

## **Sidmouth Traffic Management Plan**

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 the proposals for restrictions on motor vehicles and restrictions on waiting in Sidmouth town centre as detailed in Appendix I to this report are implemented as advertised.**

### **1. Summary**

This report is to consider the submissions to the statutory consultation on the restrictions proposed in Sidmouth town centre, as part of the Traffic Management Plan programme.

### **2. Background**

In early 2020, a temporary Covid emergency scheme was imposed in Sidmouth town centre to aid social distancing and prioritise road space for pedestrians and cyclists. Access for motor vehicles was restricted. Following this the Town Council and Chamber of Commerce asked that the restrictions be made permanent as they had improved the character and amenity of the town centre by reducing vehicular traffic. Officers consulted the relevant local County Councillor/Chair and Vice Chair and proposals to make the restriction permanent, in a modified form, were advertised in June/July 2021.

A summary of the proposals advertised can be found in Appendix I and the associated plans have been attached as Appendix II to this report.

### **3. Consultations/Representations**

Details of the objections received to these proposals, and the County Council's response and recommendations are shown in Appendix III to this report.

### **4. Financial Considerations**

The total costs of the scheme will be funded by the Central Government Covid grant, provided the scheme is approved and a meaningful start to implementing the works is commenced before the end of September.

## **5. Legal Considerations**

The lawful implications and consequences of the proposal have been considered and taken into account in the preparation of this report.

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 practicable, secures the expeditious, convenient and safe movement of traffic and provision of parking facilities. It is considered that the proposals comply with Section 122 of the Act as they practically secure the safe and expeditious movement of traffic.

## **6. Environmental Impact Considerations (Including Climate Change)**

The proposals are intended to reduce through traffic, rationalise on street parking and improve mobility and access within the district and are designed to:

- Enable enforcement to be undertaken efficiently.
- Encourage commuters to make more sustainable travel choices e.g. Car Share, Public Transport, Walking and Cycling.
- Assist pedestrians and other vulnerable road users by giving them higher priority on the highway.

The Environmental effects of the scheme are therefore positive.

## **7. Equality Considerations**

There are not considered to be any equality issues associated with the proposals. The impact will therefore be neutral.

## **8. Risk Management Considerations**

No risks have been identified.

## **9. Public Health Impact**

The proposal will reduce traffic flows and congestion in the restricted areas, with potential improvements to air quality and road safety.

## **10. Reasons for Recommendations**

The Town Council and Chamber of Commerce asked that the temporary Covid emergency scheme in Sidmouth town centre be made permanent as it has improved the character and amenity of the town centre by reducing vehicular traffic.

Meg Booth  
Chief Officer for Highways, Infrastructure Development and Waste

**Electoral Division: Sidmouth**

Local Government Act 1972: List of Background Papers

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Background Paper	Date	File Ref.
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Nil

sg140721edh  
sc/cr/Sidmouth Traffic Management Plan  
05 150721

**Details of Proposals Advertised**

<b>Councillor</b>	<b>Plan Reference</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Parish/Town</b>	<b>Proposals</b>	<b>Statement of Reasons</b>
Stuart Hughes	ENV5890/5975	Sidmouth Town Centre	Sidmouth	Prohibition of motor vehicles and prohibition of waiting.	To improve road safety and the character/amenity of the town centre.



P02	11/05/2021	JM	UPDATED RESTRICTIONS		
P01	05/02/2021	JM	FIRST ISSUE	AG	PK
REV	DATE	BY	DESCRIPTION	CHK	APP

DRAWING STATUS: S2 - FOR INFORMATION



CLIENT: \_\_\_\_\_

**Devon**  
County Council

PROJECT: TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT  
70072139

TITLE:

