

# Regulatory Committee

**Dorset County Council**



Date of Meeting	16 March 2017
Officer	Andrew Martin – Service Director Highways & Emergency Planning
<b>Subject of Report</b>	Dorchester Transport and Environment Plan (DTEP) Proposed Turning Movement Bans at South Gate Junction
Executive Summary	<p>In 2003 the County Council agreed with Dorchester Town Council and West Dorset District Council to prepare a plan to enhance the public realm and reduce the negative impacts of traffic in Dorchester. As the plan was developed maintenance and improvement works at various locations in Dorchester were put on hold. In late 2013 public consultation was held on a scheme proposal, which would provide one-way traffic flow in the High Street, but this was not found to be publically acceptable.</p> <p>In September 2014, Cabinet resolved that elements of DTEP that include deferred maintenance and improvement works, plus some environmental enhancements, but exclude one-way traffic in the High Street, be progressed. This included replacement of the existing pedestrian crossing signal equipment around South Gate Junction and linking of the individual crossings to reduce traffic delays. It also included relocating the pedestrian crossing on South Walks Road to provide a more direct link between Brewery Square and South Street. A Local Member Led Project Working Group was set up to oversee development of the project with representation from County, District and Town Councils.</p> <p>In order to relocate the pedestrian crossing on South Walks Road it is necessary to prohibit right-turns out of Prince of Wales Road and left-turns in. Following advertising of the proposed prohibition of turns, one objection and two representations have been received. This report considers that objection and the representations and whether the proposed prohibition of turns should be implemented as advertised.</p>

<p>Impact Assessment:</p>	<p><b>Equalities Impact Assessment:</b></p> <p>An equalities impact assessment has been carried out for this scheme which concluded that there will be no discriminatory or negative consequences for any sector of the community on the grounds of race, gender, disability, faith, sexuality or age.</p> <p>The proposals seek to relocate the pedestrian crossing on South Walks Road to a position closer to the preferred route for the majority of pedestrians wishing to use it. This will particularly benefit the young, elderly, infirm and disabled.</p> <hr/> <p><b>Use of Evidence:</b></p> <p>Traffic survey data has been collected and public consultation undertaken. Local Members, Town and District Councils and the Police support the proposals.</p> <hr/> <p><b>Budget:</b></p> <p>The overall budget for the project is £3.632 million including contributions from West Dorset District Council, Dorchester Town Council and developer payments relating to the Poundbury and Brewery Square developments. The estimated cost of the works at South Gate Junction is approximately £320,000, including design and preparation costs.</p> <hr/> <p><b>Risk Assessment:</b></p> <p>Having considered the risks associated with this decision using the County Council's approved risk management methodology, the level of risk has been identified as:          Current Risk: MEDIUM          Residual Risk: MEDIUM</p> <p>However, the level of risk will reduce as the likelihood of the risks being realised will reduce following completion of the scheme.</p> <hr/> <p><b>Other Implications:</b></p> <p>The scheme will update the signal equipment surrounding the junction to low voltage / low energy use.</p>
<p>Recommendation</p>	<p>That having considered the objection and representations received, Cabinet be recommended to approve the proposed prohibition of turning movements as advertised.</p>
<p>Reason for Recommendation</p>	<p>The proposals will allow relocation of the controlled pedestrian crossing on South Walks Road considerably nearer to the desired route for most pedestrians and contribute towards the overall DTEP scheme objections of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• increasing pedestrian priority and freedom, and</li> <li>• improving access for the elderly and disabled.</li> </ul>

Appendices	Appendix 1 - Results of Traffic Survey Appendix 2 - Consultation Plan Showing Proposed Banned Movements Appendix 3 - WDDC Air Quality Response
Background Papers	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. The responses to the Order Public Advert as outlined in Para 4.2 are available to view in the Members Room.</li><li>2. Primary consultation responses from the District and Town Councils, Dorset Police and the local County Councillors are held on file in the Environment and the Economy Directorate.</li></ol>
Officer Contact	Name: Paul Hannam Tel: 01305 225325 Email: <a href="mailto:p.l.hannam@dorsetcc.gov.uk">p.l.hannam@dorsetcc.gov.uk</a>

