

Bus Gate - Old Torrington Road, Sticklepath

Report of the Chief Officer for Highways, Infrastructure Development and Waste

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

Recommendation: It is recommended that:

- (a) the comments to the proposed traffic orders be noted;**
- (b) the proposed bus gate and waiting restrictions on Old Torrington Road be implemented as advertised and the traffic regulation orders be made and sealed;**
- (c) the existing prohibition on Gratton Way be revoked as advertised and the traffic regulation order be made and sealed;**

1. Background/ Introduction

As part of the new housing developments it has been proposed that the prohibition of motor vehicles (bus gate) on Gratton Way be relocated to Old Torrington Road to better manage traffic in the area.

2. Proposal

A large housing development (Larkbear) is being constructed between Old Torrington Road and the A361 in several phases. So far, planning permission has been granted for over 200 new homes, with the potential for more to be constructed in the future. As part of the development it has been proposed to change the route motor vehicles use to access the southern part of Old Torrington Road.

Currently there is an existing prohibition (bus gate) in Gratton Way which is operated by a rising bollard system. The proposed traffic orders seek to revoke this and introduce a new bus gate on Old Torrington Road, to the north of the junction with Gratton Way, which would be enforced by cameras. This would mean that traffic would be directed through Gratton Way to the new development, the crematorium and properties at the southern end of Old Torrington Road instead of from Bickington Road (A3125). This is to help better manage traffic in the area and reduce congestion due to the new housing development.

3. Consultations

Following the North Devon HATOC meeting of 3 March 2021, where this bus gate was discussed, it was resolved to progress the advertising of the new bus gate. The proposals were advertised from 13 May – 17 June 2021 with notices on site, on the council's website and in the local press. Postcards informing residents of the proposals were sent to nearby properties.

In total 224 responses were received, of which 174 were in favour and 47 objected.

176 residents to the north of the proposed bus gate submitted comments.

35 residents to the south of the proposed bus gate submitted comments.

13 comments were received from respondents outside of the area;

Comments were received from 7 users of the crematorium (funeral directors, celebrants and the crematorium).

Comments were also received from Tawstock Parish Council & Fremington Parish Council.

A full summary of the comments submitted and the council's response can be found in Appendix II.

After considering the comments, it is recommended that the existing prohibition (bus gate) is revoked on Gratton Way and the new bus gate on Old Torrington Road, as well as the proposed waiting restrictions, be implemented as advertised.

4. Alternatives

The alternative of not implementing the proposed bus gate on Old Torrington Road but revoking the existing bus gate on Gratton Way to allow traffic to travel through the whole area has been considered. If it was decided to go ahead with this alternative then it would be recommended to implement the proposed waiting restrictions on Old Torrington Road as advertised, to ensure the junctions in this area are kept clear of parked vehicles. However it is thought that this alternative would cause too much congestion on Old Torrington Road and at the roundabout at the Old Torrington Road/Bickington Road (A3125) junction.

Another alternative would be to not introduce the new bus gate on Old Torrington Road as advertised and to reinstate the existing bus gate on Gratton Way. However, this would require advertising a new the traffic regulation order and we do not have the funding to advertise or implement this alternative.

5. Financial Considerations

The proposals and associated works are being funded by the housing developer for the Larkbear development, Persimmon Homes. The camera enforcement equipment for the bus gate would also be funded by the developer.

6. Legal Considerations

To introduce a vehicle prohibition will require a statutory consultation in accordance with The Local Authorities' Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996.

When making a Traffic Regulation Order it is the County Council's responsibility to ensure that all relevant legislation is complied with. This includes Section 122 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 that states that it is the duty of a local authority, so far as is practicable, to secure the expeditious, convenient and safe movement of traffic and provision of parking facilities.

7. Environmental Impact Considerations (Including Climate Change)

These proposals would reduce congestion and traffic queuing on Old Torrington Road at the A3125.

