

To: Infrastructure, Land and Environment Policy Board

On: 15 June 2022

Report by: Director of Communities and Housing Services and Director of Environment and Infrastructure Services

Heading: School Parking Exclusion Zones – Safer Schools Evaluation

1. Summary

- 1.1 Officers have been working on developing and delivering a School Parking Exclusion Zones/Safer School pilot at 4 schools across Renfrewshire. The pilot was due to begin in 2020, however, the global Covid-19 pandemic prevented the pilot from starting due to schools being closed with pupils studying from home on several occasions during 2020/2021.
 - 1.2 As a result, the period of the Experimental Traffic Regulation Order was extended, and the pilot officially started following the Easter Break in April 2021. To allow a full evaluation to take place, the scheme was extended until the end of March 2022.
 - 1.3 To understand the full impact of the zones, Renfrewshire Council invited everyone affected by the road restrictions e.g. schools, staff, parents, children, residents and partners to complete a survey on the zones. There were 91 responses to the 4-week survey.
 - 1.4 The results of the evaluation are detailed below in Section 4 of this report with the survey questions being attached as Appendix 1 to this report for the information of members.
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2. Recommendations

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Infrastructure, Land and Environment Policy Board:
- (i) Notes the evaluation of the School Parking Exclusion Zones pilot that took place between April 2021 and March 2022 with the evaluation undertaken in Feb/March 2022.
 - (ii) Approves the use of a range of interventions set out in section 5 of this report, tailored to the needs of schools and communities across Renfrewshire, including the 4 pilot schools, to improve the safety of children and tackle parking patterns and traffic movements around schools.
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3. Background

- 3.1 A paper was presented to the Communities, Housing and Planning Policy Board on 21 May 2019 updating on previous road safety campaigns and seeking the approval of a number of actions that would seek to tackle this issue.
- 3.2 One was a proposal to pilot the introduction of school exclusion zones around certain schools within Renfrewshire for a 9-month period.
- 3.3 Following a desk top review of all primary schools across Renfrewshire and discussions with Children's Services, 4 schools were chosen to pilot school parking exclusion zones. These zones prohibited cars from entering/leaving at set times during the day at the start and end of the school day.
- 3.4 The schools chosen for the pilot were:
- Barsail Primary School (Erskine)
 - Lochfield Primary School (Paisley)
 - St Catherine's Primary School (Gallowhill, Paisley)
 - St Charles Primary School (Paisley)
- 3.5 As part of the pilot, certain streets were closed around the schools. The timings were 45 minutes in the morning and afternoon (8.30am – 9.15am and 2.30pm – 3.15pm). During this time, the street became a pedestrian zone.
- 3.6 It was initially intended that the pilot would run for approximately 9 months (Easter 2020 – December 2020), however, due to Covid-19 this was delayed and the start date became April 2021 with the pilot running up to March 2022.

- 3.7 Experimental Traffic Regulation Orders (ETROs) were prepared and published with community consultation undertaken.
- 3.8 As a result of a significant majority of objectors to the proposed Experimental Traffic Regulation Orders being school staff, discussions were held with the headteachers of each of the schools affected, with a report taken to the Infrastructure, Land and Environment Policy Board on 4 November 2020 at which time it was agreed as part of the pilot that staff would get an exemption from entering/leaving the zone during the restricted times.
- 3.9 Meetings also took place with Senior Officers in Police Scotland to ensure collaboration and enable a multi-disciplinary approach to implementing the pilot.
- 3.10 As part of the project, the newly recruited Road Safety Officer worked with all 4 schools to prepare Active Travel Zone leaflets to allow an easy reference to show the exclusion zones, 5-minute walk zone and key walking routes. An example of the Active Travel Zone leaflet for St Charles PS is attached as Appendix 2.
- 3.11 A dedicated page was provided on the Council website and affected residents contacted and advised how to receive a residents exemption badge.
- 3.12 Following the introduction of the pilot, Officers from Community Safety (Renfrewshire Wardens) and Police Scotland visited the zones as part of routine visits to schools.

