

Bus Gate - Old Torrington Road, Sticklepath

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

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

Recommendation: It is recommended that the new bus gate on Old Torrington Road should apply at all times.

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.

At the North Devon HATOC on 7 July 2021 it was resolved that the bus gate and waiting restrictions on Old Torrington Road be implemented as advertised subject to further consideration by this committee on the proposed operating times of the new bus gate.

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 traffic orders will 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.

After further consideration it is proposed that the bus gate applies at all times. This would provide a clear restriction, with no ambiguity, that the public will understand.

A part time bus gate is more likely to be abused and may generate confusion for those accessing properties south of the new bus gate.

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 and Fremington Parish Council.

A full summary of the comments was considered at the North Devon HATOC on 7 July 2021.

Following the committee meeting we have received correspondence from the Crematorium. A copy of this is in Appendix 2. It should be acknowledged that the impact on the Crematorium was considered at the meeting of 7 July 2021, however there had never been any mention of further costs being incurred by the Crematorium to create a waiting area as a result of the proposal. It is considered that there is still space on-street for principal vehicles to wait on Old Torrington Road south of the Gratton Way junction.

4. Alternatives

The alternative of implementing the bus gate part time has been considered.

The purpose of the bus gate is to stop traffic from using the Old Torrington Road route. It is recognised that there would be an increased demand to use this route when the A3125 is congested and therefore it is appropriate that the bus gate must apply during these times. However, if the A3125 is not congested then the A3125 will have capacity for the traffic that would want to use Old Torrington Road.

This is consistent with the existing bus gate on Gratton Way that also applies at all times.

A part time bus gate may also lead to confusion for drivers, especially those occasionally travelling to properties/amenities to the south of the bus gate. A full time restriction is much clearer than one that operates some of the time.

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 junction with the A3125.

Comments received as part of the consultation suggested that congestion on Cedars Roundabout and the surrounding roads may become worse following the implementation of this new bus gate. It is considered that traffic should use the A3125 as this is designed for a higher capacity of traffic. Work is being undertaken as part of a separate scheme to identify any issues at Cedars Roundabout and look to manage congestion.

8. Equality Considerations

It is considered that the proposed recommendation does not have 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 Council's position.

10. Reasons for Recommendations

After considering the comments received, it is recommended that the new bus gate and associated waiting restrictions on Old Torrington Road are introduced 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 Reference
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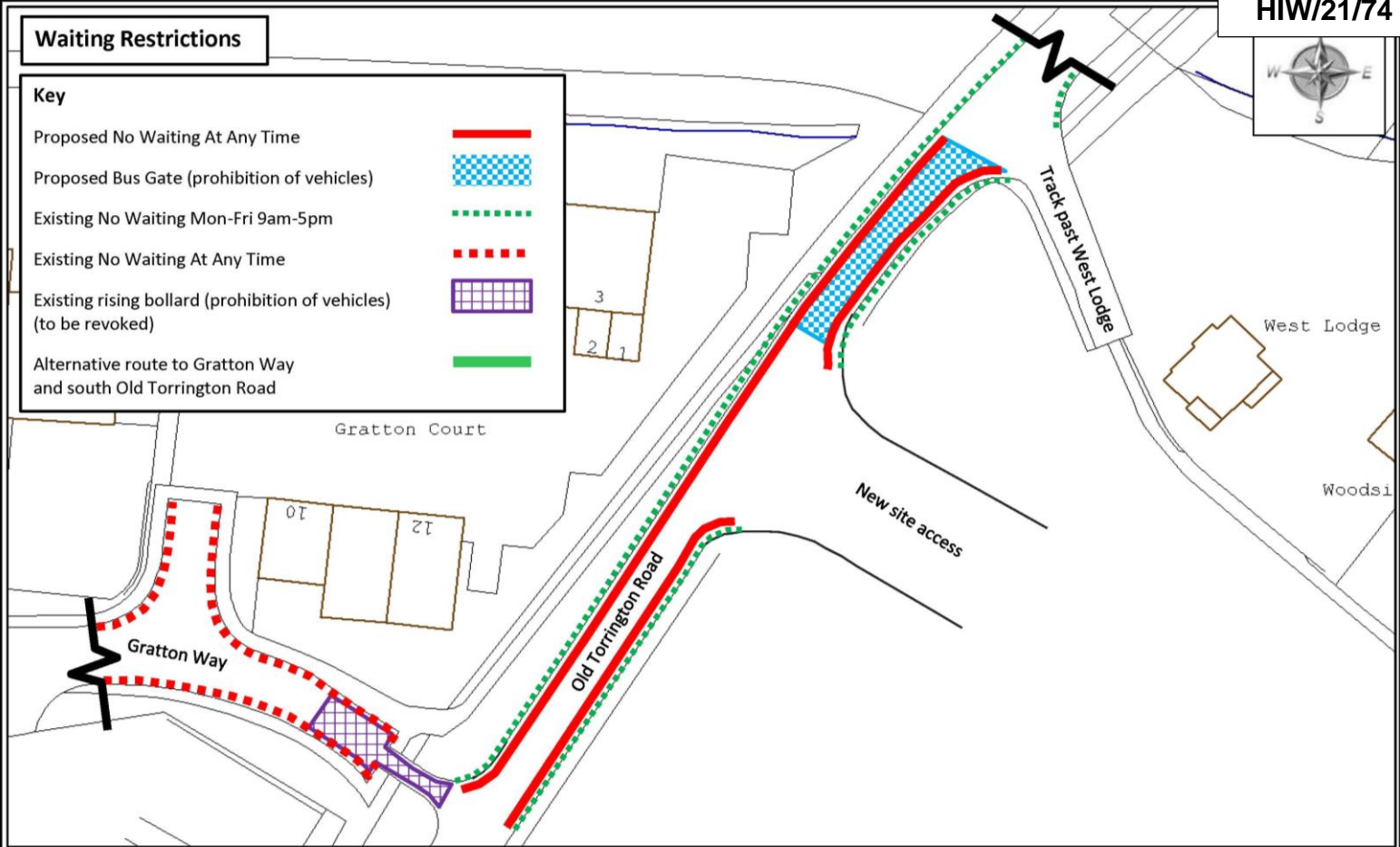
None		
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sc/cr/Bus Gate - Old Torrington Road Sticklepath
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Waiting Restrictions

