

**Chard Road, Exeter, Prohibition of Vehicles and Waiting restrictions**

Report of the Director of Climate Change, Environment and Transport

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

**Recommendations: It is recommended that the Committee:**

- (a) approve the construction of a permanent closure on Chard Road shown in Appendix 1, at an estimated cost of £10,000;**
- (b) approve the making and sealing of the Traffic Regulation Orders necessary to deliver the scheme, including waiting restrictions immediately adjacent to the closure point; and**
- (c) delegate powers to the Director of Climate Change, Environment and Transport in consultation with the Chair of HATOC and local member, to make minor variations to the scheme as required.**

**1. Summary**

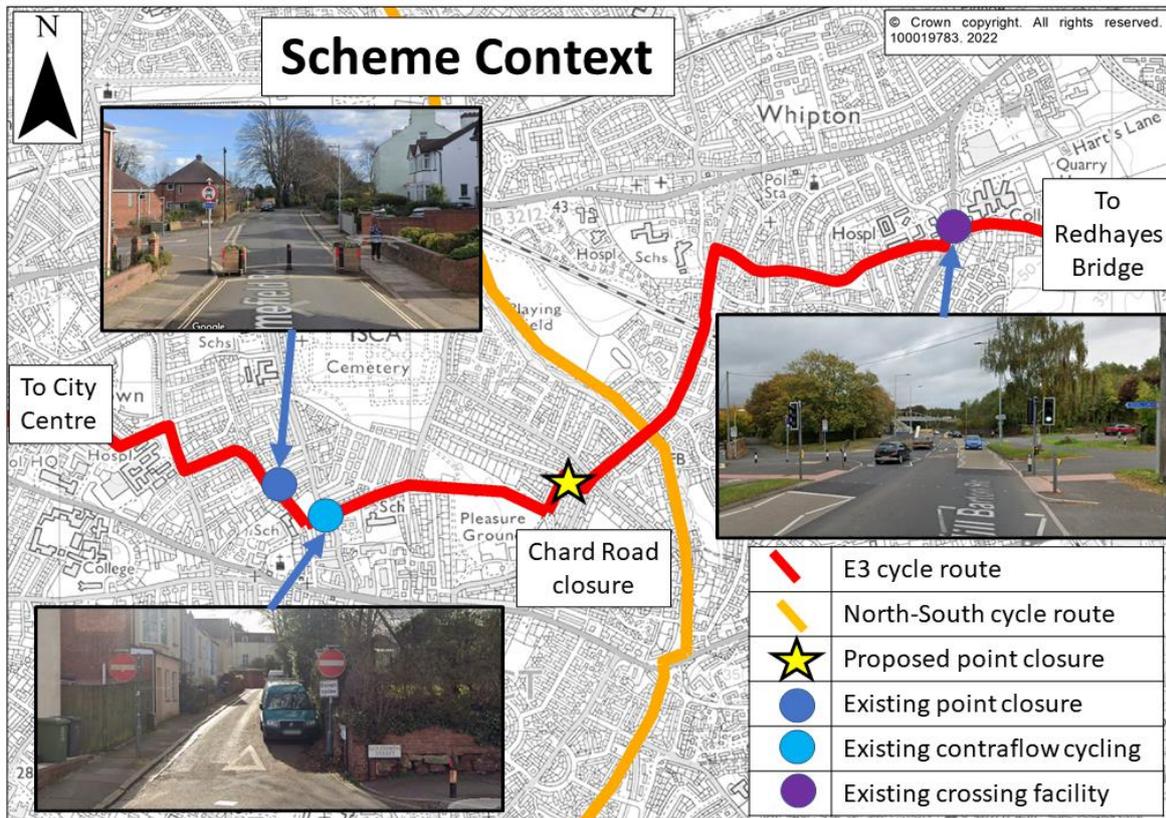
During the COVID-19 pandemic (in July 2020), temporary restrictions were introduced to temporarily prohibit all vehicles, except for cycles, on a short length of Chard Road between the junctions with Nicholas Road and Whipton Lane. This forms part of the E3 strategic cycle corridor that connects Redhayes Bridge, Whipton, Heavitree and the City Centre.

For this scheme, approval is sought to implement a closure on Chard Road, in addition to 'no waiting at any time' restrictions to prohibit parking immediately adjacent to the closure (see Plan in Appendix 1).

**2. Introduction**

By removing through vehicular traffic from Chard Road, it is intended to provide continuity along the E3 route, providing a more attractive route for cyclists, as well as improving the amenity of the area, for example by reducing traffic noise on Chard Road.

