

Title of meeting: Transport Cabinet Decision Meeting

Date of meeting: 12 October 2023

Subject: School Streets - Phase 1 - Trial to Permanent Measures

Report by: Kerri Farnsworth, Interim Director of Regeneration

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Wards affected: St Thomas, Central Southsea

Key decision: No

Full Council decision: No

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1** The purpose of this report is to provide an overview of the School Streets project to date, summarise the learnings from five trials and the future approach to implementing school streets in Portsmouth.
- 1.2** To seek approval for the proposed permanent School Streets at St Jude's Church of England Primary School and Bramble Infant School and Nursery.

2. Recommendations

It is recommended that the Cabinet Member for Transport:

- 2.1 Approves to proceed with the implementation of permanent School Streets at St Jude's Church of England Primary School;**
- 2.2 Approves to proceed with the implementation of permanent School Streets at Bramble Infant School and Nursery;**
- 2.3 Approves to proceed with future school streets trials under an 18 month ETRO (Experimental Traffic Regulation Order).**

3. Background

3.1 School Streets

- 3.1.1 A School Street is a road outside a school that has a restriction on vehicle access at school drop-off and pick-up times. The restriction applies to school and through traffic, at specified times, on weekdays during term time. School Streets are usually piloted for 6 to 18 months using temporary or experimental traffic regulation orders (ETRO) and can be enforced through the presence of a physical barrier, signs, enforcement cameras or a combination of these.
- 3.1.2 Each site is different and requires careful consideration to meet the environmental needs and the project objectives. Careful monitoring is needed before, during and after the trial, to evaluate the impact of the School Street both on the road that is closed, and on the wider area. Engagement with local Councillors, residents, businesses, and the whole school community is recommended, to maximise behaviour change and minimise potential opposition to the changes.
- 3.1.3 School Streets have been shown to have a wide range of benefits to both the school, as well as to the wider community. These include boosting physical and mental health, improved safety, reduced congestion, improved air quality, better concentration in class and a more welcoming and social space around the school gates.

3.2 School Streets in Portsmouth until now

- 3.2.1 The popularity of School Streets increased dramatically during Covid 19 pandemic and in September 2021 two schools, St Jude's Church of England Primary School and Bramble Infant School and Nursery, took part in the Phase 1 trials in Portsmouth. Following that, in May 2022 St John's Cathedral Catholic Primary School, Meon Infant and Meon Junior took part in Phase 2 and in September 2022 Kings Academy College Park took part in Phase 3 of School Streets.
- 3.2.2 The schools took part for a minimum of 7 weeks trials under Temporary Traffic Regulation Order (TTRO) with Bramble and St John's schools prolonging their trials until the end of term that their trial was in.
- 3.2.3 The trials to date have followed the 'steward model'. This requires volunteers from the school and local community to set up and operate the road closures using road signs and light physical barriers at the beginning and end of the school day. Access for residents, essential services and the school is maintained by the stewards.
- 3.2.4 Using this model promotes relationship building between the school and the local community and allows for closer traffic monitoring. However, it relies on people's time and enthusiasm to manage the scheme.

- 3.2.5 Most schools could not continue their trials beyond the initial trial period due to lack of volunteers, sometimes needing support from council officers and Sustrans to complete their trial.
- 3.2.6 Every school had a different steward make up. For example, at:
- St Jude's Church of England School stewards were mainly parents and residents.
 - Bramble Infant School and Nursery, the site manager was the lead steward with parent support.
 - Meon Infant and Meon Junior schools had the most varied stewards made up from school staff, parents, residents, ward Councillors and wider community support including asylum seekers.
 - St John's Cathedral Catholic Primary School stewards were almost exclusively parents, with one ward Councillor joining halfway through the trial. Stewards at St John's Cathedral Catholic Primary School had minimal school involvement due to site manager sickness.
 - Kings Academy College Park closures were facilitated by school staff without any parent or resident involvement. It was mainly the Head Teacher and Deputy Head Teacher who were the stewards, later with some support of Council officers and Sustrans. No parents came forward to volunteer despite repeated calls from the Head Teacher.
- 3.2.7 Free breakfast and after school clubs were offered to parents wishing to volunteer. This was an incentive at St Jude's and St John's Cathedral Catholic Primary Schools which some parents took advantage of.
- 3.2.8 The support for permanent School Streets varied between the schools, however in all schools the majority of survey respondents who participated in post-trial surveys were in favour of the closures remaining in place¹.
- 3.2.9 In 2022/23 work was undertaken to assess the feasibility to make St Jude's and Bramble Infant School and Nursery permanent School Streets as both schools had high levels of support for permanent closures. Initial school and resident engagement took place at both schools in February and March 2023, again showing strong support for creating School Streets. A report was taken to the Cabinet Member for Transport in March 2023, where approval was given to create a School Street around St Jude's Church of England school².
- 3.2.10 Due to the issues with steward recruitment, the Safer Travel Team initiated a School Street model review. Research was undertaken to understand best practice from other Local Authorities, aiming to create a range of models available to use in future trials depending on the school and its location. The findings are attached as Appendix A of this report.