8. Equality Considerations

It is not considered that the proposed recommendation has any equality impacts.

9. Risk Management Considerations

This proposal has been assessed and all necessary safeguards or action have been taken/included to safeguard the Councils position.

10. Reasons for Recommendations

After considering the comments, it is recommended that the new bus gate and associated waiting restrictions on Old Torrington Road are introduced as advertised.

It is also recommended that existing bus gate on Gratton Way is revoked as advertised.

Meg Booth
Chief Officer for Highways, Infrastructure Development and Waste

Electoral Division: Chulmleigh & Swimbridge

Local Government Act 1972: List of Background Papers

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| Background Paper | Date | File Ref. |
|------------------|------|-----------|
| None | | |

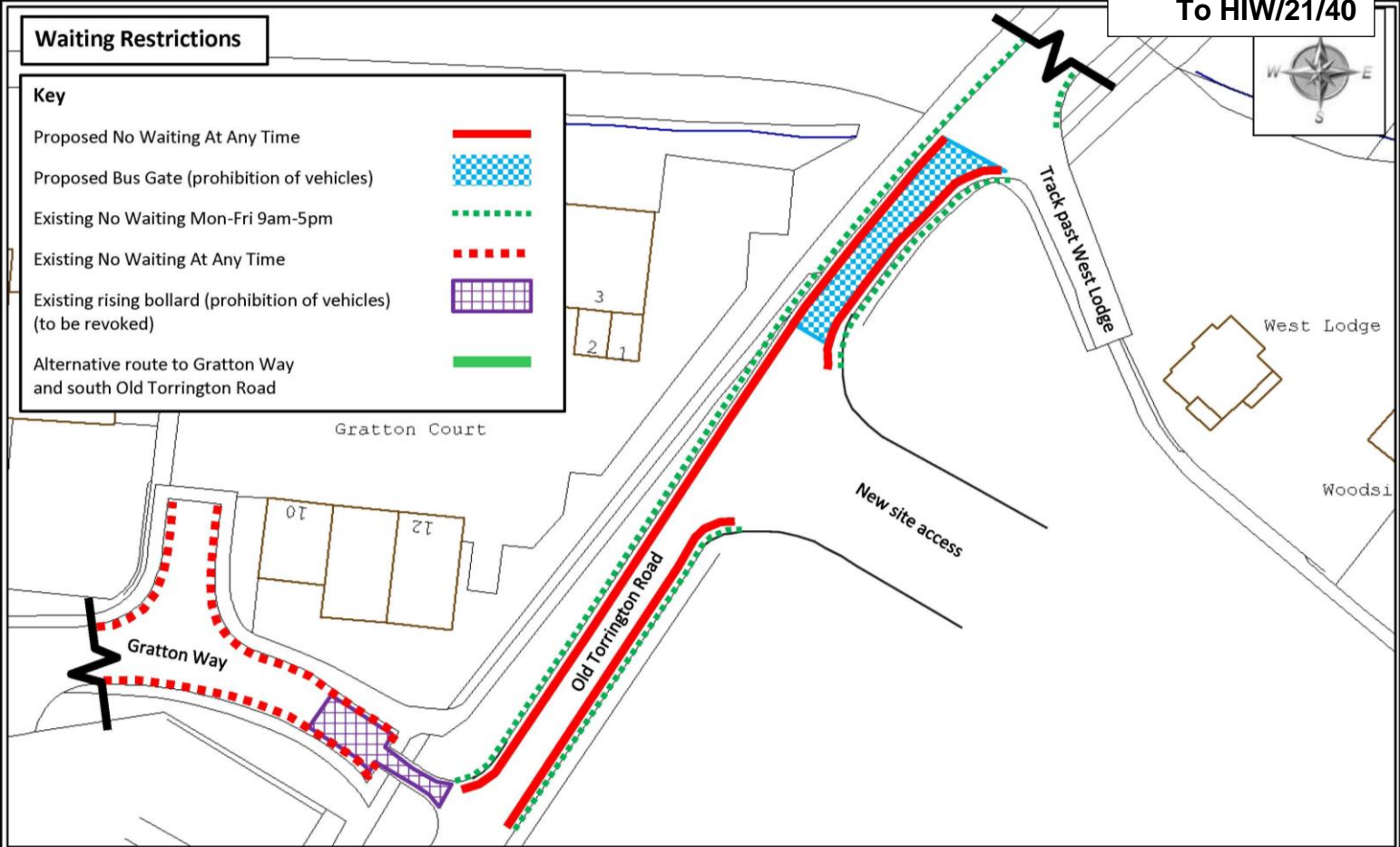
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Waiting Restrictions

Key

- Proposed No Waiting At Any Time
- Proposed Bus Gate (prohibition of vehicles)
- Existing No Waiting Mon-Fri 9am-5pm
- Existing No Waiting At Any Time
- Existing rising bollard (prohibition of vehicles) (to be revoked)
- Alternative route to Gratton Way and south Old Torrington Road



Alternative Route



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Summary of Comments Received

| Comments | Count | DCC response |
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| Respondent supports the proposals. | 174 | Support noted. |
| Respondent objects to the proposals. | 48 | Objection noted. |
| Supports the proposed no waiting restrictions. | 1 | Support noted. |
| Respondent agrees that the existing bus gate should be removed. | 1 | Support noted. |
| This proposal will help to improve traffic congestion at the Old Torrington Road/Sticklepath Hill junction. | 67 | Comment noted. |
| If vehicles are able to travel up Old Torrington road then it will get congested at the Sticklepath Hill junction. | 1 | Comment noted. |
| Old Torrington Road gets very congested with the amount of traffic travelling through. | 66 | Comment noted. |
| This will improve traffic on Old Torrington Road. | 32 | Comment noted. |
| The proposal will afford better traffic management and better access to the North Devon Link Road and Barnstaple centre. | 1 | Comment noted. |
| This proposal will improve access for residents of the area to their properties. | 7 | Comment noted. |
| There are already safety issues from volume & speed of vehicles on the Shorelands Road roundabout. | 1 | Comment noted. |
| Traffic often exceeds the speed limit on Old Torrington Road. | 29 | Concerns about speed in specific locations can be reported to the council for investigation through the SCARF process. |
| This proposal will help to improve safety on Old Torrington Road. | 18 | Comment noted. |
| The volume of traffic on Old Torrington Road makes it dangerous for pedestrians and cyclists. | 1 | View noted. |

| Comments | Count | DCC response |
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| It will help to prevent speeding on Old Torrington Road. | 3 | Comment noted. |
| This proposal would prevent large volumes of traffic using Old Torrington Road. | 1 | Comment noted. |
| To better manage the traffic in the area due to new housing developments. | 1 | Comment noted. |
| Respondent has noticed an increase in traffic since construction on the new developments have started. | 2 | This is expected due to the new developments in the area. |
| Respondent was under the impression that the decision to implement the bus gate in Old Torrington Road had already been decided. | 2 | The proposed bus gate was included in the developer plans but requires statutory consultation for a traffic regulation order prior to a final decision. |
| Traffic will get worse as the development is built. | 1 | View noted. |
| The proposal should be accepted for safety reasons. | 1 | View noted. |
| The proposed bus gate will improve air quality and pollution on Old Torrington Road. | 14 | Comment noted. |
| Any more traffic on Old Torrington Road will make it dangerous. | 5 | View noted. |
| Any more traffic on Old Torrington Road will make it dangerous for pedestrians crossing the road from Old Bideford Road. | 2 | View noted. |
| Any more traffic on Old Torrington Road will make it dangerous for pedestrians crossing the road. | 1 | View noted. |
| Roundabout at Shorelands Road/Old Torrington Road junction unfit for purpose: awaiting this to be addressed: any increase in volume of traffic increases accident risk. | 2 | There are no recorded personal injury collisions at Shorelands Road roundabout, therefore we are not reviewing the layout at this time. |
| This will help reduce volume of traffic across Shorelands Road roundabout. | 1 | Comment noted. |
| This will improve traffic on Old Torrington Road which already has a deteriorating road surface. | 1 | Comment noted. |

| Comments | Count | DCC response |
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| Due to the volume of traffic, and site traffic, the road condition is very poor and will only degrade further if the bus gate is not implemented. | 1 | Comment noted. |
| Old Torrington Road already has a deteriorating road surface. | 1 | Comment noted. |
| This will prevent Old Torrington Road being overwhelmed with traffic from new Larkbear estate. | 1 | Comment noted. |
| Commented on congestion in the area and that this proposal will make congestion worse. This proposal will make journeys for residents longer and increase traffic volumes on already busy roads. | 41 | View noted. The proposal sought to divert traffic to use the strategic roads that are more capable of handling the additional traffic, however it is recommended that the proposed bus gate is not implemented at this time but the existing bus gate be removed to allow drivers the option to travel on either route. |
| This proposal will make the air quality worse and increase pollution. | 9 | View noted. |
| This proposal will just move the problem. | 1 | View noted. |
| The building of a new supermarket will make traffic worse. | 1 | Traffic conditions would be considered at the planning stage. |
| Large vehicles are often parked up on Gratton Way causing an obstruction. | 1 | Gratton Way has no waiting at any time restrictions along its length so large vehicles should not be stopped there unless there are loading or unloading |
| This proposal will make it difficult for residents who live in the south of Old Torrington Road to access Barnstaple. | 2 | View noted. |
| This would increase travelling time to school/work | 5 | View noted. |
| Route to the crematorium has been largely unchanged since its opening; proposal may result in people driving the wrong way, & being late for services/receiving fines. | 1 | If the proposals are implemented then signage to the crematorium will be modified and the bus gate will be clearly signed. |
| Respondent is concerned that this will make the route to the crematorium more difficult, and longer as the roads are already congested. | 9 | It is considered that the link to Gratton Way provides a better connection to the strategic network. |

| Comments | Count | DCC response |
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| Respondent feels that this proposal provides an unsuitable route to the crematorium. Those travelling to the crematorium should not have to do so through Gratton Way as it is an industrial estate. | 8 | View noted. |
| Respondent is unhappy that residents will have to drive through an industrial estate. | 1 | View noted. |
| Respondent hopes that the proposed bus gate will be enforced. | 5 | It is proposed that the bus gate would be enforced by cameras which capture the details of vehicles travelling through the bus gate, those travelling through who are not permitted will receive a penalty charge notice. |
| Any delays on the route to the crematorium may hold up a funeral, which has to start on time as scheduled. | 2 | This is something that would have to be factored into the journey times of those attending the crematorium. |
| Changing the route to the crematorium may be confusing and upsetting to mourners, even with good signage. | 1 | If the proposals are implemented then signage to the crematorium will be modified and the bus gate will be clearly signed. |
| Crematorium traffic should be allowed through the proposed bus gate. | 1 | We have considered this as an option, however if other vehicles were permitted to travel through the bus gate it would make enforcement impossible so it is not proposed. |
| Clear signage will be required. | 1 | If the proposals are implemented then signage to the crematorium will be modified and the bus gate will be clearly signed. |
| There is added stress due to scrapping of waiting areas used by hearses along Old Torrington Road. | 1 | The proposed no waiting at any time is an upgrade of the existing no waiting restriction (Monday- Friday 9am-5pm) on Old Torrington Road to the north of the crematorium. |
| Those attending the crematorium may be confused by the new route, enter through the bus gate and receive a fine. | 1 | If the proposals are implemented then signage to the crematorium will be modified and the bus gate will be clearly signed. |
| An accident at the Sainsburys Roundabout on 17 th June 2021 caused Gratton Way to be closed resulting in funeral delay. Respondent is concerned that delays such as this will affect the smooth running of services at the crematorium. | 1 | A collision anywhere on a strategic route is expected to affect traffic in the wider area and cannot always be accounted for. If there is a pattern of collisions in a specific location this will be investigated by the council. |

| Comments | Count | DCC response |
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| Respondent is concerned that the crematorium, funeral directors and celebrants have not been consulted enough on this proposal. | 1 | This is the public consultation for the proposal, a final decision will be made following this consultation. |
| This proposal will reduce the value of houses at the south of Old Torrington Road. | 3 | View noted. |
| The infrastructure cannot cope with all of the new housing being built. | 2 | This would have been considered at the planning stage. |
| The infrastructure cannot support the amount of cars accessing the new development & new supermarket. | 2 | These issues would have been considered at the planning stage. |
| There have been a number of near miss accidents on Gratton Way as all vehicles currently use this route, despite the existing bus gate. | 1 | If there is a pattern of collisions in a specific location this will be investigated by the council. |
| If the suggestions to remove the existing bus gate and not implement proposed bus gate or to create a junction to the south of Old Torrington Road to the A39 are not feasible then the current bus gate should stay in situ. | 1 | View noted. |
| Money would be better spent on improving the roundabout at the Old Torrington Road/Sticklepath Hill junction. | 1 | This traffic order is being funded by the developer of the Larkbear site as part of the planning permission of phase 1 of the development. Therefore, any further works are outside the scope of this scheme. |
| Money would be better spent on reducing traffic speeds on Old Torrington Road. | 1 | It is outside the scope of this scheme to review the speed limit on Old Torrington Road. |
| No exemptions for emergency service vehicles (or motorcycles). | 1 | Emergency service vehicles would be exempt and the proposed traffic regulation order can be modified to reflect this. Motorcycles would not be exempt. |
| Requests Devon County Council to analyse the effect of the proposed bus gate on traffic in the area. | 1 | If this proposal was implemented and we received reports of a negative effect on traffic we could review it at a later date. |
| Respondent does not agree with the proposals to introduce no waiting at any time along the length of Old Torrington Road. | 1 | It is proposed to introduce no waiting at any time on a section of Old Torrington Road where the bus gate is proposed, not the whole length of Old Torrington Road. |
| Respondent does not believe this will help to improve traffic. | 1 | View noted. |
| Respondent has observed vehicles drive through the existing bus gate. | 1 | The proposed bus gate would be enforced through a camera system, not a rising bollard which is used on the existing Gratton Way bus gate. |

| Comments | Count | DCC response |
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| The money would be better spent on safety in Old Torrington Road to construct a footpath and streetlighting for pedestrians. | 1 | It is outside the scope of this scheme to provide these features. |
| The proposal may reduce the safety of cyclists and children. | 1 | View noted, any works to the highway will be subject to a road safety audit at the design stage, after construction and after at least 12 months of operation. |
| The proposal is just moving the traffic elsewhere. | 1 | Comment noted. |
| The ring road is designed for larger volumes of traffic and should be used as such. | 1 | View noted. |
| There are more developments proposed as well as supermarkets and businesses in the area which will create more traffic. | 1 | This will be considered at the planning stage. |
| There are no current traffic problems in the area. | 1 | View noted. |
| This proposal will encourage use of the link road. | 1 | Comment noted. |
| This proposal will limit access for residents of Elizabeth Drive. | 1 | The proposed bus gate should improve access for those who live north of the proposal, including those in Elizabeth Drive. |
| The top of Old Torrington Road is used as bus stop for Petroc students, which causes blocks/congestion when stopped. No pedestrian crossing in place. | 1 | It would not be appropriate to introduce a signalised pedestrian crossing at this location. |
| When Petroc College is open can be hazardous due to number of students around. | 1 | View noted. |
| Respondent understands that there will be an access provided from the Larkbear development onto the A361, is this the case and when will it be built? | 1 | The long term ambition is for a new access from the Larkbear development to the A361 Western Bypass, but this does not have planning permission or a live planning application. It is not known when this might be constructed. |
| Will emergency vehicles be permitted through the bus gate? | 1 | Emergency vehicles will be permitted through the bus gate. |
| Will traffic from the new housing development behind Grange Avenue access the road network through Old Torrington Road? | 1 | The Larkbear development has approval for access onto Old Torrington Road which has been built. |

| Comments | Count | DCC response |
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| How will the bus gate be managed? | 2 | It is proposed that the bus gate would be enforced by cameras which capture the details of vehicles travelling through the bus gate, those travelling through who are not permitted will receive a penalty charge notice. |
| Suggestion to remove existing bus gate and not implement proposed bus gate to let traffic travel through the whole area. | 18 | Suggestion noted. |
| Suggestion to install lighting and footpaths south of the crematorium. | 2 | It is outside the scope of this scheme to install footpaths and lighting. |
| Suggestion to put in some traffic calming. | 2 | Traffic calming measures are outside the scope of this scheme. |
| Suggestion to allow funeral vehicles through the proposed bus gate. | 1 | If vehicles other than buses were permitted to travel through the bus gate it would make enforcement very difficult so it is not included in the proposal. |
| Suggestion to allow residents to the south of Old Torrington Road access through the new bus gate. | 1 | If vehicles other than buses were permitted to travel through the bus gate it would make enforcement very difficult so it is not included in the proposal. |
| Suggestion to open up Old Torrington Road to the A39 to the south. | 6 | This is outside of the scope of this scheme and any such proposal would be likely to be detrimental to operation of the A39. |
| Suggestion to construct a junction from the Larkbear Development onto the A361. | 1 | This is proposed as part of the wider plan for the Larkbear development. |
| Houses on the new development should have access directly to the A361 and A39. | 1 | See above. |
| Suggestion to install a roundabout into Gratton Way from Old Torrington Road. | 1 | Changes will be made to the Gratton Way junction to facilitate traffic entering/ exiting Old Torrington Road. |
| Suggestion to install bins, lighting and footpaths from the crematorium. | 1 | Plans for footway and street lighting on Old Torrington Road outside the Crematorium are being drawn up. |
| Suggestion to install traffic lights at the Old Torrington Road/Sticklepath Hill junction. | 2 | This is outside of the scope of this scheme. |
| Suggestion to install traffic lights or a roundabout at the junction of Gratton Way & Old Torrington Road. | 1 | Changes will be made to the Gratton Way junction to facilitate traffic entering/exiting Old Torrington Road. |
| Suggestion to introduce a speed limit in the area. | 1 | The speed limit is currently 30mph which is deemed appropriate for a residential area. |

| Comments | Count | DCC response |
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| Suggestion to provide more than signage to prevent all vehicles passing through the proposed bus gate. | 1 | It is proposed that the bus gate would be enforced by cameras which capture the details of vehicles travelling through the bus gate, those travelling through who are not permitted will receive a penalty charge notice. |
| Suggestion to review the junction layout at the north of Old Torrington Road. | 1 | Reviewing the junction layout to the North of Old Torrington Road is outside the scope of this scheme |
| Tawstock Parish Council suggests that the A3125 should be widened from both directions on approach to the Gratton Way/Fishleigh Road roundabout. | 1 | This is outside of the scope of this scheme. |
| The bus gate should stay where it currently is. | 1 | View noted. |
| Suggestion to introduce limited waiting restrictions on Old Torrington road for those attending the crematorium. | 1 | The proposed no waiting at any time is an upgrade of the existing no waiting restriction (Monday- Friday 9am-5pm) on Old Torrington Road to the north of the crematorium. It is not proposed to extend the length of these restrictions. |