The scheme would complement recent improvements elsewhere on the E3 route, including a point closure on Homefield Road, contraflow cycling on Park Place and a pedestrian/cycle crossing on Hill Barton Road. The E3 route also connects to the North-South cycle route towards Polsloe Bridge in the north and Marsh Barton in the south, as shown in the map below.



Plans for additional modal filters as part of an area wide traffic filter scheme have been consulted on in the [Phase 2 Exeter Streets Consultation](#). A decision on a potential area-wide trial of such a scheme for Heavitree and Whipton will be made at a future Exeter Highways and Traffic Orders Committee (HATOC) meeting. However, a decision on making the Chard Road changes permanent would have to be made now, due to the legal timescales of the temporary arrangements.

The proposal to implement the Chard Road filter permanently will build upon Devon County Council’s encouragement of active travel, which includes the Exeter Transport Strategy aims to achieve 50% of journeys by walking and cycling. It also supports the Council’s Climate Emergency objectives by encouraging modal shift away from the private car.

### 3. Proposal

Subject to approval of this report’s recommendations, TROs are proposed to be sealed to:

- prohibit the passage of vehicles (excluding cycles and certain other classes of vehicle) along a short section of Chard Road; and
- introduce ‘no waiting at any time’ restrictions adjacent to the closure point, to ensure cycles can safely and proceed past the closure point.

The TROs were advertised between 28th April and 20th May 2022.

The closure will be constructed using planter boxes, to which will be attached reflective signs. Double-yellow lines will be painted to demarcate the waiting restrictions, and signage will be revised, including the installation of 'No through road (except cycles)' signs and removal of redundant signs.

#### 4. Options/Alternatives

Removing the closure was not supported by a majority of respondents to the TRO consultation. Additionally, this would not reduce traffic on Chard Road and would not support delivery of the E3 cycle route.

#### 5. Consultations/Technical Data

##### Previous consultations

Views on making the Chard Road closure permanent were previously sought during the Heavitree and Whipton Phase 1 Consultation (November – December 2020), but feedback was inconclusive, with 45% in agreement, 5% neutral and 50% against.

##### TRO consultation

The TROs for the permanent scheme were advertised between 28 April and 20 May 2022. 214 responses were received, of which 73 were from residents of the area directly affected by the scheme, i.e. Chard Road, Nicholas Road and Lymeborne Avenue. Overall, 60% of respondents were in favour of the proposals, with 39% against and 1% neutral.

Within the scheme area, 37% of respondents were in favour and 63% against – 53% were in favour on Chard Road itself, but on Nicholas Road and Lymeborne Avenue, only 8% were in favour, likely because the latter are already cul-de-sacs, so the reduced traffic on Chard Road has had less impact on these roads. Outside the area directly impacted by the scheme, 72% of respondents supported making the closure permanent, with many of these respondents stating that they use Chard Road on foot or by cycle.

<b>Respondent address</b>	<b>Responses</b>	<b>% In favour</b>	<b>% Against</b>	<b>% Neutral</b>
Total	214	60%	39%	1%
Chard Road	47	53%	47%	0%
Nicholas Road/ Lymeborne Avenue	26	8%	92%	0%
Outside scheme area	141	72%	27%	1%

A summary of the TRO representations and Devon County Council's responses is given in Appendix 2.

##### Traffic count data

12-hour Manual Classified Counts were undertaken on Chard Road in 2019 and 2021, at the junctions with Hamlin Lane and Whipton Lane.

At the junction with Hamlin Lane, traffic on Chard Road reduced from approximately 1,000 vehicles in 2019 to some 600 vehicles in 2021, a 40% decrease, and there was an approximately 10% increase in cycling (from 89 to 99 cyclists).

At the Whipton Lane junction, the percentage increase in cycling was approximately the same as at the Hamlin Lane junction, with 171 and 187 cyclists recorded in 2019 and 2021, respectively. However, there was a much larger reduction in vehicular traffic, with volumes reducing from 1,200 vehicles to less than 100 vehicles, likely because the closure point is close to the Whipton Lane junction, meaning only a small number of properties have vehicular access from it. Therefore, cycle flows have exceeded vehicular traffic at the eastern end of Chard Road following the temporary closure.

## 6. Strategic Plan

The scheme is considered to be well aligned with several of the actions within the Strategic Plan, insofar as it would prioritise walking and cycling over vehicular traffic, and therefore encourage more people to walk and cycle. These impacts are summarised in the table below, whereby -3 represents a large negative impact and +3 represents a large positive impact.