¹ [School Streets and Stomp to School - Wave 3 2022 - Your City, Your Say survey research \(portsmouth.gov.uk\)](https://www.portsmouth.gov.uk)

² [FINAL St Judes School Streets permanent infrastructure report - with Legal comment.pdf \(portsmouth.gov.uk\)](https://www.portsmouth.gov.uk)

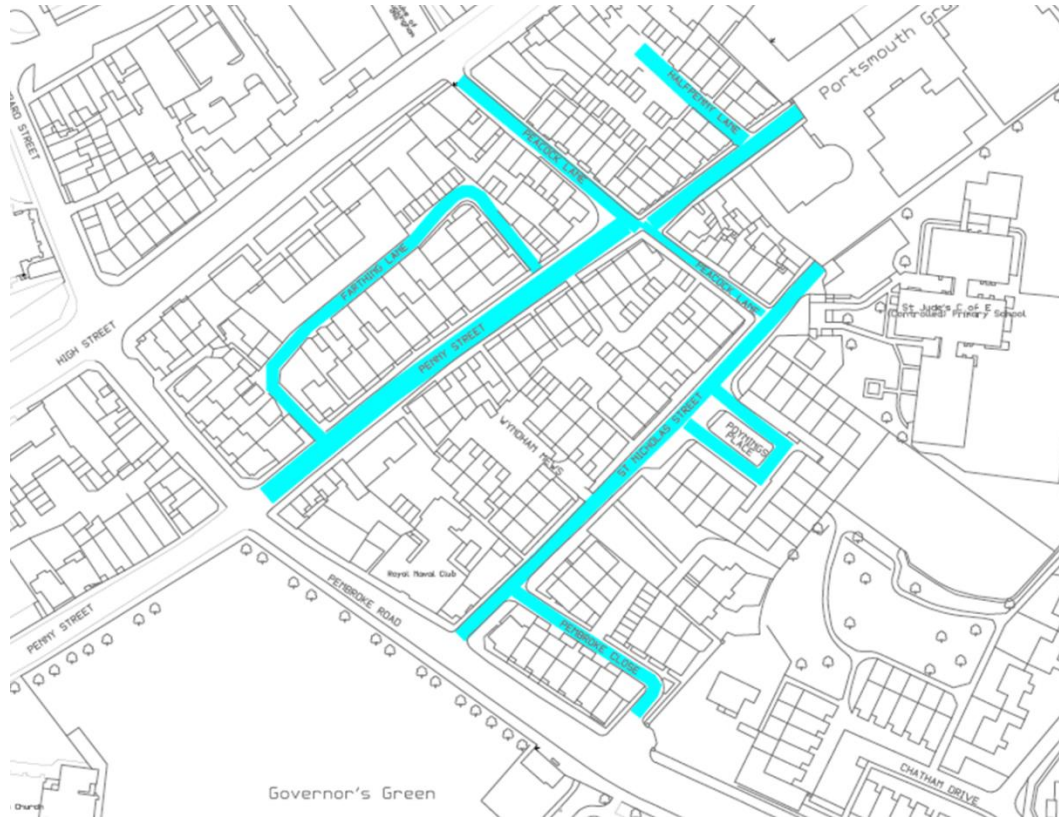
4. School Streets- next steps

4.1 Bramble Infant School and Nursery



- 4.1.1. To install a School Street to Heyward Road, restricting traffic during school drop off and pick up hours, term time only. This will use signage and bollards under ETRO (Experimental Traffic Regulation Order) valid for up to 18 months. Signs will be placed on both sides of Heyward Road at the point of entry from Fawcett Road.
- 4.1.2 To install telescopic bollards on one side of Heyward Road by the junction with Fawcett Road to create partial closure, bollards to act as visible barrier to prevent accidental access by motorised vehicles, and at the same time allow for resident and exemptions entry and exit. It has been agreed with the school that these bollards will be managed by the school.
- 4.1.3 To install advance warning signs on north and south side of Fawcett Road prior turn into Heyward Road. School Street visuals are attached as Appendix C.
- 4.1.4 To install loading bay on Fawcett Road under TRO (Traffic Regulation Order) in front of 151 Halls and Laly's Pharmacy.

4.2 St Jude's Church of England Primary School



- 4.2.2 To install a School Street zone using signage only under ETRO (Experimental Traffic Regulation Order) valid for up to 18 months. Signs to be placed on one side of Pembroke Close, St Nicholas Street and Penny Street at the point of entry from Pembroke Road.
- 4.2.3 To install advance warning signs on east side of Pembroke Road prior right turn into Pembroke Close and on west side of Pembroke Road prior left turn to Penny Street. School Street visuals are attached as Appendix D.

4.3 Future school streets

- 4.3.2 Using the steward model has proven to be unsustainable for schools to manage the trials. This has especially been apparent for the longer Portsmouth trials.
- 4.3.3 Research undertaken by the Safer Travel Team established that other Local Transport Authorities (LTAs) have experienced the same issues with steward recruitment and retention. As a result, other LTAs have started introducing more infrastructure led models with ad hoc steward support. For example, 5 schools streets trials in Norfolk finished early or have been put on hold due to lack of volunteers, Oxford County Council decided that trials will be carried out using

volunteer model, however they opted for use of ANPR cameras for permanent School Streets.