SIDMOUTH RESIDENTS PARKING SCHEME  
TOWN CENTER PROPOSALS

SCALE @ A:			CHECKED:		APPROVED:	
1:500			AG		PK	
PROJECT No:			DESIGNED:	DRAWN:	DATE:	
70072139			JM	JM	February 21	

DRAWING No:		REV:
70072139-WSP-GEN-SID-002-S2		P01

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## Summary of Submissions

<b>Plan ENV5890/5975 – Sidmouth Town Centre</b> <b>21 respondents – Town Council, Chamber of Commerce, Residents and Business Owners of Sidmouth</b>	
<b>Comment</b>	<b>Devon County Council Response</b>
<p><b>Support</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sidmouth Chamber of Commerce would like to record its support for the proposal and advised that no members made objections or proposed alternative views.</li> <li>Sidmouth Parish Church fully support the proposal for permit parking for church visitors outside their premises.</li> <li>3 residents stated their full support for the proposals.</li> <li>6 residents were broadly supportive but objected to cyclists being permitted to use pedestrianised areas, particularly Old Fore St, on safety grounds.</li> </ul> <p><b>Objection</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2 residents formally object, but actually support the scheme apart from allowing any exemption for cyclists.</li> </ul> <p><b>Suggestion</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sidmouth Town Council support the proposal but not the exemption for taxis or blue badge holders, which should remain in the locations made available for the duration of the Covid emergency restrictions. They also call for the closure of Old Fore Street to vehicles at its junction with the Esplanade.</li> <li>Deans Taxis support the proposal but suggest all spaces in New Street are made into taxi bays, and other taxi spaces elsewhere converted to blue badge bays.</li> <li>1 resident agrees with the comments of the Town Council</li> <li>2 residents made the point that in the event of roads being closed the restrictions would have to be eased to allow vehicles out of town.</li> <li>2 residents called for more consultation.</li> <li>1 resident requested waiting restrictions in Riverside Road.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Reason for Proposal</b></p> <p>The proposal is to improve road safety by reducing the volume of traffic in streets which are narrow, are often without footways and which generate significant pedestrian flows, while allowing access to parking spaces for those who require it. It will improve the character and amenity of the local area and make the town centre more attractive for pedestrians, particularly the older and younger road users.</p> <p>It will reduce traffic congestion and potentially improve air quality and the character of the Environment.</p> <p><b>Officer Comments</b></p> <p>The proposals have not generated any significant opposition.</p> <p>The most contentious issue is whether to allow blue badge holders and taxis exemptions to enter the restricted zone to park in designated bays.</p> <p>It is appreciated that a significant number of blue badge holders may enter the restricted zone looking for a parking space, but in reality taking away the blue badge bays will not change that. That is because by law they can park anywhere (except where loading is banned) provided it is safe to do so. Even if we remove all the blue badge bays they would still have a right to access the zone to look for somewhere to park. By providing bays for them we are at least directing them to park in the safest and least inconvenient places, so really this is the best option and it does not actually affect the number of badge holders who can enter the restricted zone.</p> <p>Taxis are less of an issue because there are obviously fewer of them. It is considered the points raised by residents are fair, especially for elderly people who depend on taxis, and it is recommended the rank returns to its former position.</p> <p>There have been some suggestions to alter the locations of blue badge, loading or taxis bays, though different ideas have been put forward.</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 resident asked for the access roads to Lennards Court to be included in the scheme but did not specify exactly what was being asked for.</li> <li>• 1 resident suggested limiting the traffic restriction to between 11am and 5 pm and thought pedestrian footfall would reduce as people might not realise there were shops in the restricted area.</li> <li>• 1 resident requested improved bus services and infrastructure, lower speed limits, one-way roads.</li> <li>• 1 resident suggested amendments to some loading areas.</li> </ul> <p><b>Other</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3 residents raised technical questions about rights of access.</li> <li>• Prior to the advertising of these proposals we have received some observations during the Covid emergency regarding the temporary scheme, which are relevant to this proposal. Comments included:             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. the unsuitability of the temporary taxi rank because people were forced to stand and wait while exposed to the wind and rain, and it forces them to walk further from the shops, often with heavy bags,</li> <li>2. blue badge holders unable to use local shops because parking spaces were too far away.</li> </ol> </li> </ul>	<p>Changing the proposals would mean re-advertising, which would risk losing the budget, and would force the removal of the temporary restrictions in the intervening period. Phase 2 of the scheme will allow potential amendments to be considered once the initial scheme is secured.</p> <p>The other contentious issue is the proposal to allow cyclists an exemption to ride along streets which are clearly 'pedestrianised' in the minds of the public. This is not considered a crucial aspect of the scheme. Some cyclists do ride along Old Fore St and there is no record of any injury collisions as a result. Enforcement of this restriction is not a police priority. Encouraging cycling is a County policy, but it is not considered that maintaining the prohibition on Old Fore Street is a major inconvenience for cyclists, as the alternative roads are safe for them. However, as motor vehicles are allowed to drive along the roads for access and loading it is not considered that allowing cyclists is a significant extra risk.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation - Implement as advertised.</b></p>	