## **1 Background**

- 1.1 In 2003 the County Council agreed with Dorchester Town Council and West Dorset District Council to prepare a plan to enhance the public realm and reduce the negative impacts of traffic in Dorchester. As the plan was developed maintenance and improvement works at various locations in Dorchester were put on hold. In late 2013 public consultation was held on a scheme proposal, which would provide one-way traffic flow in the High Street, but this was not found to be publically acceptable. However, as part of that consultation it was revealed that there was a demand for a more direct pedestrian connection between Brewery Square and South Street.
- 1.2 In September 2014, Cabinet resolved that elements of DTEP that include deferred maintenance and improvement works, plus some environmental enhancements, but exclude one-way traffic in the High Street be progressed. This included replacement of the existing pelican crossings at Prince of Wales Road, Trinity Street and Great Western Road with new, low energy, puffin crossings, plus replacement and relocation of the crossing on South Walks Road as well as linking all the crossings around the junction to ease traffic flow.
- 1.3 A Local Member Led Project Working Group comprising members and officers of the County, District and Town Councils was set up to oversee development of the project.
- 1.4 Following a decision by West Dorset District Council in December 2015 to defer support for a link road affecting Fairfield car park, in February 2016 Cabinet again resolved to progress design and construction of improvements at South Gate Junction and the other locations identified in the revised DTEP project.
- 1.5 In order to relocate the pedestrian crossing on South Walks Road as close as possible to the pedestrian desire line between Brewery Square and South Street, it is necessary to prohibit left turns from South Walks Road into Prince of Wales Road and right turns from Prince of Wales Road into South Walks Road.
- 1.6 The proposed prohibition of turns was advertised for public consultation on 26 January 2017. The objection period closed on 17 February 2017, during which one objection and two representations were received. This report considers that objection and the representations and whether the proposed prohibition of turns should be implemented as advertised.
- 1.7 The Director for Environment and Economy had declared a personal interest in the scheme put to consultation, the subsequent Cabinet decisions and the current DTEP proposals, because he lives in Dorchester on a road that could be impacted by some of the proposals. He has taken no part in the development of the project and the portfolio holder has dealt directly with the design team manager, service manager and head of service. Nevertheless, the Director for Environment and Economy remains the nominal Lead Director.

## **2 Information**

- 2.1 With the increasing level of development on the Brewery Square site, the amount of pedestrian movement between Brewery Square and South Street is increasing and, as a result, so is the demand for more direct access between the two areas of the town.
- 2.2 The existing junction arrangements allow all turning movements for traffic, with signal controlled pedestrian crossings located within a short distance on all arms of the junction. As a result, pedestrians from Brewery Square wishing to access the shopping areas in South Street (or vice versa) must either cross Weymouth Avenue, Great

Western Road and Trinity Street or having crossed Prince of Wales Road detour about 20 metres up South Walks Road (total detour about 40 metres).

- 2.3 The ideal situation for these pedestrians would be for a crossing to be installed on Weymouth Avenue/South Walks Road west of Prince of Wales Road crossing directly into South Street. However, this is not possible due to the locations of the side roads.
- 2.4 The existing pelican crossings use old (pelican) technology and high energy units and are due for replacement with up-to-date, low energy, puffin crossing equipment which is already in place at the more recently installed Weymouth Avenue crossing.
- 2.5 As part of this refurbishment it is proposed that the existing crossing on South Walks Road be removed and replaced with a new crossing immediately east of Prince of Wales Road, but for this to operate safely it will be necessary to prohibit left turns into Prince of Wales Road and right turns out of Prince of Wales Road.
- 2.6 A full 12-hour turning movement traffic survey was undertaken in October 2011. The results are shown in Appendix 1 where it can be seen that on average about 10 vehicles per hour turned right into South Walks Road whilst about 15 vehicles per hour made the opposing left turn manoeuvre. Surveys, taken since this survey, at regular intervals at other sites within the town have shown that there has been little change in traffic flows, despite the various developments which have taken place.
- 2.7 The majority of the traffic currently undertaking the turns which are proposed to be prohibited is thought to join/leave South Walks Road at the Acland Road junction. There is an existing alternative route for this traffic, via Culliford Road North, at little or no detour. The existing two-way flow here, while not high (approx. 160 vehicles per hour), is sufficient that any increase as a result of the banned turns is unlikely to be noticeable.

