

Traffic Sensitive Streets Review 2023

Report of the Director of Climate Change, Environment and Transport

Please note that the following recommendation is subject to consideration and determination by the Committee before taking effect.

1) Recommendation

It is recommended that the Committee notes that Devon County Council propose to undertake a full review of the traffic sensitive streets network across the county.

2) Background

Devon County Council has a legal duty under the Traffic Management Act 2004/Section 59 New Roads and Street Works Act 1991 to Co-ordinate works activities on the road network. As part of this duty, a power is afforded to Devon County Council to enable the designation of certain streets as 'Traffic Sensitive'. When a street is designated 'Traffic Sensitive', timings of works can be better regulated to ensure the free flow of traffic so far as reasonably practicable through the council's Permit for Works Scheme. E.g. Restrict works on Topsham Road, Exeter during peak traffic flow times.

The project works in line with Devon County Council's strategic objective in the Better Place vision, 'Help Communities be safe, connected and resilient'. The last recorded full review was undertaken in 2018. The proposed review forms part of a 5 yearly routine review, designed to ensure that designations remain fit for purpose.

The Department for Transport (DfT) recent consultations also indicate that changes to the legal powers for destinations may be imposed. Proceeding with this review will put Devon in the best place to react to any statutory changes.

3) Proposal

Statutory Regulations outline when a street can be designated traffic sensitive. The following steps must be completed before a designation can be updated:

- Each street is crossed referenced against the statutory criteria.
- Proposals for revised designations are outlined.
- Communications are undertaken with affected stakeholders.
- A 1-month statutory consultation period is held.
- The updating of Devon's mapping data is completed.

	Jan-23	Feb-23	Mar-23	Apr-23	May-23	Jun-23
Internal assessment of designations						
Informal communications with stakeholders						
Formal Consultation						
Review of Consultation						
Update Designations						

What are the Impacts?

It is envisaged that some designations will be decreased due to the statutory requirements being adjusted (as indicated by a recent DfT consultation). This may mean reduced controls for the following areas:

- Winter gritting routes.
- Tourist areas.
- Special events.

The proposal aims to consider strategic visions for network growth wherever possible. Works promoters may find adjusted restrictions on working practices/timescales (this includes Devon County Council's contractors). However, the overall objective is to trigger early communication and better planning. It is not to prevent works taking place.

4) Options

The process is determined by statute, therefore there is no alternative.

5) Consultations

Statutory consultation proposed for April 2023 and this will include County Councillors.

6) Strategic Plan

<https://www.devon.gov.uk/strategic-plan>

This proposal helps network management and aims to keep traffic flowing. It also reducing idling traffic for lengthily queues at road works sites, reducing the amount of CO2 emitted into the atmosphere. The following areas of the strategic plan are drivers for this review:

- Respond to the climate emergency.
- Help communities be safe, connected and resilient.

7) Financial Considerations

There are no additional costs as the review will be undertaken by existing highway staff.

8) Legal Considerations

This change is required to remain compliant with Devon County Council's duties under the Traffic Management Act 2004 and ensure our Permit for Works Scheme remains lawful in its application.

9) Environmental Impact Considerations (Including Climate Change)

This review will offer a method of better managing road works and give controls for idling traffic. The environmental impacts are therefore positive and in line with Devon County Council's Carbon Plan objectives.

10) Equality Considerations

No areas have been identified. Project is operating to standard designation tolerances and will be implemented consistently across the county.

11) Risk Management Considerations

The recent DfT consultation indicates that local authorities would have reduced powers for designating routes that impact on winter gritting locations, tourist areas and special events. *(To be confirmed if this will proceed)*. This may result in Devon having to deregulate some of the existing traffic sensitive routes. This will be led by statutory changes to regulations.

The proposed review aims to help identify the areas where powers may be reduced so Devon can consider other forms of designations/education to minimise the impacts on end road users.

12) Summary

This review is required for 2 purposes:

- To ensure Devon's traffic sensitive network is in line with network changes and reflects the current traffic choices of our communities.
- To ensure compliance with statutory changes.

Meg Booth

Director of Climate Change, Environment and Transport

Electoral Divisions: All

Local Government Act 1972: List of background papers

Background Paper Nil

Date

File Reference

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