaviour by residents, commuters, and visitors alike. Modifying travel behaviour and car ownership levels is difficult in the short term, but the rewards can be so significant that, in the future, very few people will want to return to the way we organise travel now, as experienced elsewhere in the country.

The aim of Liveable Neighbourhoods is to reduce overall vehicle use, rather than divert traffic elsewhere. Successful schemes will be those that improve the local environment for residents, increase capacity, safety, and convenience for sustainable travel on main corridors, and foster conditions whereby residents reduce their reliance on private cars, making their local trips by walking, cycling, e-bikes or public transport.

The introduction of Liveable Neighbourhoods has the potential to make huge improvements to people's lives, enabling communities to improve their health, wellbeing, and equality of opportunity.

Liveable Neighbourhood strategies in B&NES (Low Traffic Neighbourhoods, Residential Parking Strategy, and On Street Electric Vehicle Charging Strategy) were the subject of public consultation between 9th September and 18th October 2020. The responses demonstrated overwhelming public support for the council's approach and proposed measures.

These strategies were approved in December 2020, and applications were subsequently sought for Liveable Neighbourhoods, Residents' Parking Zones, and Electric Vehicle Parking. Ward Members and Parish Councils were asked to submit expressions of interest by 12th February 2021, with a second round of expressions of interested invited by 5th May, and a third round by 5th August 2021.

A prioritisation methodology was developed to assess the applications received, which resulted in a shortlist of schemes that are considered to offer the greatest potential and are worthy of detailed investigation and development.

Queen Charlton Lane is one of the schemes that was subsequently prioritised.

It is considered appropriate for the proposed Modal Filter to be introduced on an experimental basis in the first instance, so that the actual impact of closing the road to through traffic can be assessed and monitored.

5. SOURCE OF FINANCE

The proposal is capital funded: TLN00028S

6. INFORMAL CONSULTATION REQUIREMENT

Informal consultation was carried out with the Chief Constable, Ward Members and the Cabinet Members for Transport.

The responses to the informal consultation can be found in ETRO report number 3.

7. OBJECTIONS / COMMENTS RECEIVED (following the public advertisement of the proposal(s))

The objection / comments received have been summarised below with the technical responses in italics underneath each one.

**OBJECTIONS / COMMENTS RECEIVED
(during the 6-month public advertisement of the proposal)**

The objection/comments received have been summarised below with the technical responses in italics underneath each one.

Total Responses: 98

Objections- 18

Support- 76

Support in part- 4

Objections main points raised:

Overall, 21 respondents provided comments with reasons why they would object to the trial scheme. The table below provides a breakdown of the themes which arose from these reasons, with some respondents mentioning more than one theme.

Comment	Object (number)
Unfair restriction to motorcycle users	9
Will displace traffic /causes congestion elsewhere	6
The trial scheme is unnecessary	6
Favours wealthy residents / privatisation / divides the community Road remains open.	4
The trial scheme is a waste of money	3
Disrupts local traffic	2
Causes more pollution / vehicles travel further	1
Negatively impacts wider Bath residents	1
Increases journey times potentially could, but wider benefit to increase active travel in the area.	1
Total comments received	21

Unfair to motorcycle users:

- Out of the 98 responses to the consultation the main concern identified was that the trial was unfair to motorcyclists, with comments noting that motorcyclists did not cause the same 'rat-running' issues.

Response:

Motorcycles were included in the traffic restriction for road users' safety. The aim of the scheme was to stop motorists using Queen Charlton Lane as an inappropriate shortcut (or through route) when travelling between Keynsham and Bristol and to provide a safe, healthy environment for residents, pedestrians, horse riders and cyclists. Allowing motorcycles to be excluded from this restriction would reduce the impact of the scheme and put more vulnerable road users at risk.

Traffic displacement:

- Responses noted that there were concerns that the trial scheme 'displaced traffic' and disrupts local traffic.

Response:

While the data shows that traffic on the principal alternative routes to Queen Charlton Lane has increased (i.e., on Woollard Lane and the southwestern section of Charlton Road), this is to be expected as the purpose of the trial was to encourage commuter traffic to stay on the main roads.

While the increase is not insignificant, it is felt that a considerable proportion of that change may be reflecting a general increase in traffic on routes that would otherwise be unaffected by the trial.

An example is the north-western section of Charlton Road, which also saw more traffic during the monitoring period but given its location, would not have been directly impacted by the trial.

We also note more traffic on Sleep Lane (when comparing baseline and post-installation data). Sleep Lane is not an alternative route for Queen Charlton Lane, nor a main road, however northbound traffic here has increased by up to 16% compared with baseline data (averaging up to 280 extra vehicles a day).

It is therefore difficult to draw a definitive conclusion on the impact of the trial itself on traffic volumes on the main alternative routes (e.g., Woollard Lane and southwest Charlton Road) because we also note increased traffic volumes on routes which should not have been directly impacted by the trial. In other words, the trial may not be the sole contributor to increased traffic on alternative routes.

On balance, it appears that the volume of displaced traffic is relatively modest, considering the length and the directness of the route that was closed to through-traffic, and the changes in traffic elsewhere.

The traffic monitoring report can be found attached as Appendix A.

Pollution:

- In the ETRO public consultation, 8 respondents commented that they were concerned that the proposals would increase air pollution.

Response:

Levels of air pollution were not measured as part of the monitoring of this scheme as it was felt to be unnecessary. Because of its rural location the area is not an area with high levels of pollution. While traffic monitoring did show small increases in traffic volume on surrounding roads, given the volume of traffic these roads already see, it is not expected that this would impact negatively upon air quality.

