

## MEDWAY COUNCIL

REPORT	<b>Delegated Decision Report – 12th June 2025</b>
Report Title	<b>Safer, Healthier Streets Programme - Provision of Tranche 2 Schools TRO Results of Consultation and Recommendations</b>
Department	Place
Report Author/ Contact details	Alex Constantinides – Strategic Head of Public Realm
Wards affected	Gillingham North, Chatham Central, Rainham South East, Rochester West and Borstal, Wayfield and Weeds Wood
Public Access	Personal details have been redacted before being released to the public
Appendices	Appendix A Notice of Proposals (published in the Medway Messenger) Appendix B Responses received

### 1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 As part of the renewed emphasis on quality of life and place shaping in local neighbourhoods, the School Streets initiative provides safe spaces for our school children and their parents, carers, or guardians to travel to and from school. Building on the successful delivery of Tranche 1, school streets will aim to improve safety, air quality in the vicinity of our schools and support the wider community to choose more sustainable ways to travel.
- 1.2 The council carried out a public consultation on the proposed School Streets which took place between 16 September 2024 and 27 October 2024.
- 1.3 Following this, on 19 November 2024, a report was presented to, and approved by, Cabinet on the details of the Safer Healthier Streets Programme - School Streets Tranche 2.
- 1.4 During the meeting held on the 19 November, Cabinet agreed to progress nine school streets, subject to the formal Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) process. Of the nine, six locations were subject to the 21-day statutory consultation period. The remaining three were subject to an extended statutory consultation period due to design changes that resulted from feedback in the public consultation and they will be the subject of a separate report in due course.
- 1.5 This report details the outcomes of the six locations subject to a 21-day statutory period. These sites included:
  - Cliffe Woods Primary School / Cliffe Woods Pre-School and the City of Rochester School, Cliffe Woods
  - Fairview Primary School, Rainham
  - High Halstow Primary Academy, High Halstow
  - Hilltop Primary School, Frindsbury

- St Margaret's Church of England Junior School and St. Margarets Infant School, Rainham
  - St William of Perth Catholic Primary School, Rochester.
- 1.6 The Cabinet agreed to delegate authority to the Director of Place, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Community Safety, Highways and Enforcement to consider the outcome of the statutory process (where necessary any amendments) and to take forward necessary infrastructure work and implementation (subject to the statutory process) (decision 144/20024 refers).
- 1.7 The Cabinet's decisions were subsequently called in by six Councillors and the decisions were referred to the Regeneration, Culture and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee who considered the matter at a special meeting on 19 December 2024. The Committee having considered the call in, agreed to accept Cabinet decisions 135/2024 to 144/2024 and therefore take no further action.
- 1.8 This report considers the outcome of statutory consultation and makes recommendations on the following orders which can be found in Appendix A:  
(The Medway Council (School Streets) (Pedestrian and Cycle Zones) (No. \*) Traffic Order 202\*

## **2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 For the reasons set out in this report and the Cabinet report presented on the 19 November 2024 it is recommended the Director of Place in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Community Safety, Highways and Enforcement in line with the approved delegated authority agreed by the Cabinet:
- Note and consider the objections received to the proposed traffic order and associated officers' response as detailed in Appendix B to the report and summarised in section 4 of the report.
  - Agree to make the traffic order which give permanent effect to the following six school streets as laid out in section 1.5 under the provisions of section 124, Schedule 1 and Part IV of Schedule 9 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 and of the Local Authorities' Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996 regulations 23 and 24:
  - Cliffe Woods Primary School / Cliffe Woods Pre-School and the City of Rochester School, Cliffe Woods
  - Fairview Primary School, Rainham
  - High Halstow Primary Academy, High Halstow
  - Hilltop Primary School, Frindsbury
  - St Margaret's Church of England Junior School and St. Margarets Infant School, Rainham
  - St William of Perth Catholic Primary School, Rochester (SWoP)
- 2.2 In the case of St William of Perth it is recommended The School Street zone will only commence operation once the supplementary safety measures on Maidstone Road Rochester have been implemented.

