

Introduction:

Active Travel is defined by Suffolk County Council (SCC) as:

‘Getting about using the power of your own body instead of a powered engine. Active travel includes walking, wheeling and cycling. In terms of this scheme, we also include public transport in this definition.’

In February 2024, SCC launched a public consultation on its first phase of potential changes to Woodbridge to make it easier to choose active travel – this was known as the Woodbridge South (Phase 1) consultation. Woodbridge Town Council (WTC) issued a press release on March 14th, 2024, which stated:

‘WTC recognises that the interventions proposed in the consultation document could lead to significant changes to the transport infrastructure of the town, and therefore are keen to see that any changes made are for the betterment of the town as a whole, and in general accord with the views of its residents, traders and users. WTC will wait until the consultation has closed, and results of the consultation survey are available. The Council will then debate the issue in a full meeting of the Council and provide a formal response to SCC.’

The phase 1 consultation summary report was published in September, and by November, SCC published their phase 2 consultation, this time focusing on the ‘Woodbridge Town Centre’ proposals.

This paper presents WTC’s response to the interventions proposed in phases 1 and 2 of the Active Travel Woodbridge Proposals.

Executive Summary

WTC fully endorses the townwide 20mph scheme and encourages SCC to implement this speed restriction as soon as is practicably possible.

WTC supports the following objectives of the Active Travel proposals:

- To improve the standard of pedestrian infrastructure.



- To improve conditions on the highway to facilitate more walking, wheeling and cycling activity.
- To improve the public realm while acknowledging the architectural and historical importance of the town centre.

WTC are grateful to SCC for removing the proposed 'modal filters' which led to significant public concern during the phase 1 consultation summary. WTC broadly supports the interventions proposed in the phase 1 consultation report, the exception being the proposed 'one way' corridor on Bullards Lane. WTC considers that the proposals provided in phase 2 are an improvement on current conditions but require significant remodelling prior to being acceptable.

WTC response to proposals for phase 1 (Woodbridge South) and Phase 2 (Woodbridge Town Centre) of the Active Travel Woodbridge Scheme

WTC understands that the £5 million funding pot comes from Active Travel England (an executive branch of central government) and cannot be used on anything else in Woodbridge. It is vital that common ground is found between the objectives that have to be achieved in order for the money to remain in Woodbridge and the wishes of local residents and stakeholders as without general acceptance some stakeholders and residents may seek to circumvent the changes.

WTC acknowledges the exceptional level of public engagement in the consultation from local residents and visitors (differentiated by postcode). The Council are using this evidence to guide its comments as well as the communications received directly from residents.

Phase 1 – Woodbridge South

WTC has considered the 'Active Travel Woodbridge Report', and the Council's response broadly follows the sequencing of that document:

<https://thewaytogosuffolk.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/Active-Travel-Woodbridge-Report.pdf>

Old Barrack Road corridor

What we plan to do

We have considered your feedback on the proposed modal filters on California and Bullard's Lane and looked at other options that achieve our project objectives.

Instead, we are looking into:

- Traffic calming measures on Sandy Lane to reduce speeds and make it safer to walk, wheel and cycle.
 - Trialling a one-way system northbound on Bullard's Lane (between Peterhouse Crescent to Naunton Road), to assess if this option achieves the aim of the modal filter – to reduce traffic volumes and create a safer cycle and walking route.
 - We will trial the modal filter on Bilney Road (Grundisburgh Road exit) to understand the impact on traffic volumes on this road and surrounding roads with the aim of creating safer cycle and walking route.
- We will upgrade the parallel crossing on Ipswich Road to a signal crossing while retaining access to California.
 - We will also provide safe crossing points for people walking on Old Barrack Road.

Sandy Lane

WTC supports traffic calming measures on Sandy Lane which are intended to reduce mean speeds, but not to prevent vehicular access to and from Woodbridge.

Ipswich Road j/w California and Old Barrack Road

The proposed pedestrian crossing will compete with crossing traffic, is on a blind bend and on the opposite side of the junction to the existing bus shelter on Ipswich Road.

WTC suggests removing the existing crossing refuge and installing a raised table across the whole junction, the latter to lower speeds on Ipswich Road. If a raised table is not possible then a zebra crossing at the site of the existing refuge point and bus stop would be more suitable.

Old Barrack Road

WTC propose a new zebra crossing to the north-east of the junction of Old Barrack Road and Newnham Avenue for the dual purpose of slowing traffic and making it safer for families to cross the road when accessing Kyson Primary School and Woodbridge Day Nursery.

WTC proposes the following interventions for Old Barrack Road:

- Double yellow lines to be considered outside of the Old Barrack Road Co-op store to reduce the chicanes created by parked vehicles – there is sufficient parking available behind the Co-op.
- To the north-east of the junction with Clare Avenue where Old Barrack Road is at its widest, school drop off parking bays be created.

