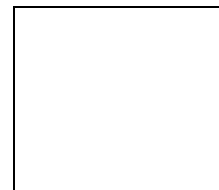


Agenda Item:

Regulatory Committee



Dorset County Council



Date of Meeting	06 April 2017
Officer	Andrew Martin – Head of Highways
Subject of Report	Dorchester Transport and Environment Plan (DTEP) Proposed Access Only Order in Victoria Road
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. 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 Dorchester Transport and Environment Plan (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 obsolete signal equipment at Great Western Cross and improvement of the junction to provide for controlled pedestrian crossing facilities on all major arms. 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 provide the pedestrian crossing facilities at Great Western Cross without adversely affecting the traffic capacity of the junction it was necessary to prohibit certain traffic movements, but these could have led to increased traffic in Victoria Road as drivers sought to find an easy alternative to the banned turns. For this reason a ban on right turns from Damers Road into Victoria Road was included. Following advertising of the prohibition of turns, objections and representations were received. Most of the</p>

	<p>objections were from residents of Victoria Road who were concerned at the potential increase in traffic and/or opposed to the right-turn ban as a means of controlling traffic.</p> <p>Given the concerns expressed by residents, it was agreed to progress an access only order for Victoria Road, Westover Road, Albert Road (west of Cornwall Road) and St Helen’s Road and to revoke the ban on right turns into Victoria Road, following which three of the objections were withdrawn.</p> <p>Following advertising of the proposed access only order, one objection and three expressions of support have been received. This report considers that objection and the expressions of support and whether the proposed prohibition of access should be implemented as advertised.</p>
<p>Impact Assessment:</p>	<p>Equalities Impact Assessment:</p> <p>An equalities impact assessment for DTEP was carried out in 2014. This 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 at Great Western Cross seek to introduce new pedestrian crossings which will particularly benefit the young, elderly, infirm and disabled. This order is in support of the works at Great Western Cross.</p> <p>Use of Evidence:</p> <p>Traffic surveys and modelling, public consultation and support of Local Members, Town and District Councils and the Police.</p> <p>Budget:</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 is approximately £10,000, including design and preparation costs, which will be met from the budget for the works at Great Western Cross.</p> <p>Risk Assessment:</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: LOW</p>

Recommendation	That having considered the objections received, Cabinet be recommended to approve the proposed prohibition of access as advertised.
Reason for Recommendation	The proposals should deter inappropriate use of a quiet residential street by unsuitable through traffic.
Appendices	Appendix 1 - Consultation Plan Showing Extent of Proposed Restriction
Background Papers	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. The responses to the Order Public Advertisement as outlined in Para 4.2 are available to view in the Members Room.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.
Report Originator and Contact	Name: Paul Hannam Tel: 01305 225325 Email: p.l.hannam@dorsetcc.gov.uk