### **3. Traffic Regulation Order CONSULTATION PROCESS**

- 3.1 The statutory Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) consultation took place between the 6 March and 28 March 2025 which included:
- Publication of the “Notice of Proposals” in the Medway Messenger on 6 March 2025
  - Street notices placed on lamp columns in and around each school street site
  - Emails to statutory / representative organisations, including the emergency services, and other key stakeholders.
- 3.2 The Notice of Proposals referred to above is attached as Appendix A.
- 3.3 The proposals were also publicised on the Council’s website.

### **4. STATUTORY OBJECTIONS / FEEDBACK**

As part of the consultation process, emails were sent to all statutory consultees notifying them of the advertised traffic orders and inviting feedback on the proposed scheme. Feedback received has been provided below:

#### Emergency services

- 4.1 On 1 April 2025 a representative from Kent Police confirmed that they had no specific objections to the scheme. The remaining emergency services have not raised any specific concerns, objections or comments in relation to the Medway school street traffic orders.

#### Road Haulage Association

- 4.2 The Road Haulage Association have not raised any specific concerns, objections or comments in relation to the Medway school street traffic orders.

#### Freight Transport Association

- 4.3 The Freight Transport Association have not raised any specific concerns, objections or comments in relation to the Medway school street traffic orders.

#### Bus companies

- 4.4 The Bus Companies have not raised any specific concerns, objections or comments in relation to the Medway school street traffic orders.

#### Other statutory feedback

- 4.5 The TRO statutory process is open for comment by all Medway residents and wider as per the statutory consultation requirements. Current census data indicates the population of Medway is 279,800.
- 4.6 As part of the TRO process, 1,217 letters were delivered to residents and businesses in close vicinity of the six schools, additionally emailed all impacted schools and updated the council website to keep the community informed.
- 4.7 When considering the response rate of those in close proximity to the scheme, compared with population, only 0.52% of people responded.

- 4.8 During the three-week statutory TRO consultation, 142 representations were received. 119 of those were recorded as objections. Details of each objection can be found within Appendix B of this report and have been considered with officers' comments provided.
- 4.9 Of the 119 objections, 101 were for St William of Perth Catholic Primary School this included an objection from the school requesting a public inquiry if the decision for the TRO is to be made. This is detailed in Appendix B along with the Council response.
- 4.10 16 objections were spread across the other five sites and 2 were regarding the overall schools streets programme. The following paragraphs provide the number of objections per schools and key themes raised and officer comments.
- 4.11 One objection was related to Cliffe Woods Primary School / Cliffe Woods Pre-School and the City of Rochester School. The resident questioned the following:

Theme	Question/concern/comment	Officers' comments
Access Routes	Concern there is a lack of safe walking routes to school from Cliffe. Request for school bus services.	<p>The aim of the school street is to create a safer, more pleasant environment outside the school gate, improving pupils ability to safety walk to school.</p> <p>A key part of implementing this scheme is working with schools to support the roll out, and the council will continue to work with the school for additional road safety improvements, although a bus route would be a separate initiative to the school street being implemented.</p>

- 4.12 One objection was related to High Halstow from the school trust. They raised the following:

Theme	Question/concern/comment	Officers' comments
Administration impacts to the school	Concerns that managing school exemptions for staff and visitors will create unnecessary administrative burden on schools.	The council have an established process in place. Prior to any scheme going live, a 4-week application period will be opened to ensure all those who are eligible can apply for the appropriate exemption.
Impacts to schools relationship with parents/ local community	Concerns that implementation will be seen as a request of the school / academy and concerns backlash will become the issue of the school to deal with.	<p>This is a council led initiative and a key part of implementing this scheme is working with schools to support the roll out.</p> <p>Medway will continue to support the school and respond to any concerns raised by members of the school community or public.</p>

- 4.12 Two objections related to Hilltop Primary School in Finsbury, from residents.

