

**The Warwickshire County Council (footpath adjacent to Harbury Lane,
Warwick) Cycle Track Order 2024**

Warwickshire County Council Summary

October 2025

I am Alison Kennedy and I hold the post of Principal Transport Planner within the Transport Strategy and Road Safety Group at Warwickshire County Council (WCC).

Objections to the **Warwickshire County Council (footpath adjacent to Harbury Lane, Warwick) Cycle Track Order 2024** have previously been forwarded to the Secretary of State. Warwickshire County Council (WCC) requests that the Secretary of State confirms the Order based on the importance of the scheme and reasons that are summarised in this statement, with further details set out in the accompanying Proof of Evidence.

The Harbury Lane Active Travel Connections project is a package of measures to upgrade existing paths and crossings and provide new footways, cycle tracks and crossing facilities. The project will complete missing links to new developments on the south side of Warwick and Leamington Spa, and enable more people to walk, wheel and cycle for local journeys.

The project delivers on Warwickshire County Council's policies on health, sustainability and transport and supports the Government's strategies and targets to increase levels of active travel.

Harbury Lane is a programmed scheme in the Warwickshire Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan. The project was identified in 2021 and secured funding from Active Travel England in 2022. Designs and phasing of the project have evolved in response to community engagement in 2023 and the opening of new facilities, including Oakley School in Autumn 2024.

The community engagement in 2023 showed that there were already concerns about the poor condition of the existing footpath along the north side of Harbury Lane and demonstrated local support for the project. There was also agreement or strong agreement expressed in responses to specific questions about cycle tracks, street lighting and access connections.

The Cycle Track Order relates to; a three metre wide footpath running parallel to the north side of Harbury Lane (approximately one kilometre between Tachbrook Road and Garrett Drive); a connecting three metre wide footpath between Harbury Lane and Earl Rivers Avenue; new lighting; and access points (including new access points at Shylock Grove, Trinculo Grove, Laertes Grove and Achilles Close).

The Cycle Track Order is required because the speed and volume of traffic on Harbury Lane make it unsuitable for cycling, whilst the parallel path can meet Government principles for cycle design (coherent, direct, safe, comfortable, attractive). The proposed cycle tracks, incorporating access points and lighting, provide the following benefits:

- an all-weather surface for all-year round use
- sufficient width for walking, wheeling and cycling
- a durable facility to support long-term growth in demand
- greater accessibility to new homes, shops and schools
- connections to existing and proposed cycle routes.

WCC has complied with statutory requirements for the advertisement of a Cycle Track Order. Following WCC's advertisement of making the order on 28 November 2024 (using its powers under the Cycle Tracks Act 1984) WCC received objections from four residents of Achilles Close and a local campaign group, Cycleways. The Cycleways objection was subsequently withdrawn.

The four objectors were invited to discuss their concerns in person at a meeting with WCC officers and local councillors at Heathcote Community Centre on 4 February 2025. Two residents responded to say that they were unable to attend. The other two residents did not respond and did not attend the meeting. WCC provided written responses to the objectors but received no formal withdrawal of objections.

Although the Cycle Track Order relates to over one kilometre of footpaths, lighting and access points, the objections relate to only one access point – at Achilles Close. The objection themes are summarised below, together with a response from WCC.

Objection theme 1: Concern over anti-social behaviour and potential criminal activity at Achilles Close

- The access point is not on private land – it connects between the public footpath and Achilles Close public highway.
- Warwickshire Police were consulted and there were no objections.
- Greater use of the footpath increases natural surveillance.
- Active Travel England state that, 'natural surveillance involves designing in a way that ensures people can see in and out of an area. For example, an area with poor natural surveillance would be one with narrow passageways, hidden corners or limited exits and entries'.

Objection theme 2: Access point at Achilles Close is not required

- The demand for the access point has increased due to development in the area including homes, shops and schools.
- There are alternative access points but these require longer routes which reduces their accessibility for all users.
- More direct walking, wheeling and cycling routes help to reduce reliance on private motor vehicles for short journeys.
- The location of the access point on Achilles Close connects the public footpath directly with the existing footway and dropped kerbs at the turning head. This provides a continuous connection for people walking and wheeling, and a comfortable transition for people on cycles to exit from, or return to, the carriageway.

Objection theme 3: Increase in litter at the access point at Achilles Close

- Not considered relevant to the Cycle Track Order - the footpath is already being used and additional litter bins were installed in 2025 by Warwick District Council.

Objection theme 4: Changes to Achilles Close private driveway / scheme is not within highway land

- Not considered relevant to the Cycle Track Order - Achilles Close is a public highway, up to and including the footway and carriageway turning head adjacent to the footpath. The proposal is to connect directly between the public highway section of Achilles Close and the public path

Objection theme 5: Property values at Achilles Close will depreciate

- Not considered relevant to the Cycle Track Order – there are no works on private driveways.

Objection theme 6: Concern over impact of previous path construction works on private property at Achilles Close.

- Not considered relevant to the Cycle Track Order – this relates to a gully on private land.

The footpath subject to this Cycle Track Order is an important connection between homes and schools, supporting a growing community and delivering local and national policies to encourage more people to walk, wheel and cycle.

The community engagement in 2023 demonstrated support for the cycle track, lighting and new access points. There is ongoing support for the Harbury Lane Active Travel Connections project from councillors at Warwickshire County Council, Warwick District Council and Bishops Tachbrook Parish Council.

The improvement works that have already taken place are proving popular and are already being used for journeys to school, leisure trips and commuting.

The Cycle Track Order process has been undertaken diligently and reasonable steps have been made to communicate and engage with the objectors and to discuss their concerns. There is no objection to cycling on the main footpath; the only outstanding objections relate to a single access point to Achilles Close. This access point is seen as essential to achieve the wider benefits of the project, by enabling more direct connections between the footpath and local highway network, avoiding longer detours. The new access points will provide a substantial number of local residents with a safer and more direct route and thereby help to encourage local journeys by sustainable modes of transport.

The Council therefore invites the Inspector to recommend that this Order is confirmed.