<b>Strategic Plan priority</b>	<b>Strategic Plan action</b>	<b>Alignment</b>
Responding to the climate emergency.	Prioritise sustainable travel and transport.	+3 (Large positive)
Responding to the climate emergency.	Encourage sustainable lifestyles.	+2 (Moderate positive)
Investing in Devon's economic recovery.	Maintain and, where necessary, improve our highway network and improve sustainable transport options.	+2 (Moderate positive)
Improving health and wellbeing.	Give people greater opportunities for walking and cycling to increase their physical activity.	+2 (Moderate positive)

## 7. Financial Considerations

The construction of the scheme is expected to cost up to £10,000, which will be funded from the £1.35 million grant awarded by the Department for Transport Active Travel Fund.

## 8. Legal Considerations

The legal implications of the proposals have been considered in the preparation of this report.

The proposed changes would be introduced through Traffic Regulation Orders, the advertisement for which was conducted in April-May 2022.

The statutory consultation on the proposed road closure and parking restrictions has been carried out in line with the Local Authorities' Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996. This includes a public notice placed in the local press and statutory bodies (e.g. emergency services) being notified of the restrictions.

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, to secure the expeditious, convenient and safe movement of traffic (including pedestrians and cyclists) and provision of parking facilities.

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

The first set of filters used red and white barriers, but, in light of public feedback, these were soon replaced by planters to improve streetscape. Streets became cleaner, safer places encouraging social interaction, where parents gained more confidence in allowing their children to play on the streets but also a space for encouraging wildlife. Since the installation, community groups have been established to care for the planters and explore other ways to make neighbourhoods greener. This has undoubtedly boosted public acceptance of the closures, as they see the benefits of making streets greener and more attractive places to be.

In addition, the scheme is designed to encourage greater use of active travel, by making journeys on foot or by cycle relatively more attractive than by car, and improving provision on the E3 cycle route. Therefore, the scheme may reduce total traffic volumes (and thus emissions) in the area.

## **10. Equality Considerations**

Where relevant to the decision, the Equality Act 2010 Public Sector Equality Duty requires decision makers to give due regard to the need to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other prohibited conduct;
- advance equality by encouraging participation, removing disadvantage, taking account of disabilities and meeting people's needs; and
- foster good relations between people by tackling prejudice and promoting understanding.

taking account of age, disability, race/ethnicity (includes Gypsies and Travellers), gender and gender identity, religion and belief, sexual orientation, pregnant women/new and breastfeeding mothers, marriage/civil partnership status in coming to a decision, a decision maker may also consider other relevant factors such as caring responsibilities, rural isolation or socio-economic disadvantage.

It is acknowledged that this proposal may make some vehicular journeys slightly longer, potentially increasing fuel costs for some residents. However, the proposal is also very likely to reduce traffic volumes on Chard Road (as evidenced by traffic counts following the temporary closure), supporting walking and cycling on this section of the E3 strategic cycle route. This could enable those reliant on walking and cycling to more easily access certain opportunities, such as jobs, education and social activities, and particularly benefit children, who are more vulnerable to vehicular traffic. Furthermore, the scheme may reduce risks to people with sensory impairments, who may have difficulties perceiving the approach of vehicular traffic.

## 11. Risk Management Considerations

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

As the proposed arrangement has been trialled for nearly 2 years, it is considered that many of the risks and potential issues are well-understood and can be mitigated through the delivery of the permanent scheme.

## 12. Public Health Impact

The scheme will likely have a positive public health impact by making walking and cycling more attractive, thus helping tackle health issues associated with physical inactivity (e.g. obesity). It will also reduce traffic volumes on Chard Road, reducing residents' exposure to traffic noise and pollution, which are known to adversely impact public health.

## 13. Summary

Implementing the Chard Road as permanent infrastructure will build on the continuing work to deliver the E3 cycle route, but also will be a first step in establishing a neighbourhood area which will be a more enjoyable place to live and work, and also improve options for safer travel for all residents in and around the area. It is believed that this scheme supports targets within the Exeter Transport Strategy to achieve 50% of people walking and cycling to work and education, as well as targets listed in the County Council's Carbon Zero agenda, encouraging the greening of neighbourhoods, promoting active travel and encouraging people to shift from reliance on the private car for shorter journeys.

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**Electoral Division: Heavitree & Whipton Barton**

**Local Government Act 1972: List of Background Papers**

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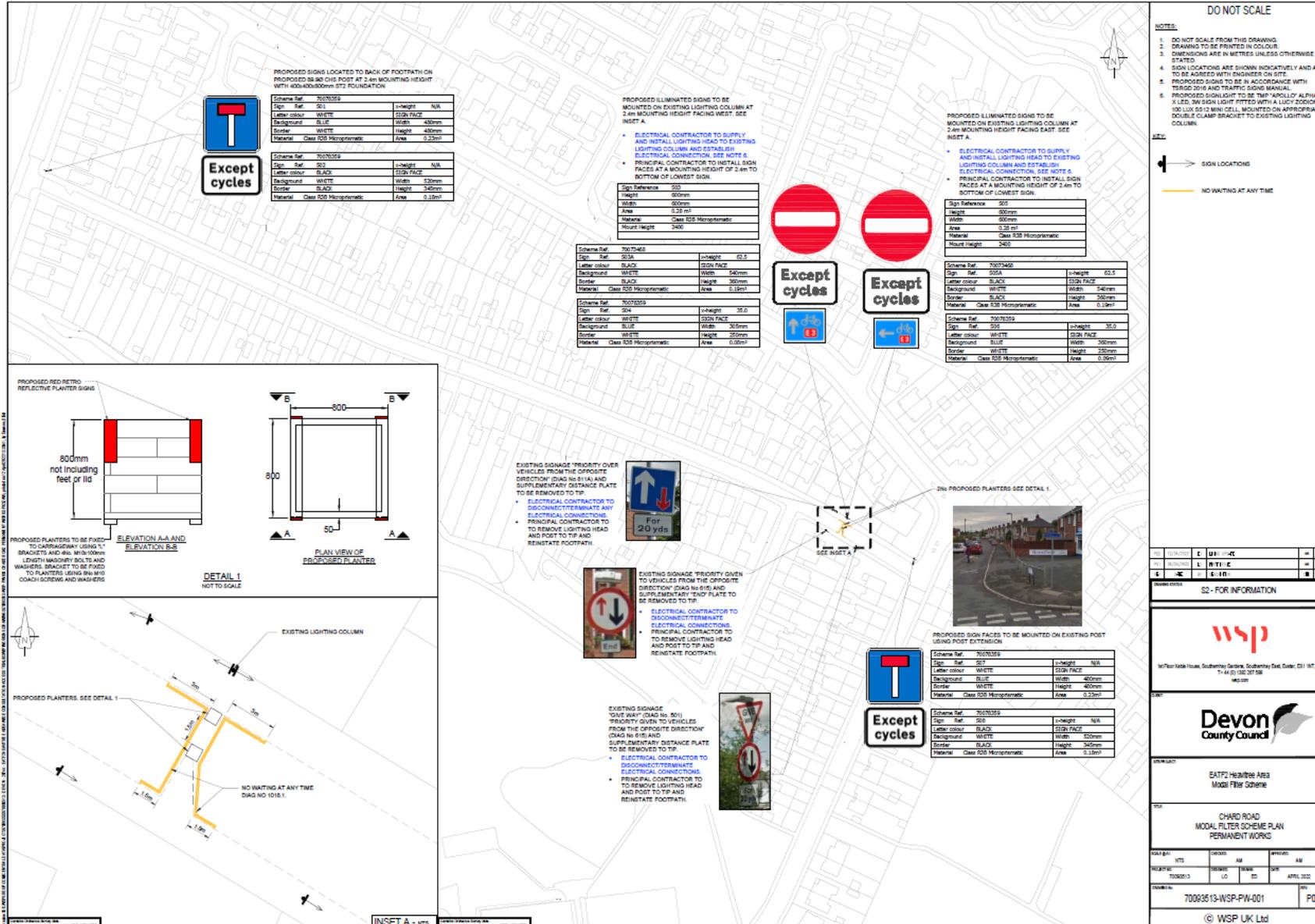
Room: Transport Planning, Matford Offices, County Hall, Exeter EX2 4QD

<b>Background Paper</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>File Reference</b>
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Nil

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sc/cr/Chard Road Exeter Prohibition of Vehicles and Waiting restrictions  
05 240522

Scheme Plan



## Summary of TRO Representations

Comment	Responses	DCC Response
Respondent suggests that scheme would improve safety for walking and cycling.	48	Noted.
Respondent suggests that scheme would have negative impact on vehicular journeys.	37	It is acknowledged that the scheme would slightly increase the lengths of some vehicular journeys for residents on Lymborne Avenue and Nicholas Road and some Chard Road residents. These impacts are considered to be proportionate in view of the benefits to pedestrians and cyclists across the wider area.
Respondent suggests that scheme would have negative impact on surrounding network.	34	It is acknowledged that the scheme may displace some traffic onto neighbouring roads, however these impacts are considered to be proportionate in view of the benefits to pedestrians and cyclists.
Respondent suggests that scheme would encourage walking and cycling.	28	Noted.
Respondent suggests that scheme would create danger.	25	The scheme is designed to improve safety for all users especially vulnerable users such as pedestrians and cycles. A Minor Scheme Safety Audit will be conducted prior to the scheme's construction.
Respondent expresses general support.	24	Noted.
Respondent suggests that scheme would provide benefits for children.	24	Noted.
Respondent expresses concerns re. driving on footway.	20	It is proposed that the scheme incorporates a bollard on the edge of the footway to prevent vehicles from driving past the closure point on the footway.
Respondent expresses support for wider measures to support cycling.	13	Noted.
Respondent suggests that scheme would positively impact the environment.	12	Noted.
Respondent suggests that scheme would negatively impact the environment.	12	It is acknowledged that the scheme may displace some traffic onto neighbouring roads, however these impacts are considered to be proportionate in view of the benefits to pedestrians and cyclists.
Respondent suggests that cycle route is little used.	11	Monitoring data suggests an increase in cycling following the implementation of the temporary scheme, and further monitoring will be undertaken to assess the impacts of the permanent scheme.

<b>Comment</b>	<b>Responses</b>	<b>DCC Response</b>
Respondent suggests that scheme would have general positive impact.	10	Noted.
Respondent suggests that scheme would reduce traffic.	9	Noted.
Respondent expresses concerns re. impact on emergency services.	9	The emergency services were notified of the introduction of the temporary restrictions, which were also added to Google Maps and One Network to enable users to plan alternative routes. We are continuing to liaise with the emergency services regarding the impacts of traffic filters on their operations.
Respondent expresses concerns re. democratic process.	8	The TROs have been advertised in line with the legal requirements given in Local Authorities' Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996. The making of the permanent TROs is subject to HATOC approval before taking effect.
Respondent suggests that scheme would increase levels of cycling.	6	Noted.
Respondent suggests that scheme would improve public health.	6	Noted.
Respondent suggests moving the closure point to the west of the Nicholas Road junction.	6	This would not be feasible, due to the lack of a suitable turning head for vehicles approaching the closure point from the west.
Respondent suggests that inconvenience caused by scheme would not be significant.	6	Noted.
Respondent suggests that scheme would have little impact on traffic.	4	Monitoring data shows a reduction in traffic on Chard Road following the implementation of the scheme, and further monitoring will be undertaken to assess the impacts of the permanent scheme.
Respondent suggests that scheme would discourage car journeys.	3	Noted.
Respondent requests that scheme incorporate planters.	2	It is proposed that planters be used to implement the closure.
Respondent suggests improved signage.	2	The scheme will incorporate 'No through road (except cycles)' signs at either end of Chard Road, providing road users with advance warning of the closure. There will also be 'No entry (except cycles)' signs at the closure point, and directional signage for the E3 strategic cycle route.

<b>Comment</b>	<b>Responses</b>	<b>DCC Response</b>
Respondent requests that the scheme accommodate non-standard cycles, e.g. tricycles.	2	The closure point has been designed according to the latest standards, and will allow non-standard cycles to pass without being so wide as to allow the passage of motor vehicles.
Respondent expresses concerns re. positioning of closure in relation to private access.	2	The project team are investigating whether minor modifications could be made to address these concerns.
Respondent suggests not prohibiting parking adjacent to the closure.	2	Prohibiting parking adjacent to the closure is considered necessary to ensure cyclists can safely and comfortably proceed past the closure point.
Respondent requests to better enforce 20mph.	1	Noted.
Respondent suggests that scheme would create confusion.	1	The scheme will incorporate 'No through road (except cycles)' signs at either end of Chard Road, providing road users with advance warning of the closure.
Respondent suggests constructing a cycle lane without closing the road.	1	There is insufficient space to construct such a lane and the cost of this would likely be prohibitive.
Respondent suggests using access-only signage instead of the proposed scheme.	1	This would be unlikely to reduce traffic as significantly as the proposed scheme, due to reduced compliance with signed-only restrictions.
Respondent suggests using signage to indicate the residential area.	1	This would be unlikely to reduce traffic as significantly as the proposed scheme.
Respondent suggests introducing a 10mph speed limit.	1	This would not be possible without specific consent from the Secretary of State for Transport.
Respondent suggests prohibiting parking at nearby junctions.	1	Under the Highway Code (Rule 243), road users must not park opposite or within 10 metres of a junction, except in an authorised parking space.
Respondent suggests traffic calming on Chard Road.	1	Noted.
Respondent suggests making use of cycle routes mandatory.	1	Under the Highway Code (Rule 61), cyclists are entitled to exercise their judgement and are not obliged to use cycle routes or facilities.
Respondent states that Sweetbrier Lane scheme was a waste of money.	1	Noted.