Theme	Question/concern/comment	Officers' comments
Traffic displacement	Concerns that traffic will increase on neighbouring roads, causing vehicle delays.	<p>With any changes to the highway, it is important to recognised that introduction of new schemes will always involve some element of traffic displacement, especially within the short term.</p> <p>However, while this potential for displacement is acknowledged, it is pertinent to emphasise that the intention of a school street is to reduce the immediate risk of vehicle collisions with more vulnerable road users, like pedestrians, outside of the school gate. By doing this, we can improve safety outcomes for our children.</p> <p>Further to this, the area will be subject to a monitoring period after implementation.</p> <p>The scheme also aims to encourage use of more sustainable forms of travel, like walking and cycling, to school to reduce levels of traffic in and around the school gate.</p>

4.13 11 responses were received for St Margaret's Church of England Junior School and St. Margarets Infant School, Rainham. Two were in support of the scheme, four were either queries or comments and five were objections to the proposal. Key concerns raised included:

Theme	Question/concern/comment	Officers' comments
Safety outcomes	Concerns around possible negative impacts on safety due to displaced traffic.	<p>With any changes to the highway, it is important to recognised that introduction of new schemes will always involve some element of traffic displacement, especially within the short term.</p> <p>However, while this potential for displacement is acknowledged, it is pertinent to emphasise that the intention of a school street is to reduce the immediate risk of vehicle collisions with more vulnerable road users, like pedestrians, outside of the school gate. By doing this, we can improve safety outcomes for our children.</p> <p>Further to this, the area will be subject to a monitoring period after implementation.</p>

Safety outcomes and impacts of other proposed schemes.	Concerns of possible negative impacts on safety due to cumulative displacement of traffic from the scheme and other proposed active travel schemes along Maidstone Road.	The scheme along Maidstone Road proposed as part of the active travel consultation is not currently being progressed.
Administrative process	Concerns that exemptions are not processed quickly enough, which will negatively impact those eligible, including residents and disabled people.	The council have an established process in place. Prior to any scheme going live, a 4-week application period will be opened to ensure all those who are eligible can apply for the appropriate exemption.

4.13 There were 7 objections received for Fairview Primary School, Rainham from 11 representations. Key concerns raised included:

Theme	Question/concern/comment	Officers' comments
Operational Timings	<p>Concerns raised that timings in the morning will negatively impact residents and their visitors and should be finished when school starts at 9am.</p> <p>Concerns also raised that afternoon sessions need to commence at 2.30pm.</p>	<p>All residents are exempt. Timings have been developed during discussions with the school. Addressing peak periods, these are appropriate times.</p> <p>Proposed timings are also shorter than the current School Keep Clear restrictions that are currently in place from 8-9.30am and 2.30-4pm.</p> <p>All schemes will be subject to a monitoring period, which includes conducting before and after surveys to assess the impact once a scheme has been implemented. Should adjustments need to be made, the Council will consider these.</p>
Impacts to residents	Concerns around possible negative impacts on residents regarding visitor and care access, particularly given older demographic who lives in the scheme area.	<p>Registered carers, emergency services and those eligible for an exemption will all be able to apply to enter the scheme during operational hours. If there are particular instances of concerns for a visitor during the limited hours of operation Medway Council will consider options to reduce any impacts.</p> <p>Visitors can also exit a school street zone without receiving a PCN once it is operational.</p>



4.14 10 responses to St William of Perth Catholic Primary School were either in support of or queries. 101 of the responses were objecting to the proposal. Concerns raised included:

Theme	Question/concern/comment	Officers' comments
Programme support	Concerns regarding a lack of general support.	As outlined in the report linked in item 6, 68.5% of local residents within the proposed School Street zone were supportive of initiative going ahead.
Impacts to disabled students	Concerns that temporary closures will impact school and pupils with a disability to access the school or receive required services.	Blue badge holders and registered carers are eligible to apply for an exemption to the scheme.
Evaluation data	Request for data supporting decision (Traffic and Air Quality).	All schemes will be subject to a monitoring period, which includes conducting before and after surveys to assess the impact once a scheme has been implemented. Surveys will record traffic levels and monitor emissions around each school including St William of Perth Catholic Primary School.
Consultation process	Concerns that the consultation process and lack of consultation with parents.	In line with best practice and council policy, an open and accessible engagement process was conducted to build understanding and seek feedback on the proposal. Medway conducted a public consultation between 16 September 2024 and 27 October 2024. Information was sent to the school advising of proposal, onsite signage was in place and information was made available on the council website. All outcomes of the consultation process were published in the report listed under item 6, which was presented in full to cabinet and is publicly available.
Safety outcomes	Concerns around possible negative impacts on safety due to displaced traffic and need to walk children to school, particularly along Maidstone Road.	<p>With any changes to the highway, it is important to recognised that introduction of new schemes will always involve some element of traffic displacement, especially within the short term.</p> <p>However, while this potential for displacement is acknowledged, it is pertinent to emphasise that the intention of a school street is to reduce the immediate risk of vehicle collisions with more vulnerable road users, like pedestrians, outside of the school gate. By doing this, we can improve safety outcomes for our children.</p> <p>Additionally parking will be moved onto the carriageway on Maidstone Rd between Canon Close and Priestfields, to improve safe pedestrian movements.</p> <p>Further to this the area will be subject to a monitoring period.</p>