- 4.3.4 Future school streets trials in Portsmouth will be carried for a minimum 18 months under an Experimental Traffic Regulation Order (ETRO), as long-term trials have been proven to be far more effective in influencing travel behaviour change and allowing for changes, ongoing surveying and monitoring.

5 Permits

- 5.1 As part of the permanent school streets and future trials, permits allowing vehicles to enter the school street zone would be available to residents of premises located within the school street zone and their visitors. Permits will be site specific, vehicle specific and time bound.
- 5.2 Some vehicles belonging to identified groups or situations are automatically allowed to drive in school street zone without first obtaining a permit: blue badge holders, emergency services, healthcare workers, utility companies (essential maintenance), refuse collectors, postal services providers and delivery of goods, licensed hire vehicles serving properties within restricted area and home to school transport.
- 5.3 Schools are allowed to grant exception permit to access school street zone to parents and carers (based on individual need) as well as teachers if entry point to teacher parking is within school street.
- 5.4 Vehicles accessing school street zone would be monitored ad hoc and parents breaking the rules reported to the head teacher.
- 5.5 Police would be able to issue tickets for drivers entering school street without valid permit.

6 Reasons for recommendations

- 6.1 Portsmouth City Council has ambition to create more child friendly streets, to increase pupil physical activity which translates directly into pupils' wellbeing. Portsmouth City Council also invests in creating Safer Routes to School and School Streets to make last stretch of their journey to the school gate safer. Over time School Streets benefit the whole area by creating a quieter area around the school, improving air quality by dispersing traffic. Parents have reported enjoying spending time walking with their children instead of rushing and being stuck in traffic.
- 6.2 To ensure the continuing success of school streets, the relationship between the council and the school is key. A school street has tangible benefits but is also a commitment for both council and school resources. The Safer Travel team with

support from Sustrans will continue to support schools as they implement and manage their school street.

- 6.3 Future school street trials will be carried for longer periods of time than previous trials to influence long term behaviour change.
- 6.4 A combination of signs, bollards, cones, planters and stewards (staffed and volunteered) will be considered, a model will be chosen and adapted to meet the needs of the school and the area.
- 6.5 The area around the school to be assessed more holistically for longer term road safety improvements, opportunities for joint work with other projects and availability of other funding streams.