### **3 Law**

- 3.1 Sections 1 and 2 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 allow the County Council to make an Order requiring vehicular traffic to proceed in a specified direction or prohibiting its so proceeding. The circumstances where an Order may be made include:

For avoiding danger to persons or other traffic using the road or any other road or for preventing the likelihood of any such danger arising;

For facilitating the passage on the road or any other road of any class of traffic (including pedestrians);

For preserving or improving the amenities of the area through which the roads run.

### **4 Consultation**

- 4.1 Under Dorset County Council's procedure, primary consultation was carried out on the proposed scheme and it is supported by the Local Members for Dorchester, by West Dorset District Council, by Dorchester Town Council and by the Police.
- 4.2 There were three responses to the public consultation process, which are summarised below.

Respondent and Address	Summary of Response
Resident of Southfield House, South Walks Road, Dorchester	Is concerned at the relocation of the pedestrian crossing. Considers that the proposals will decrease air quality at her flat; is opposed to the loss of grass on the corner of Prince of Wales Road and South Walks Road; considers that traffic turning right into Prince of Wales Road will suffer additional delay; considers the loss of her view of “young mothers and their children” on the crossing will increase “loneliness of the elderly”.
Resident of Orchard Street, Dorchester	Objects to the proposal. Can understand the reason for the right turn from Prince of Wales Road being banned but not the left turn in. Doesn't like puffin crossings and doesn't think this is the best solution for pedestrian safety.
Resident of Copper Crescent, Dorchester	Is concerned at the expenditure which he considers is unnecessary. Is also concerned that the alternative route via Culliford Road is unsuitable for the additional traffic.

- 4.3 The responses consist of one objection and two expressions of concern about possible effects of the proposals.
- 4.4 The objector gives no specific reasons for the objection. The objector recognises that there is an advantage for pedestrians if the crossing is relocated and agrees the reasoning for banning right turns out of Prince of Wales Road, but cannot understand the reason for banning left turns into Prince of Wales Road. The objector seems to think that the relocation of the crossing and banning of turns is intended to provide some form of traffic improvement.
- 4.5 The objector is also opposed to the use of puffin technology and prefers the old style pelican crossings.
- 4.6 The respondent from Copper Crescent considered that the expenditure was unnecessary. The respondent was also concerned at the suitability of Culliford Road as an alternative route, noting that they considered turning into it off South Walks Road as difficult and right turns out of it as dangerous.
- 4.7 The respondent from Southfield House supported the use of puffin technology, but raised the following concerns: -
- additional car fumes at their flat;
  - loss of grass verge on the corner of Prince of Wales Road and South Walks Road;
  - delays to traffic;
  - potential littering;
  - insufficient space for pedestrians to wait;
  - loss of view of the crossing increasing “loneliness of the elderly”;
  - the money could be better spent elsewhere, e.g. to provide better pedestrian facilities at Maumbury Cross.

## 5 DCC Comment on Representations

- 5.1 The design rules for signal controlled pedestrian crossings require that they should not be placed within 20 metres of a junction where vehicles can turn onto the crossing. This is a safety measure so that a vehicle can complete its manoeuvre and stop safely at the crossing. In order to relocate the crossing, it is therefore necessary to ban right turns out of Prince of Wales Road.
- 5.2 To achieve a crossing as close as possible to the direct pedestrian route, as requested by consultees, the radius of the left turn from South Walks Road into Prince of Wales Road has to be substantially reduced and this would make it difficult for small vehicles and impossible for larger vehicles to make this manoeuvre safely. It is for this reason that the left turn is proposed to be banned.
- 5.3 An option for the crossing location which did not require the left turn into Prince of Wales Road to be banned was considered during development of the design, but was rejected by the Local Member Led Project Working Group because of its effect on the setting of the war memorial and the lack of directness of the link into South Street.
- 5.4 Pelican crossings became obsolete when new traffic signs regulations came into force in 2016. There is no longer an option to introduce a pelican crossing. All new or amended signal controlled pedestrian crossings must use puffin equipment. Existing pelican crossings may only be 'maintained in obsolescence' until they are replaced by puffin crossings.
- 5.5 The majority of expenditure on this scheme comprises maintenance work, involving renewal of equipment at four pedestrian crossings (Trinity Street, Great Western Road, Prince of Wales Road and South Walks Road). All of these have been kept in operation well beyond their normal service life and are due for renewal. During the renewal of the South Walks Road crossing the opportunity is being taken to relocate it to the most appropriate location for the current and anticipated future usage.
- 5.6 The number of vehicles undertaking the turns proposed to be banned is small (on average about 10 vehicles per hour turn right into South Walks Road and about 15 vehicles per hour make the opposing left turn manoeuvre). If all of these divert onto Culliford Road (which currently carries less than half of the flow on Prince of Wales Road) the daily flow would increase by only about 15%. It is difficult to ascertain the origins and destinations of this traffic, but it is not unreasonable to assume that most of it comes from or goes to Acland Road, as there are other, more direct routes to/from origins and destinations further east. Therefore, most of the displaced traffic using Culliford Road is likely to either turn right into it or left out of it and there is unlikely to be any increase in traffic turning right from Culliford Road onto South Walks Road, which the respondent considers a dangerous manoeuvre.
- 5.7 Air quality in the vicinity of Southfield House is affected by traffic queuing in both directions at the crossing and also from queues as a result of traffic turning right into Trinity Street or Great Western Road. Air quality assessment previously undertaken does not show any localised change in air quality in the very immediate vicinity of pedestrian crossings. The relocation of the crossing is unlikely to have any significant impact on air quality in the vicinity of the property concerned and the level of pollutants will remain well below a level that would be any cause for concern. This has been confirmed by West Dorset District Council's Public Health Team and a copy of this is detailed in Appendix 3.

- 5.8 Some of the grassed area on the corner of Prince of Wales Road and South Walks Road will be lost, to provide footway access to the new pedestrian crossing, but a substantial part of it will remain and the flower bed within it will be unaffected.
- 5.9 The reduction in queuing length for vehicles approaching the new crossing from Weymouth Avenue may cause some vehicles wishing to turn right into Prince of Wales Road to be delayed, but the impact is likely to be small. One of the benefits of the Puffin technology to be used in the new crossing is that traffic can be held for longer, if necessary, to allow less active pedestrians to finish crossing the road. However, the technology also cancels a crossing request if the pedestrian decides not to cross, or crosses before the signals have changed in his/her favour. Overall any impact on traffic capacity should be small.
- 5.10 If littering occurs the provision of bins will be rationalised.
- 5.11 The proposed crossing will be slightly wider than the existing and there should be adequate space for pedestrians to wait.
- 5.12 The revised location of the crossing will be significantly more direct for pedestrians walking between South Street and Brewery Square or Prince of Wales Road, without disadvantaging those wanting to cross and proceed eastward on South Walks Road. This should improve safety by reducing the number of road crossings pedestrians will undertake and reducing numbers of pedestrians crossing away from a controlled crossing.
- 5.13 The DTEP project includes various elements to improve pedestrian priority and freedom amongst which is a scheme to improve pedestrian facilities at Maumbury Cross.