Other:

- Some respondents commented that they felt the trial scheme was 'unnecessary' and was a waste of money.
- A few comments noted that there were concerns that the trial scheme was creating a divide in the community.
- Favours wealthy residents / privatisation of roads

Response:

The Council is more widely working towards a number of targets that will help to address climate change. As such, in 2020 the council adopted the Liveable

Neighbourhoods policy which sets out it's ambition to reduce the dominance of vehicles in residential areas. The allocation of road space must be reconsidered to reduce carbon emissions, improve air quality and promote healthy lifestyles. Our vision is to provide fairer access for those travelling on foot and by bicycle, creating healthier outdoor spaces for everyone to enjoy. This was reflected in the scheme's data collection which showed a 300% increase in numbers of people walking along Queen Charlton Road.

Following the introduction of trial modal filters on Queen Charlton Lane, the road remains open for access.

Economic status of residents is not a factor which is considered when identifying possible Liveable Neighbourhood scheme trials.

Support:

Just over three-quarters (78%) of the 98 respondents support the Experimental Traffic Order Regulation (ETRO), with a further 4% saying they partially support it.

All responses were provided by members of the public except one respondent who replied on behalf of an organisation. This organisation is included in the total count.

A total of 76 respondents provided comments with reasons why they would support the trial scheme. The table below provides a breakdown of the themes which arose from these reasons, with some respondents mentioning more than one theme.

Monitoring shows around 300% more walkers used this route one year after it was launched and an average of between 12-18 more cyclists each day, which is uplift of 60-80%. Of those who responded to our end point survey, 86% felt road safety had improved for pedestrians and 84% felt road safety had improved for cyclists and 82% felt road safety had improved for horse riders.

Comment	Support (number)
Makes the area safer / more pleasant to walk / cycle	40
Road is safer	22
Reduced traffic in the trial scheme area	17
Safer for children / elderly	17
Stopped rat running	13
Encourages more walking and cycling	13
Reduced speeding	13
Generally improved the street	10
Improved the environment	7

Road is quieter	6
Reduced litter / fly tipping	4
Reduced noise pollution	3
Reduced accidents / damage	2
Positively impacted mental/ physical health	2
Total comments received	76

Recommendation: Approve and seal as advertised.

8. **ADDITIONAL COMMENTS FROM WARD MEMBERS AND CABINET MEMBER FOR HIGHWAYS (in response to the above)**

Chief Constable:

Thank you for the email and attachments regarding the Experimental Traffic Regulation Order Queen Charlton Liveable Neighbourhood and the data contained in the attached.

It is noted that the initial proposal stated *“The introduction of a Modal Filter in Queen Charlton Lane, Queen Charlton, on an experimental basis in the first instance. A Modal Filter is, essentially, a road closure which prevents through traffic from using a route, whilst maintaining access for walking, wheeling and cycling. The filters will be porous and emergency vehicles will have access through the bollards including farm vehicles.”*

It is noted that the Traffic Monitoring Data Report (Appendix A) states *“In overall summary, the data shows that the through-traffic restriction trial has significantly reduced traffic along Queen Charlton Lane and encouraged an uplift in active travel along this route, including walking and cycling. This has been sustained across two sets of surveys and in both directions.*

8.4. While the data shows that traffic on the principal alternative routes to Queen Charlton Lane has increased (i.e., on Woollard Lane and the southwestern section of Charlton Road), this is to be expected as the purpose of trial was to encourage commuter traffic to stay on the main roads.

8.5. While the increase is not insignificant, it is felt that a considerable proportion of that change may be reflecting a general increase in traffic on routes that would otherwise be unaffected by the trial (for example, the north-western section of Charlton Road). It is therefore difficult to draw a definitive conclusion on the impact of the trial itself on these alternative routes.

8.6. On balance, it appears that the volume of displaced traffic is relatively modest, considering the length and the directness of the route that has been closed to through-traffic, and the changes in traffic elsewhere”

There are no further observations.

Parking Services:

No comment.

Ward Members:

Saltford:

Cllr Duncan Hounsell – The ETRO was a great success in meeting the objectives of improved safety and promoting active travel. I am delighted with the high proportion of supportive responses in the consultation. The effects have been beneficial and transformative. It has been a model scheme that should now be made permanent.

Cllr Alison Streatfeild-James - The Queen Charlton Liveable Neighbourhood scheme has had a great impact on the village of Queen Charlton and the ability of local residents both in the village and in the many nearby settlements to enjoy walking through the village and along the closed lane. I have received a huge amount of positive feedback and the benefits to the wellbeing and health of local people is very evident. I thoroughly support this scheme becoming permanent.

Cabinet Members:

Cllr Manda Rigby - I am very pleased to approve this TRO to go to the director of Place management and am delighted that the trial has proven so very successful.

8. RECOMMENDATION

That the Traffic Regulation Order as advertised is sealed.



Paul Garrod
Traffic Management & Network Manager

Date: 24th April 2024

9. DECISION

As the Officer holding the above delegation, I have decided that the objections / comments be not acceded to and the Order as advertised be sealed.

In taking this decision, I confirm that due regard has been given to the Council's public sector equality duty, which requires it to consider and think about how its policies or decisions may affect people who are protected under the Equality Act.

The Council's policy framework has been used as the basis to develop the scheme with full engagement with stakeholders across the area.

I further note that the issue of deciding whether to implement any scheme is a matter of broad judgement, taking into account the wider transport and climate aims of the Council rather than a purely mathematical analysis on the numbers of positive or negative responses.

The arguments both for and against the scheme were clearly identified and were considered fully as part of the decision-making process before I made the final decision as set out above.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Chris Major', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Chris Major
Director for Place Management

Date: 25/04/24