Financial implications	Concerns this is a money-making scheme for the council.	<p>The overriding objective is to get high level of compliance in order to improve the safety for children, however with all types of regulatory measures there is often indiscriminate driving which creates the need for enforcement.</p> <p>The implementation, processes and maintenance of an enforcement system has a cost associated which is required to be met through any generated PCN fines.</p>
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## 5. IMPLICATIONS

The financial, legal and equalities implications of the scheme, and the impact on climate change, the environment and health and wellbeing are set out in the Cabinet Report approved on 19 November 2024.

## 6. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 19 November 2024 – Cabinet Report: Safer, Healthier Streets Programme – School Streets

## 7. CONCLUSION

7.1 As outlined in paragraph 4.9 and 4.10 of the report, 16 of the objections received were distributed across five of the six schools, indicating a low rate of representations.

7.2 Within the proposed School Street zone for St William of Perth Catholic Primary School, 68.5% of local residents expressed support for the implementation of a School Street. The 101 objections received are predominantly from the school community and parents who drive to the area.

7.3 While the concerns raised by the schools are acknowledged, the proposed schemes remain aligned with the Council's corporate objectives and policies. No compelling or material objections were presented during the statutory consultation which would require either a turnaround or substantive change to the traffic orders.

7.4 The School Street zone for St William of Perth Catholic Primary School will only commence operation once the supplementary safety measures on Maidstone Road have been implemented.

7.5 Furthermore, in response to the objections, the proposals have benefits of road safety particularly to vulnerable users, improved air quality and reduction of congestion. This outweighs the small number of objections that could be addressed by individuals varying their travel behaviour or by changing their mode of transport to more sustainable measures such as walking, cycling or use of public transport. It is pertinent to state that these restrictions are in operation for approximately one hour in the mornings and afternoons, and during term time only. Carers, both registered and family/friends, residents etc would qualify for exemptions.

7.6 The six school street schemes should therefore be made permanent.



I agree / disagree with the recommendations laid out in this report.

Comments:

Adam Bryan:

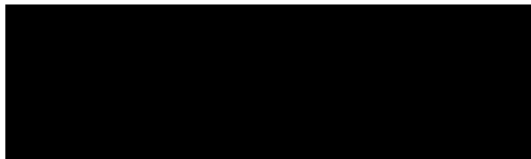
I agree that all six School Street schemes outlined in this report should proceed to implementation. However, following a review of the submitted representations, the feedback received regarding St William of Perth Catholic Primary School indicates a need to amend the proposed operating times. In light of this, implementation should proceed with revised hours of 2:30 PM to 3:30 PM.

As the recommendation states that the School Street for St William of Perth will only commence once supplementary safety measures on Maidstone Road are in place, the scheme should therefore be re-advertised under a new traffic order to reflect both the safety measures as well as the revised PM start time of the school street. This new order will incorporate both the updated operating hours and the planned safety measures on Maidstone Road.

Adam Bryan

Director of Place.

Signed




Date: 19 June 2025

In Consultation with Councillor Alex Paterson

Portfolio Holder for Community Safety, Highways and Enforcement

Medway Council

Signed



Date

2 July 2025

Adam Bryan

Director of Place

Medway Council