## **6 Conclusion**

- 6.1 The DTEP scheme has been developed as a result of the response to public consultation undertaken in Autumn 2013 and subsequent member led community liaison work in 2014.
- 6.2 Having considered the representations submitted, concerns raised have been mitigated or responded to as detailed in section 5.
- 6.3 The Highway Improvements team considers that the proposed measures are necessary in order to realise the scheme objectives of: - increasing pedestrian priority and freedom; and improving access for the elderly and disabled.

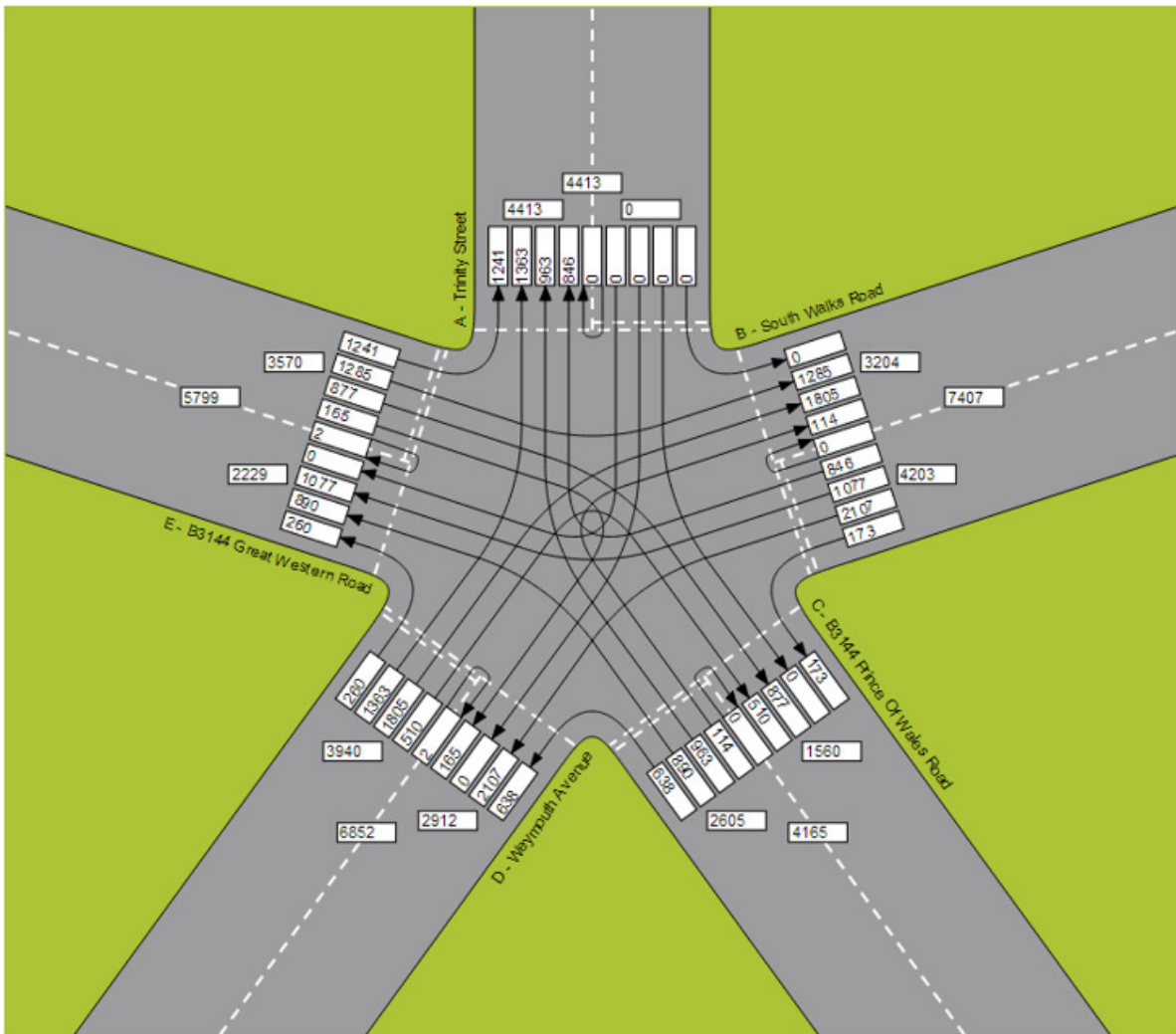
**Andrew Martin**

Service Director Highways & Emergency Planning

February 2017

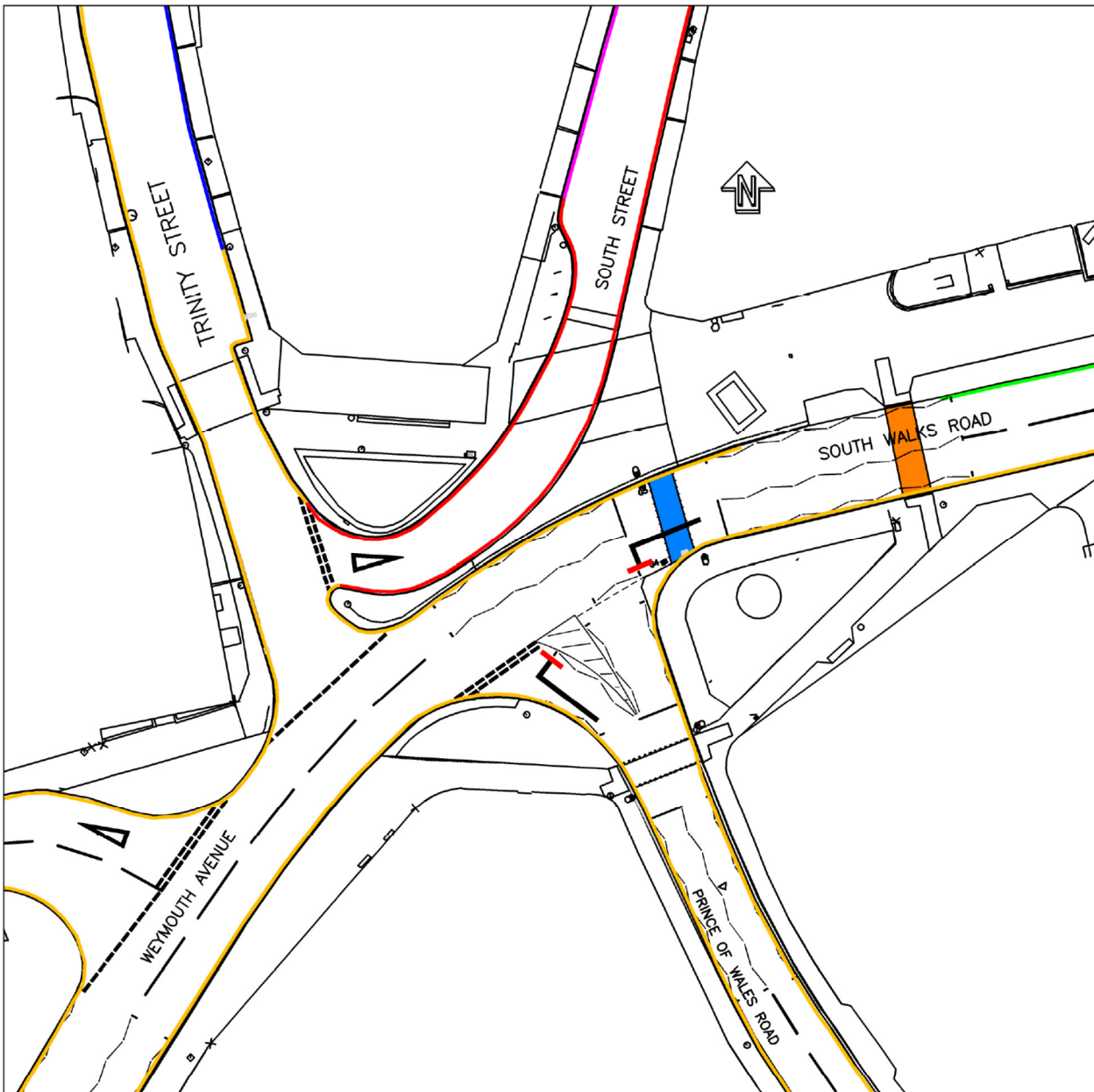


### Appendix 1 – Results of Traffic Survey



12-hour Traffic Flows (7am to 7pm) 4 October 2011

### Appendix 2 – Consultation Plan Showing Proposed Banned Movements



KEY			
	New puffin crossing		Proposed banned turning movements
	Existing pelican crossing to be removed		No waiting between hours of 10:30am and 4:30pm
			No waiting at any time except Taxis
			Existing no loading or unloading between the hours of 9:30am and 4:30pm
			Existing no waiting at any time
			Existing no waiting between the hours of 8am to 6pm, Monday to Saturday

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 <b>Dorset County Council</b> ENVIRONMENT AND THE ECONOMY DIRECTORATE Mike Harries Director for Environment and the Economy	Project Title DORCHESTER TRANSPORTATION AND ENVIRONMENT PLAN			C 06Jan17 Key Amended EVB B 04Jan17 Notes and Key amended EVB A 16MAR16 Presentational Changes PHH