Bullard's Lane one way system (Northbound between Peterhouse Crescent and Naunton Road)

WTC is concerned that this change will displace traffic into the town centre via Burkitt Road, most concerningly past St Mary's Primary School. There will be increased traffic accessing Seckford Street, via the Market Hill, which is already a significant bottleneck with a priority passing system. If the phase 2 proposals for Market Hill are fully adopted, then Queens Head Lane would be used which is wholly unsuitable in terms of width and sightline to access Seckford Street. WTC is also concerned about an increase in queuing traffic at the junction of Grundisburgh Road and Burkitt Road – a mini roundabout at this junction may be a solution.

WTC proposes the one-way system be replaced by a priority route with passing places. Naunton Road should have double yellows on both sides.

WTC support the Bilney Road modal filter and note this will be included as part of the A12 MRNI scheme.

Burkitt Road corridor

What we plan to do

We will continue to develop the detailed designs for these plans.

We have considered your feedback on the proposed modal filter and priority change. You suggested additional zebra crossings as an alternative option.

We have considered zebra crossings on Grundisburgh Road and Hasketon Road and have concluded that additional crossings would still achieve the project objectives and improve safety for pedestrians and cyclists along this route.

We will look into ways to tackle issues with pavement / parking on Burkitt Road and we will work with the school/s to deliver initiatives that help more children to walk, scoot and cycle to school safely.

Burkitt Road

WTC supports the zebra crossings proposed to be installed on Grundisburgh Road, Hasketon Road and Burkitt Road outside of St Mary's Primary School. WTC does not support the loss of any on road parking on Burkitt Road as the parking supports the town centre and most importantly, the local care home on that road.

WTC recommends the addition of a time limited parking scheme to encourage short term, rather than long term parking at this location.

Peterhouse Crescent

What we plan to do

We plan to improve infrastructure in the vicinity of the school to provide safer crossing points, manage on-street parking and improve footways.

We will work with the school to deliver initiatives that help more children to walk, scoot and cycle to school safely.

WTC fully supports the proposals for improvements in Peterhouse Crescent/ Kyson School area.

20mph speed limit

What we plan to do

We will consider whether we can include Pytches Road and Bredfield Road within the 20mph speed Limit.

To do this, we will carry out further traffic survey work to confirm compliance with council policy and guidance of new and existing routes.

Traffic survey data shows that average vehicle speeds on Ipswich Road would not meet national guidelines for implementing a 20mph speed limit. In order to reduce the speed limit from 30mph to 20mph, extensive traffic calming measures such as road humps and tables would be required. We do not believe the measures are in fitting with the nature and character of the route. Therefore, we are not planning to include Ipswich Road in the plans but believe that a review of the crossing points on the B1438 as part of the Town Centre proposals could result in slowing the traffic speed on Ipswich Rd effectively.

We will start the design work that's needed to put the 20mph speed limits in place, such as minor traffic calming.

WTC fully endorses the proposed 20mph speed for limit for Woodbridge (and has done since the projects inception around ten years ago!). WTC encourages SCC to include all roads possible within the scheme.

Phase 2 – Woodbridge Town Centre

WTC have considered the 'Active Travel Woodbridge Town Centre proposals' and agreed it's response in regard to the inventions proposed in that document:

<https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/6b3c364e6af24a8cb5bf4d34338edb1d>

Station Road and Quay Street

WTC welcomes the proposed installation of a raised table at the junction of Station Road and Quay Street as a means to slow traffic and to make it safer for pedestrians to cross the road at this busy junction (with the existing zebra crossing being retained). WTC recognises the junction of Wolsey Gardens with Bent Hill, Hamilton Road and Hamilton Gardens in Felixstowe as an example of best practice.



WTC is concerned about pedestrians exiting the train station and following a direct line up the footpath directly across the centre of the junction. This is the natural desire line, however it puts pedestrians in conflict with three directions of busy traffic. This concern was heightened following the accident in December 2023 when a vehicle travelling southbound on Quay Street lost control and demolished the low wall and road signs on the footpath:



In an attempt to improve pedestrian safety (especially if Quay Street is made one way southbound), and to ensure that pedestrians have to use the zebra crossing (which in turn helps to slow traffic in the area), WTC recommends that a metal guard rail be installed across the width of the junction. An example of this street furniture within the town can be found at the main pedestrian access to Elmhurst Park, a few hundred yards up the road:



WTC is also concerned about the increase in informal pedestrian crossing at the junction of Tide Mill Way with Quayside – with the ever-growing popularity of the attractions in the Whisstocks Place area, more and more pedestrians are seen to be crossing the road directly at this junction.

Due to the bends in the roads and observed higher speed at this location, WTC has significant concerns about pedestrian safety in this area.