7 Integrated impact assessment

- 7.1 An IIA has been undertaken, and is attached as Appendix B

8 Legal implications

- 8.1 It is the duty of a local authority to manage its road network with a view to achieving, so far as may be reasonably practicable having regard to its 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.
- 8.2 Local authorities have a duty to take account of the needs of all road users, take action to minimise, prevent or deal with congestion problems, and consider the implications of decisions for both their network and those of others.
- 8.3 Experimental traffic orders (ETRO's) can be made for the same reasons as standard traffic regulation orders, including avoiding danger to persons or other traffic using the road or for preventing the likelihood of such danger arising or facilitating the passage on the road of traffic. ETROs may last for up to a maximum of 18 months.
- 8.4 An order may specifically include provisions prohibiting, restricting or regulating the use of a road or any part of the width of a road by any specified class of traffic.
- 8.5 There is no statutory requirement to consult before making an ETRO but notice of the order must be given in the prescribed form. Specified documents must also be placed

on deposit. The order cannot come into force until the expiry of 7 days from the date that notice was given.

- 8.6 If it is intended to make the ETRO permanent after the trial period has passed the notice should contain the prescribed statement set out in Schedule 5 of the Local Authorities Traffic Orders Procedure Regulations 1996. A statement of the reasons for making the order will also have to be placed on deposit.
- 8.7 Any person or body may object to the ETRO being made permanent by no later than 6 months from the order coming into force.
- 8.8 The procedural provisions for giving permanent effect to an experimental order is set out in regulations 23 and schedule 5 of The Local Authorities' Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996
- 8.9 Regulation 23 provides that an experimental order can be made permanent providing the following requirements are adhered to:
- 8.9.2 The following statements were included in the notice of making the experimental order:
- that the order making authority will be considering in due course whether the provisions of the experimental order should be continued in force indefinitely
 - A person may object to the experimental order continuing for an indefinite period within 6 months of the order beginning on the date the order came into force (or within 6 months beginning on date the order is varied or modified)
 - That any objections must be in writing, state the grounds on which it is made and be sent to an address specified in the notice]
- 8.9.3 The following documents were deposited and kept available for inspection beginning from the date on which the advertisement of the experimental order is first published and ending on the date the order ceases to have effect:
- a. a copy of the relevant notice of proposals and, if the order has been made, of the relevant notice of making;
 - b. a copy of the order as proposed to be made or as made (as the case may be);
 - c. a map which clearly shows the location and effect of the order as proposed to be made or as made (as the case may be) and, where appropriate, alternative routes for diverted traffic;
 - d. a statement setting out the reasons why the authority proposed to make the order including, in the case of an experimental order, the reasons for proceeding by way of experiment and a statement as to whether the authority intends to consider making an order having the same effect which is not an experimental order;
 - e. if the order varies, revokes, applies or suspends another order, a copy of that other order;
 - f. if the order has been made after the holding of a public inquiry, a copy of the report and recommendations (if any) of the inspector; and

g. where the experimental order has been modified in accordance with section 10(2) RTRA a statement of the effect of each such modification

8.10 Where the above has been satisfied regulations 6 (consultation), 7 (notice of proposals) and 8 (objections) do not apply.

9 Director of Finance's comments

9.1 The cost of the existing trials and any future trials will be funded through the Emergency Active Travel Fund awarded by the Department of Transport.

9.2 The cost of funding the installation of permanent School Streets will be met from an allocation in the Local Transport Plan 4, approved by the City Council in February 2023.

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Signed by:

Appendices:

- Appendix A School Streets options report
- Appendix B Integrated Impact Assessment for St Jude's Church of England and Bramble Infant School and Nursery
- Appendix C School Streets, visual proposal for Bramble Infant and Nursery
- Appendix D School Streets, visual proposal for St Jude's Church of England Primary School

Background list of documents: Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972

The following documents disclose facts or matters, which have been relied upon to a material extent by the author in preparing this report:

Title of document	Location

The recommendation(s) set out above were approved/ approved as amended/ deferred/ rejected by on

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Signed by: