

REPORT TO ENVIRONMENT AND TRANSPORT COMMITTEE

CLOSURE OF CHURCH HILL

Report Reference ET-26-13
Meeting Date 30th September 2026
Agenda Item 9
Prepared by A Keppel-Green, Town Clerk



1.0 BACKGROUND

Cheshire East Council has stated it is considering an 'experimental' traffic regulation order for Church Hill, to close a section of the street from 1st November to 31st March.

The Experimental Order will:

- Prohibit Motor Vehicles on Church Street, from a point 30m from the junction with King Street, to King Street.
- Revoke One-way on Church Hill, from a point 30m from the junction with King Street for a distance of 24m in a South Westerly direction.
- The installation of temporary signage in 6 locations to compliment the scheme.

The proposal involves the installation of five 'no through route' signs, a prohibition of vehicles (except bicycles) sign and temporary barriers. A plan of the proposal is attached.

The reasons for the proposal are "Historically there have been various accidents recorded at the Church Hill junction with King Street. These are due to icy conditions on the road and vehicles losing control and colliding with the properties on the other side of the junction on King Street."

This proposal was first mooted in 2023 when members met with Cheshire East Highways to hear about the proposal. Following views expressed by members, the Town Council responded (September 2024):

The prevailing view of the Town Council is that we do not support the experimental order.

We recognise that during icy conditions it may be warranted to close the road, as happens now, but feel that a permanent closure (even experimentally) is excessive for the desired outcome. In reality it would mean that a road which is safe 90% of the time would be closed and this will have negative impacts on traffic flows, funeral services etc.

We feel that alternative arrangements should be implemented instead e.g. improved gritting, placement of a grit bin on the road to encourage users to grit etc.

Information provided by CEC in 2024 outlined:

- Traffic displacement: Based on data collected in February 2023, it is estimated that the proposal will displace an average of 1,000 vehicles per day into Toft Road/Adams Hill.
- Yellow Box: Introducing a manual gritting system would not be feasible, as the road surface

would still pose issues with grip.

- Church Funeral Service: The available road space is sufficient for vehicle turning.
- Winter road closure: This option could be considered after a trial period (experimental order) to evaluate the impact of the closure.
- Impact on shops along King Street: We currently do not have data to support this assumption. The proposed experimental order will collect feedback from shops and other stakeholders.

In 2025, it was stated that following the earlier engagement (which proposed total closure of the road) a seasonal closure was planned, which is now being proposed as the council recognised a full year closure was unnecessary.

In April 2026, the Town Clerk submitted an FOI request to obtain information on the proposal. The response outlined that:

- 1) *There are no reported injury collisions at the junction of Church Hill with King Street. We do not hold information regarding damage-only collision, which are not recorded by the Police, and this is the case country-wide.*

We are aware of an incident around 20 years ago in which a car overshot the junction and crashed into the wall of the shop opposite. An incident was also reported to us on 5th January 2026 where the following details were provided:

skidded and taken out the hollow cast iron bollard on the eastern pavement of King Street opposite Church Hill

No vehicle information is available for this incident.