	Drawing Title SOUTHGATE JUNCTION TRAFFIC REGULATION ORDER			
DORSET HIGHWAYS Andrew Martin Head of Dorset Highways	Scale (A4 Size)	Drawn	Date	Rev Date Issue / Remarks Checked
	1:500	ATG	06Jan17	
Drawing Number HI1087/03/01/C			Drawing Status -	

## Appendix 3 – West Dorset District Council Air Quality Response

**Emma Baker**

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**From:** Coralie McGown <CMcGown@dorset.gov.uk>  
**Sent:** 21 February 2017 11:37  
**To:** Emma Baker  
**Subject:** TRO South Gate Junction

Dear Emma

Thank you for asking for an air quality response in relation to the proposed TRO at South Gate Junction in Dorchester.

The nearest locations where West Dorset District Council undertake monitoring for nitrogen dioxide are Great Western Road, and Trinity Street. These are considered to be areas where pollutants associated with traffic would be harder to disperse due to the topography of tall buildings either side and in close proximity of the road. Monitoring indicates levels of nitrogen dioxide well within prescribed levels (the Air Quality Objective of an annual mean of 40µg/m<sup>3</sup>). Monitoring is carried out on the façade of properties, 2m from the source (traffic).

It is understood a resident from Southfield House has concerns about the alterations reducing air quality within the area outside of the flats. The façade of Southfield House is approximately 15m from the source and the area's topography would enable circulation of air and subsequent dispersal of pollutants. Because we know there is a significant drop-off in levels the further back from the source we look, monitoring is undertaken usually within 2.5m of sources – the two locations mentioned above have annual means of:

Location / Year	2013	2014	2015	2016
Great Western Rd	31.9	28.9	28	27.9*
Trinity Street	32.3	30	31.1	29*

\*2016 data not adjusted for bias and will alter

Our considerations for monitoring take into account of the length of time persons are regularly present and are likely to be exposed for a period of time appropriate to the averaging period of the air quality objective. We must review outdoor locations where members of the public might reasonably be expected to spend one hour or longer (parks, residential gardens, cafes within town centres etc.). Areas such as these around the South Gate Junction area, are a significant distance from the source, and the proposals would not impact upon persons wishing to spend time there.

Therefore, it is West Dorset District Council's opinion that the air quality would not be adversely impacted by the proposed TRO at South Gate Junction.

Regards

**Coralie McGown**  
**Team Leader - Public Health**

**Dorset Councils Partnership serving:**

North Dorset District Council, West Dorset District Council and Weymouth & Portland Borough Council

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