

Saffron Walden Town Council – Market Square Pedestrianisation Update Meeting Notes

Wednesday 24 September 2025 at 12.30pm in the Town Hall

Attendees:

Essex County Council - Stuart Harrison Principal Transport and Infrastructure Planner

Uttlesford District Council - Vicky Reed Climate Change, Lead Officer

SWTC Town Clerk, Deputy Town Clerk and Operations Manager

SWTC Councillors: Eke, Hawke-Smith, Parker, Porch and Reeve

1-25	<p>History</p> <p>It was explained SWTC has historically submitted two LHP requests:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Revised Tues/Sat Market timings, submitted 10+ years ago.2. Partial pedestrianisation of the Market Square, submitted in 2022, noting:<ol style="list-style-type: none">a) Conversations and work with ECC have been ongoing for 10+ years.b) A temporary Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) was made during the Covid-19 outbreak closing the Market Square, with works conducted by SWTC. The TRO was not made permanent.c) In 2021/22 SWTC conducted a two-phase consultation, informing the LHP request seeking partial pedestrianisation of the Square on a part time basis (daily 08.00-16.00, allowing vehicular access through King Street and out Market Street – the rest of the Square would be pedestrianized. After 16.00 all roads would be open with car parking available.)3. ECC has delayed the LHP requests for several reasons, including:<ol style="list-style-type: none">a) Whether to progress the requests separate or alongside one another.b) Lack of sufficient LHP funding.c) ECC raised concerns around the potential confusion caused with part time pedestrianisation and loss of loading bays.d) Additional signage requirements and the limitations with a conservation area.
2-25	<p>Situation</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">a) The two LHP schemes are no longer included within the LHP works with ECC.b) The UDC Clean Air DEFRA grant monies included £15k for implementing pedestrianisation.c) It was believed S106 monies could be utilized to fund the pedestrianisation works.d) The draft Local Plan Transport Strategy includes full pedestrianisation of the Market Square. (This being contrary to the SWTC LHP request in 2022.)e) SH is working with UDC on several matters and is supporting progression of a pedestrianisation Market Square scheme.

3-25	<p>Traffic Regulation Order (TRO)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) It was explained this is the legal notice for intention of works. It was acknowledged the SWTC consultation does not need to be re-launched and the intended TRO will be published as a statutory requirement. b) SH and VR confirmed £15k DEFRA monies is allocated to support pedestrianisation and this will be utilized to fund the TRO preparation and its publication. c) SH is liaising with the ECC TRO team to prepare a draft TRO. SH confirmed the draft would be shared with SWTC before publication, it was anticipated this would be shared with SWTC in October 2025. d) SH explained alongside publication of the TRO, it would be helpful to launch some communications (PR/engagement day) to explain the purpose and intention of the TRO alongside the SWTC consultation results. SWTC was supportive, identifying the importance for support from third-parties and would invite/notify the Highways Portfolio Member and SW County Councilor. e) Once the TRO is published it would be live for 6-8 weeks; it would then be reviewed for implementation.
4-25	<p>Delivery</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) SH acknowledged there is unspent S106 monies which could be utilized for implementation /project delivery (the amount of monies is unknown). b) It was noted SWTC is awaiting a FOI response from ECC specifically seeking confirmation on the Linden Homes Highways monies. c) In terms of delivery practically, there was discussion around the pros and cons of a full closure for the community.
5-25	<p>Closing</p> <p>SWTC thanked SH/VR for their time, update and support. It was noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Further updates would be provided via SWTC Officers. b) Notes from the meeting would be provided to SWTC October Full Council meeting – where Council will also be asked to consider the potential change in request, from partial to full closure of the Square.

Closed at 1.30pm