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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Your ref:
Our ref:



Date: 16 September 2021



Devon Highways
Devon County Council
Topsham Road
Exeter
EX2 4QD



Dear Sir/Madam,

Re: Gratton Way/Old Torrington Road, Barnstaple

I have been asked by the North Devon Crematorium Joint Committee to write following the HATOC decision to proceed with the Gratton Way bus gate move to Old Torrington Road.

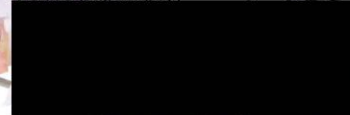
It is recognised that the decision is final, but legitimate concerns remain and it is hoped that the implementation can be constructively reviewed in a way that maintains the decision and its benefits (particularly to residents), whilst mitigating the concerns for this long-standing and vital public service provided by North Devon and Torrige District Councils.

As it stands no consideration has been made for the Crematorium's operations and it is felt that some small adjustments in the implementation could mitigate the concerns without changing the decision. If implemented without adjustments the crematorium will incur additional costs (to provide a waiting area for any early funeral cortege) and clearly much greater risk of delays to services caused by the single access route.

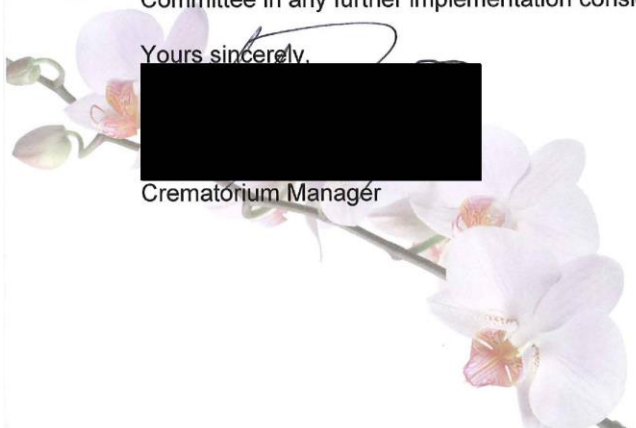
As the manager of the site I have considerable understanding of local traffic issues as well as the likely impact on crematorium operations which affects thousands of residents every year. My previous role for 30-years as a Police Officer included highways liaison with London Boroughs should help to identify solutions. An illustration of this was my highlighting the omission of an emergency vehicle exemption in this proposal (and the current Gratton Way Order of 2000) which I note was amended for the HATOC meeting.

Please involve myself as the representative of the Councillors who form the Joint Committee in any further implementation considerations/discussions.

Yours sincerely,



Crematorium Manager



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