4. Evaluation of pilot

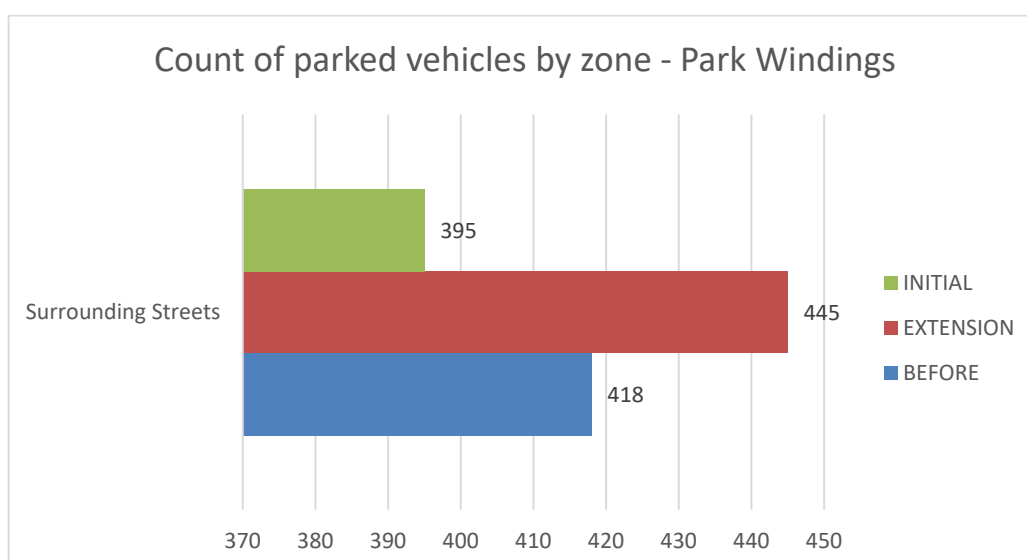
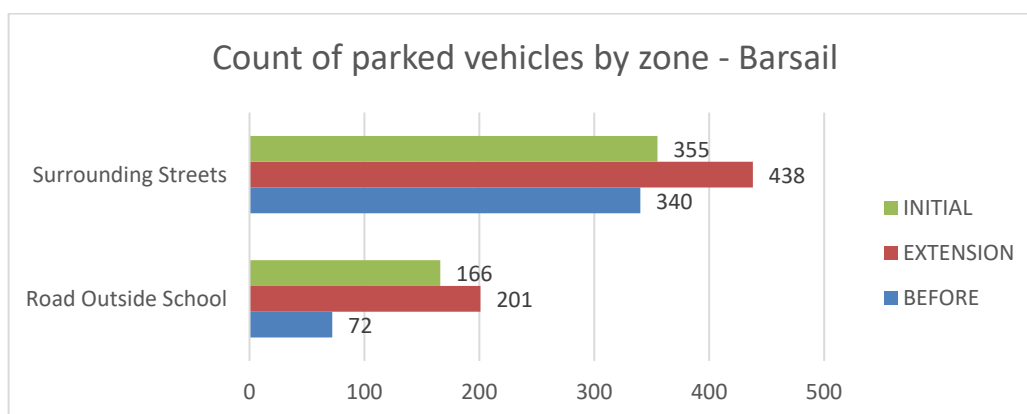
- 4.1 As part of the pilot, an evaluation of the effectiveness of the scheme has been undertaken. Initially a baseline assessment was carried out before the pilot to assess the challenges faced, counts of vehicles in streets and where any displaced traffic may go when streets were closed.
- 4.2 Some of the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) were qualitative as well as quantitative, however, evaluation included:
- Counts of vehicles entering zones
 - Number of penalty charges issued to vehicles entering the zones
 - Number of issues raised by schools
 - Near misses/accidents
 - Reduction in traffic congestion
 - Increase in Walking/Cycling and reduced car journeys
 - Survey and speaking to parents/carers, teachers, children, Elected Members to see if pilot effective.

Vehicle Count Survey

- 4.3 As part of the on-going evaluation, a vehicle count was undertaken by a consultant before, during and towards the end of the pilot to ascertain any behaviour changes for each school.
- 4.4 From the survey, it was noted that the road closures resulted in 50-80% less traffic moving directly outside the schools during the restricted periods. This was recorded mid-way through the pilot and did not change appreciably by the end. However, it should be noted that parents have either been arriving in the street before the period starts (and parking) or parking more in the surrounding streets, depending on location:

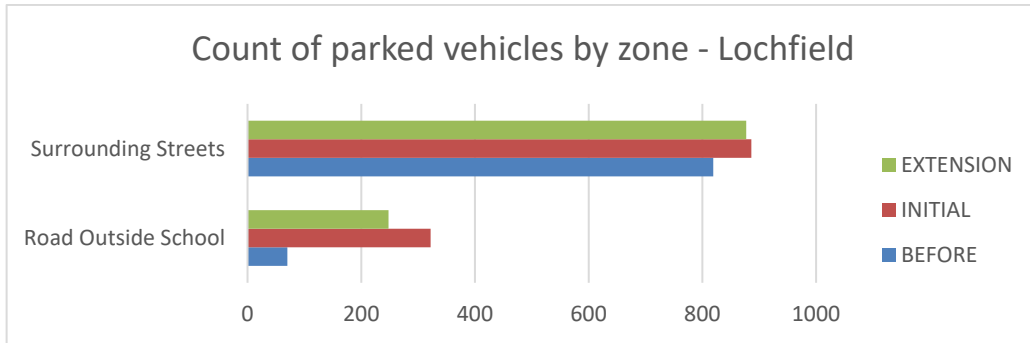
- **Barsail PS**

- Midway through pilot - The number of cars on the road outside the school was up 27% from what it used to be, but the surrounding streets remained the same. The area around Park Winding has dropped by around 5%.
- End of pilot – The number of parked cars on the road outside school is up by 65%, in surrounding streets up 28%, and in the Park Winding area up 6%.



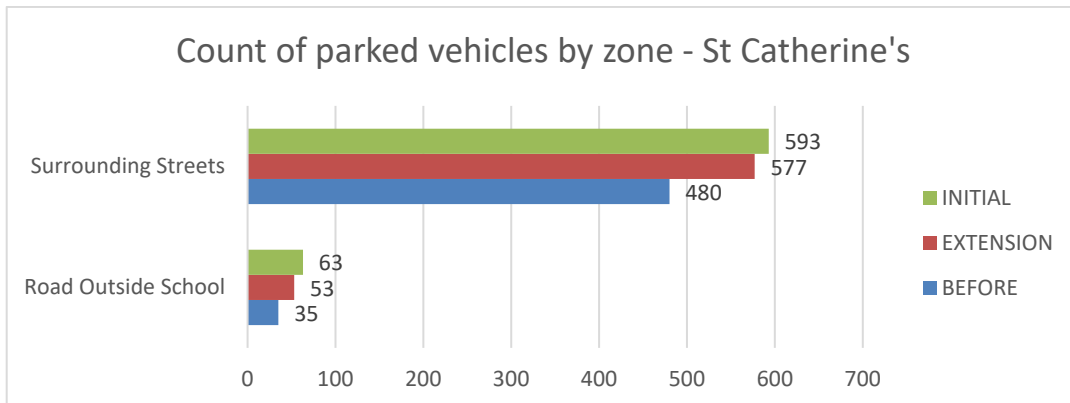
- **Lochfield PS**

- Midway through pilot – parking in the road outside school has increased by four times whereas the surrounding streets have seen an increase of 10%.
- End of pilot – parking in road outside reduced to 2.5 times the original and surrounding streets reduced to around a 5% increase.



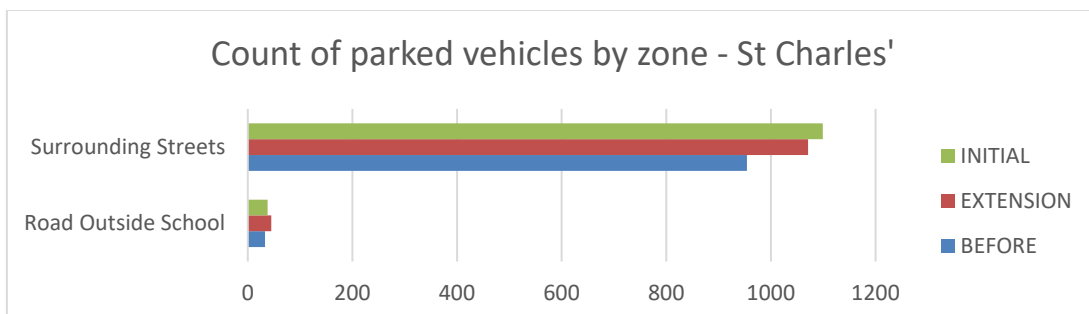
- **St Catherine's PS**

- Midway through pilot - Parking on the road outside increased to twice original amount and in the surrounding streets by 23%.
- End of pilot – parking on the school road is up 66%, surrounding area is up 20%.



- **St Charles PS**

- Midway through pilot - little change in cars parked in the street outside the school, although noted there were very few to start with. Around 10% increase in cars parked in surrounding streets
- End of pilot – same picture as above.



- 4.5 The vehicular movement survey also identified the number of conflicts over that week. This was identified as conflicts between ‘car and pedestrian’ or ‘car and car’ (minor precautionary breaking or changing lane) below. The statistics of the number of conflicts within the exclusion zone over a 1-week period were:

School	Before	During	End
Barsail PS	73	12	11
Lochfield PS	145	21	19
St Catherine’s PS	97	20	4
St Charles PS	13	12	0

- 4.6 It can be seen that the occurrences fall dramatically during the restricted periods in the morning and afternoon, when the zone was put in place. However, there is no similar data to compare before or after the restricted periods.