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. 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.
- 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 obsolete signal equipment at Great Western Cross and improvement of the junction to provide for controlled pedestrian crossing facilities on all major arms. The design would also make allowance for the Poundbury link in the Dorchester Local Cycle Network to be easily accommodated when it is completed.
- 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 the various locations identified in the revised DTEP project.
- 1.5 In order to provide pedestrian crossing facilities at Great Western Cross without adversely affecting the traffic capacity of the junction it was necessary to prohibit certain traffic movements, but these could have led to increased traffic in Victoria Road as drivers sought to find an easy alternative to the banned turns. For this reason a ban on right turns from Damers Road into Victoria Road was included.
- 1.6 Following advertising of the prohibition of turns, objections and representations were received. Most of the objections were from residents of Victoria Road who were concerned at the potential increase in traffic and/or opposed to the right-turn ban as a means of controlling traffic.
- 1.7 Given the concerns expressed by residents, it was agreed to progress an access only order for Victoria Road, Westover Road, Albert Road (west of Cornwall Road) and St Helen's Road and to revoke the ban on right turns into Victoria Road, following which three of the objections were withdrawn.
- 1.8 The proposed prohibition of access was advertised for public consultation on 2 February 2017. The objection period closed on 24 February, during which one objection and three expressions of support were received. This report considers that objection and the expressions of support and whether the proposed prohibition of access should be implemented as advertised.
- 1.9 The Director for Environment and Economy had declared a personal interest in the scheme put to consultation, the subsequent Cabinet decisions and the proposals now being considered, because he lives on a road that could be impacted by 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 Work to replace the traffic signal equipment at Great Western Cross commenced on 15 January 2017 and the turning ban order was made on 20 January 2017.
- 2.2 A survey was undertaken to record traffic using Victoria Road between 27 October and 9 November 2016 inclusive. This will be repeated in Autumn 2017 for comparison purposes and further monitoring will be undertaken if this shows a significant increase.
- 2.3 Monitoring of any through traffic will be relatively simple as an observer located at the junction of Albert Road and Victoria Road is able to view traffic entering/leaving the route at both the Cornwall Road and Damers Road junctions.
- 2.4 With regard to enforcement of the proposed ban the police response to the primary consultation noted that “police enforcement of the proposal would be as standard and obviously prioritised with general policing duties”.

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 preventing the use of the roads by vehicular traffic in a manner which is unsuitable having regard to the existing character of the roads or adjoining property;

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 have been four responses to the public consultation process, which are summarised below.

Respondent and Address	Summary of Response
Resident of Albert Road, Dorchester	Objects to order, because she considers it will be “unenforceable” so that traffic now banned from turning right from Great Western Road into Cornwall Road will use Victoria Road instead.
Resident of Victoria Road, Dorchester	Supports the proposal.
Resident of Victoria Road, Dorchester	Supports the proposal.
Resident of Victoria Road, Dorchester	Supports the proposal, as a first step to deterring traffic from ‘rat-running’ through Victoria Road.

- 4.3 The responses consist of 1 objection and 3 expressions of support, all of whom live on the roads affected by the order.
- 4.4 The objector and one of the supporters are concerned that the presence of the order might be insufficient to deter through traffic.

5 DCC Comment on Representations

- 5.1 The objector is opposed to the proposal because she fears that the access only order will not be enforced and therefore prefers the existing right-turn ban as a means of deterring through traffic. However, the access only order, if fully observed, would prevent through traffic in both directions, whilst the right-turn ban can only reduce northbound through traffic. Both the right-turn ban and the access only order would be enforceable by the police and enforcement will therefore depend on prioritisation with other policing duties.
- 5.2 It has already been agreed that when the works at Great Western Cross are complete and traffic has had a period to “normalise”, monitoring will be undertaken to assess whether the residents’ fears of additional traffic in Victoria Road are being realised. If a problem is identified then its nature will be assessed and measures to deal with it put forward.
- 5.3 It should be noted that when the Great Western Cross Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) was advertised in February 2016, the major cause for concern was a potential increase in traffic flow in Victoria Road. At that time, three of the fourteen objections received were conditionally withdrawn when it was agreed that an access only order for Victoria Road would be progressed. One of the people who withdrew their objection now supports this proposal as a first step to deterring through traffic. One of the other supporters of this proposal also objected to the Great Western Cross TRO, but did not withdraw the objection.

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 The current proposal to ban all motor vehicles from Victoria Road, Westover Road, Albert Road (west of Cornwall Road) and St Helen’s Road except for access was introduced to mitigate the main concerns raised to the Great Western Cross TRO.
- 6.3 Having considered the representations submitted, the concerns raised has been responded to as described in section 5.
- 6.4 The Highway Improvements team considers that the proposed measures are necessary in order to deal with concerns raised by residents during consultation regarding Great Western Cross and to meet assurances given to those residents.
- 6.5 It is recommended that the Committee recommend to Cabinet that the order be implemented as advertised.

Andrew Martin
Head of Highways
March 2016

Appendix 1 – Consultation Plan Showing Extent of Proposed Restriction

