



Watlington Parish Council

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Improvement in the pedestrian environment in Watlington

Social distancing has highlighted the deficiencies in the roadside footpaths in central Watlington. There is little that can be done in Couching Street and Shirburn Street to provide safer sidewalks because of the narrowness of the road and the volume of traffic they carry. High Street is however different. The issues here are:

- The footpaths are very narrow in places - as narrow as 0.7m at the Barley Mow pinch point on the south side
- The south side is partially obstructed by planters and by steps up to the houses facing onto the road
- The south side also has a moderate slope towards the road in some places, including the Barley Mow pinch point
- The north side is generally wider, more level and less interrupted by steps but still has a few pinch points
- In addition, most of the shops are on the north side, with the important exception of the butcher
- The queuing outside some shops at certain times has proved a problem with social distancing during the Covid-19 pandemic which has had other shopkeepers complain that access to their shops is obstructed
- The High Street is already one way from the eastern end.

What we want your views on

We want to reclaim High Street for residents and visitors to the town and to make it an even more attractive place to visit. Several more or less ambitious schemes have been considered but we are starting at the less ambitious end of the scale, with the hope that we can get this in place quickly. Whether we then build on that in the future will depend on the response to it.

The changes we are proposing are:

- 20 mph speed limit for the High Street
- Temporary broadening of the sidewalks where necessary
- Restricting use of the road to access only for residents and businesses.

We believe that we can get these accepted quickly under the May 23rd Covid-19 Statutory Guidance for the Traffic Management Act 2004. The most promising approach for us appears to be a Temporary Traffic Orders (TTO). The guidance explains the scope and requirements of TTO as:

- these can be in place for up to 18 months
- there is a 7-day notice period prior to making the TTO
- there is a 14-day notification requirement after it is made
- there are publicity requirements
- these are most suitable for putting in place temporary measures and road closures.

The 20 mph speed limit will be signposted at both of the entrances at the eastern end of the High Street. There are no other public roads entering High Street until Chapel Street near the western end, and the 20mph limit will end at Chapel Street to avoid the need for speed limit signs on Chapel Street, Farmhouse Mews and Church Street. There are no businesses or public buildings beyond Chapel Street. The 20 mph limit signs at the eastern end of the road will carry the warning “Pedestrians on road” beneath the roundel.

Traffic cones in the road (with indicative marks on the road to specify their position) will be used to provide additional footpath space on the northern side of the road in front of the shops where queuing is most frequent and the width of the road permits. At no point will this additional footpath reduce the carriageway width below 3.2 metres. (The carriageway at the Barley Mow pinch point is about this width, while it is over 4.5m near the shops.)

The three short term parking bays on the south side outside the butchers shop will be designated as “Loading bays – Delivery and collection only”.

The restriction of the road to access use only will be signposted by simple A-frame type signs at the two eastern entrances to the road. Suggested wording is “Pedestrians on Road - Deliveries and Access Only”.

All the changes will be introduced as a single TTO.

Please Respond through SurveyMonkey at

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/DWC86R3>

Proposed signs