- 4.7 With regards to “near misses” i.e. more serious/quicker stops to prevent collisions with vehicle or child, these were also collected during the same time period.

School	Before	During	End
Barsail PS	1	1	0
Lochfield PS	2	1	0
St Catherine’s PS	2	0	0
St Charles PS	1	0	0

Hands Up Survey

- 4.8 Every year, Renfrewshire Council undertakes a “hands up” survey with pupils to understand the pupils travel habits from year to year. These are undertaken in September each year and look at the different modes of transport e.g. walk/cycle/scooter or skate/park & stride/car/bus or taxi.
- 4.9 As part of the evaluation, the hands up survey for the 4 schools was assessed to ascertain if the exclusion zones had resulted in an increase in active travel.
- 4.10 The results across the 3 schools improved with 1 decreasing:
- Barsail PS – Active travel decreased and driving increased.
 - Lochfield PS - Active travel increased by 6.1% but driving also increased by 4.3%. Less Park and Stride 7.1% decrease.
 - St Catherine’s PS - Marked change in active travel up 17.7% and numbers taking the bus by 8.6%. Less being driven by 21.3%
 - St Charles PS - Overall Active Travel increased by 4.3%. Driving decreased by 8.7% and bus use increased by 6%.

Evaluation Survey

- 4.11 A survey was undertaken with all partners and affected residents/parents/staff as part of the school parking exclusion zones. The survey was predominantly on-line, however, letters were issued to all residents in affected to ask they opinion on the zones that were in place. The survey ran for 4 weeks in Feb/March 2022.
- 4.12 There were 91 responses to the survey.
- 75% of responses thought that the school exclusion zone pilot were a good idea
 - 76% of responses would like to see the parking exclusion zones continue.
 - 58% of responses disagreed that the surrounding street were less congested with car traffic.
 - 55% of responses held the opinion that the parking exclusion zones have worked.

On-site visits from Wardens/Police Scotland

- 4.13 To try and assist Police Scotland, the Renfrewshire Wardens also visited the 4 schools routinely to undertake parking enforcement and assess the success/challenges with the exclusion zones.
- 4.14 The Wardens advised that whilst on-site, it was noted that many residents still didn't have permits for entering/leaving the zones – it should be noted that they weren't breaking the law at this time (they weren't moving), however, if they had been, they could have received a fixed penalty notice.
- 4.15 There is a perceptible improvement when Police are on site, with regards to the restricted streets, especially when Traffic Police attend.

Enforcement

- 4.16 As part of the pilot, Police Scotland have routinely visited all 4 schools to assess compliance. On most occasions, no enforcement has taken place with anyone noted to be accessing/egressing during the restricted times being spoken to and warned. As detailed in section 4.14, with a visible presence, people don't normally enter the zones.
- 4.17 However, as part of the pilot, there have been 27 fixed penalty notices issued with the following allocation to each school:
- Barsail PS – 0
 - Lochfield PS – 3
 - St Catherine's PS – 5
 - St Charles PS – 19

5. Conclusions and Next Steps

- 5.1 The results of the evaluation of the pilot have not been conclusive and the outcomes appear to be mixed with some positives and some negatives.
- 5.2 The number of conflicts within the street where the zone was implemented reduced markedly. However, the pilot did not have a large impact on active travel with a lot of cars still noted within the zone or noted to be in the surrounding streets.
- 5.3 The active travel leaflet was well received, as were the positive communications, however, the overall enforcement was extremely challenging and resource intensive for Police Scotland.
- 5.4 Whilst it is noted that the School Parking Exclusion Zones will not be the full answer for all schools, there are a suite of road safety interventions that could be considered depending on the school, geography and community needed. This list is not exhaustive, but could include:
- Parking Exclusion Zones
 - School Active Travel Plans
 - Park and Stride
 - WOW – Living Street's Year Long Active Travel Programme
 - Walking Bus – Families meet and walk together on a specified route
 - Physical interventions e.g. planters
 - Wider parking enforcement and Traffic Regulation Orders around schools
 - Community and School Engagement Sessions
- 5.5 From this project, a Road Safety Officer has been recruited to lead and drive the above review and interventions.
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Implications of the Report

1. **Financial** – Depending on the work and interventions put in place around schools, there will be financial considerations that will require to be considered.
2. **HR & Organisational Development - None**
3. **Community/Council Planning** –
Our Renfrewshire is safe – by introducing school parking exclusion zones, this will ensure a safer environment for children to enter and depart school.
4. **Legal - None**

5. **Property/Assets - None**

6. **Information Technology - None**

7. **Equality & Human Rights**

(a) The Recommendations contained within this report have been assessed in relation to their impact on equalities and human rights. No negative impacts on equality groups or potential for infringement of individuals' human rights have been identified arising from the recommendations contained in the report. If required following implementation, the actual impact of the recommendations and the mitigating actions will be reviewed and monitored, and the results of the assessment will be published on the Council's website.