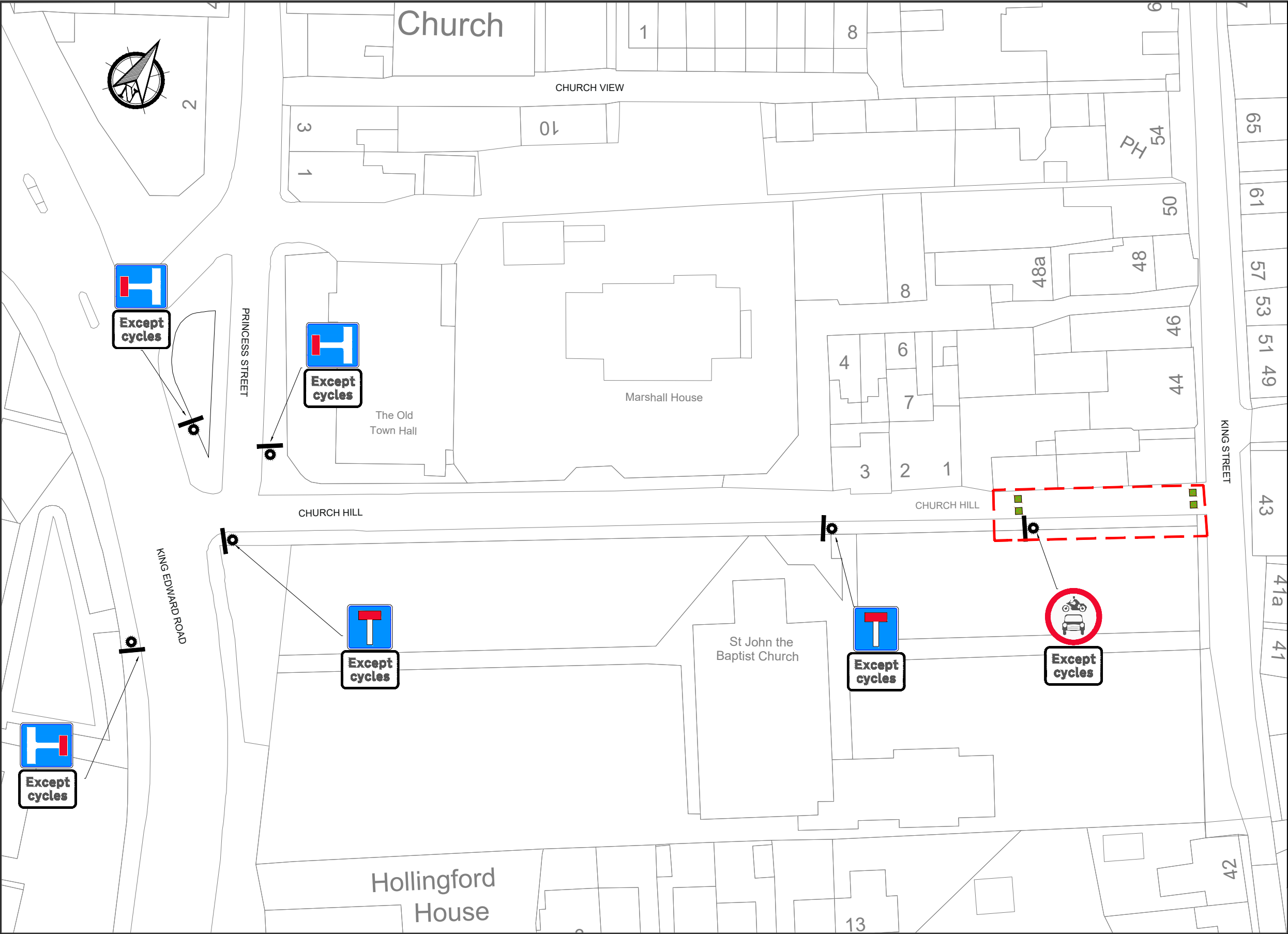
- 2) *The council does not hold any safety appraisal or traffic management studies of the junction / street*
- 3) *The council does not have specific or separate cost information regarding temporary road closures of Church Hill. Closures during winter conditions are often installed at short notice with a small amount of equipment that is stored locally and we utilise staff that are local to the area at the time for installation and removal. The approximate cost for the initial purchase of the equipment is £72.20 and each installation or removal of the equipment is estimated at £30.70*

The FOI request also requested responses to the consultation undertaken by CEC on the earlier proposal. It provided the 9 responses submitted (including the Town Council) of which four were objecting and four supporting/not objecting.

The Town Clerk has relayed the Town Council's earlier view to CEC members. Cllr Gardiner forwarded these to the relevant officer requesting the decision be paused to enable further discussion with the Town Council and other interested parties. No response has been received to date.

2.0 DECISIONS REQUIRED

The committee should consider the proposed order, determine if it has a position on the proposal and agree if any action is to be taken.



Key

New proposed signs

Install new temporary barriers

Extent of experimental prohibition of motor vehicles restriction

- Notes**
1.

Experimental Prohibition Order to be in effect from 1st November to 31st March.
2.

Signs and barriers to be taken down and stored outside of these dates.
3.

All dimensions are in metres unless otherwise stated.
4.

Drawing is for information purposes only.

Project:

Church Hill, Knutsford

Experimental Order Proposal
(Prohibition of Motor Vehicles)

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