WTC recommends that a raised table, similar to that proposed at Station Road j/w Quay Street but without the associated zebra crossing be installed at the junction of Quayside with Tide Mill Way and Crown Place – this intervention will help to slow traffic and improve pedestrian safety. (WTC appreciates a new zebra crossing does not meet minimum distance standards between such crossings)



Quay Street and Cross Corner

The condition of Quay Street is unacceptable – WTC expects that there would be town wide rejoicing if the narrow footpaths and deep gullies could be replaced by the footpaths wide enough to accommodate buggies and wheelchairs, and for people to be able to pass side by side without stepping into the road.

WTC welcomes the proposals to make Quay Street one-way with a narrower single vehicle lane, however recommends that the direction of the traffic be southbound rather than northbound.

WTC propose a southbound flow of traffic to ensure that light and heavy goods vehicles serving the businesses on the Thoroughfare and Cumberland Street are able to quickly access Ipswich Road and the A12 rather than be forced to divert around the Market Hill.

WTC proposes two further measures – a 'no right turn' for vehicles exiting the Thoroughfare, and a weight limit for vehicles turning left from Cumberland Street into Church Street. These are intended to further ensure that heavy vehicles avoid the historic centre of the town and to avoid

the problems caused by the the lack of space to turn into Church Street because of the proximity of buildings to the road at Cross Corner.

WTC acknowledges that this suggestion could route additional traffic along Cumberland Street, which was the historic A12, however considers that this is an acceptable change to ensure that the main pedestrian route linking the train station, car parks and town centre is made safer for pedestrians and those with mobility issues.

Thoroughfare

WTC request that 'Cyclists Please Dismount' signs are installed at the Cross Corner, Red Lion, Brook Street and New Street entry/ exit points to the Thoroughfare.

Market Hill

WTC own the Shire Hall and Market Square and therefore takes great interest in the proposals surrounding the Market Hill. WTC supports the proposals to make the western section of the Market Hill one way northbound, but only on the proviso that the right turn between the Shire Hall and Bull Inn be retained:

- Even with the proposal to make Quay Street one way southbound, WTC does not expect to see a major reduction in traffic accessing the Market Hill via Church Street (just hopefully fewer heavy vehicles). WTC does not wish to see any additional/ unnecessary traffic being directed down Seckford Street, therefore supports the retention of vehicular access across the 'top' of the Market Hill to allow vehicles to access Theatre Street, Burkitt Road, Grundisburgh Road and the A12. Without such access any northbound traffic on Seckford Street comes to a dead end with no turning space and risks traffic proceeding down the east side of the Shire Hall sand down Church Street.
- Similarly, WTC wishes to ensure that vehicles accessing the town from Grundisburgh Road and Theatre Street have the ability to access Seckford Street and the residential area beyond – this is especially important if SCC persist with proposed section of one-way street on Bullards Lane, which prevents access via Grundisburgh Road and Naunton Road, to areas such as Old Barrack Road and Peterhouse Crescent (which WTC does not approve). WTC has concern Queens Head Lane will otherwise be used and it is wholly unsuitable.

If the western section of the Market Hill is made one way northbound, then the right turn in front of the Bull Inn must be retained to allow for a full circulation of traffic around the Shire Hall. WTC regularly see people wishing to use the shops on the Market Hill circulate for parking – to ensure that the businesses in the area can continue to attract customers, this ability to remain in the area and search for parking must be retained. WTC is concerned that if the right turn is removed

people will simply avoid the shops and facilities on the Market Hill, which is a course of action WTC cannot support.

WTC has encouraged local business to use the Market Square in an attempt to create a 'French market town' atmosphere in the historic centre of the town – the Strawberry Café, Galley Restaurant and Creamery, and new business 'Essen', all expect to have tables on the square next year.

WTC recognises that the proposal attempts to enhance this offering – WTC recommends that a zebra crossing be installed from the pavement outside the Strawberry Café/ Galley restaurant to the Market Square to ensure that staff can safely serve the table situated on the Square.

WTC reminds Suffolk County Council that the Woodbridge market takes place on the square every Thursday. WTC do not wish to see the current parking restrictions, which allow free parking for market traders on Thursdays, to be rescinded, but would also welcome some additional disabled parking in the area. WTC propose that should a zebra crossing be installed, 3 parking bays could be allocated on one side, and 3 disabled bays on the other.

WTC concerns regarding access to the Woodbridge Town Centre for wheeled users (cyclists, wheelchair and pushchair users).

WTC is currently part of a steering group focussing on the improvement of cycling facilities in Woodbridge and are concerned that there are no proposed changes to the roads leading to and from Woodbridge to encourage modes of transport other than private cars.

Woodbridge is a market town hub serving the villages and towns around us and at peak times the car parks are at 98% capacity. WTC requests that more actions to aid wheelers to get to Woodbridge from the surrounding areas are considered as part of the proposals – WTC would encourage SCC to consider additional cycle lanes/ routes (see the [East Suffolk Cycle and Walking Strategy 2022](#) for guidance), and more bus services serving the town.

Approved by Woodbridge Town Council – 17.12.24 – Minute number 11.