8. **Health & Safety - None**

9. **Procurement - N/A**

10. **Risk - None**

11. **Privacy Impact - N/A**

12. **COSLA Policy Position - N/A**

13. **Climate Risk – None.**

List of Background Papers

- a) School Parking Initiative - Communities, Housing and Planning Policy Board, 21 May 2019
- b) School Parking Exclusion Zones – Communities, Housing and Planning Policy Board, 14 January 2020
- c) Traffic Regulation Order – School Parking Exclusion Zones - Infrastructure, Land and Environment Policy Board, 4 November 2020

The foregoing background papers will be retained within Communities, Housing and Planning Services for inspection by the public for the prescribed period of four years from the date of the meeting. The contact officer within the service is the Communities and Regulatory Manager.

Appendix 1 – Evaluation Survey Questions

Are you a parent, teacher, resident or other?

School

Which year group is your child in?

How does your child normally travel to school? (if applicable)

If your child could choose, how would they prefer to travel to school? (if applicable)

If your child would prefer to walk, cycle, scoot/skate or park and stride, why would your child prefer to do so? (if applicable)

If your child would prefer to park and stride, be driven, take the bus or use a taxi, why would your child prefer to do so? (if applicable)

Do you think the school exclusion zone pilot is a good idea?

Would you like to see the parking exclusion zones continue?

Do you think the exclusion zone might change the way school staff travel to school?

Please indicate how the parking exclusion zone impacted your use of the following modes for travelling to and from school

What impact has the exclusion zone had on the area?

The area is now safer

The area now provides more space for socialising for me (and/or my children)

The area is now a more inclusive and attractive place

The air quality in the area has improved

The exclusion zone has strengthened relationships in the local community

The surrounding streets are now less congested with car traffic

Is it now easier to social distance while travelling to school and back than before the parking exclusion zones? (if applicable)

Is it now easier to walk, cycle or scoot to school and back than before due to the exclusion zones? (if applicable)

Were you provided with the opportunity to engage in a consultation process on the exclusion zones?

In your opinion, have the parking exclusion zones worked?

Appendix 2 – St Charles PS – Active Travel Zone leaflet.

THINK
STOP
LOOK
LISTEN

Crossing the road is part of everyday life and it is essential that children learn how to do it safely. Always use the Green Cross Code with children over 7, younger children should be taught to:

Walking to school with other families is a great way to build an active community and create safer, friendlier streets. Encourage your friends and family to walk with you and make getting to school on foot an everyday choice.

WHAT IS PARK & STRIDE?

This means driving part of the way to school then walking the final 5-10 minutes. If more people did this there would be fewer cars moving and parking next to the school, making it safer and giving more space for everyone at the school entrance.

Walking an extra 5 minutes to school adds up to almost an hour of walking a week, and will help cardiovascular fitness, keep your heart healthy and tone muscles – great for our growing generation!

5 minutes

WORRIED ABOUT SAFETY? SHOW AS YOU GO!

Showing your children how to spot risks and be safe near roads is one of the best ways to protect them. Practising road safety makes children more aware, more confident and safer around traffic.

Physical activity and active travel are really important at our school. Our Captains and Vice Captains encourage all pupils to take part in a wide range of extra activities including sports days, after school clubs, Active Schools, WOW, scooting and cycling to and from school as well as Bikeability.

By being active, pupils are healthy and energised, ready for the school day. It allows them to concentrate more and tackle challenges head on. St Charles' promotes safer communities and hopes more families will choose active travel for their school journey.

Supported by:

ST CHARLES' PRIMARY SCHOOL

ACTIVE TRAVEL ZONE

ST CHARLES' ACTIVE TRAVEL ZONE

KEY

- Parking Exclusion Zone
- - - Walking routes
- 5-minute Walk Zone
- School main entrance
- Play space: Park Drive
- Staff Car Park
- School Patrol Crossing
- Bus Stop
- Traffic Lights
- Gazebo
- Basketball Court
- Shops