

**TRAFFIC REGULATION ORDER OBJECTIONS ASSOCIATED WITH
(HOGSDEN LEYS, ST NEOTS) (PROHIBITION OF DRIVING)
EXPERIMENTAL ORDER 2017**

To: **Assistant Director Highways and the Local
Member(s) representing electoral division below.**

Meeting Date: **9th November 2018**

From: **Executive Director: Place and Economy**

*Electoral
division(s):* **Local Member representing St Neots East and
Gransden**

Forward Plan ref: **N/A** *Key decision:* **No**

Purpose: **To determine the objections to the (Hogsden Leys,
St Neots) (Prohibition of Driving) Experimental
Order 2017.**

Recommendation: **a) Implement the restrictions as amended
b) Inform the objectors accordingly**

<i>Officer contact:</i>	
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1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1** Loves Farm is situated just 15 miles west of Cambridge and a short distance from the River Great Ouse. (Appendix 1). Hogsden Leys is situated at the northern end of the development (Appendix 2).
- 1.2** The northern access was restricted to buses and cycles through the use of a 'bus gate' which incorporated rising bollards, in addition, although not designed as an emergency access, emergency vehicles could gain access through the bus gate if they are fitted with a transponder. However both the Police and the Fire Service confirmed that they rarely if ever used this access.
- 1.3** Since its installation there have been numerous requests to permanently open the northern access to general traffic. It is the Council's opinion that if Hogsden Leys were open for all to use it would increase the potential for collisions between vehicles and vulnerable road users as forward visibility is severely restricted and engineering difficulties make it impossible to provide a footway. As identified by the safety audit 808 dated 10th July 2009.
- 1.4** The bus gate forms part of the planning permission for the development and is the reason that there are two junctions onto Cambridge Road which were created as part of the planned access strategy for Love's Farm, it was never intended to be opened for general traffic.
- 1.5** The rising bollards in Cambridge are being phased out as the technology is ageing and they are becoming increasingly expensive to maintain. Therefore, given that Local bus services do not use the bus gate into Loves Farm, CCC sought to permanently close the route, except for pedestrians and cyclist.
- 1.6** Following concerns raised by residents regarding emergency access, a residents meeting was held on 7th August 2017 where it was agreed that, a gate with a padlock would be installed that can be used by the emergency services at any time, despite this not being their designated route for accessing any part of the development.

2. TRO PROCESS

- 2.1** The Experimental TRO procedure is a statutory consultation process that requires the Highway Authority to advertise in the local press and on-street a public notice detailing the proposal and the reasons for it. The advert provides the public with the opportunity to formally object to the proposals in writing within a six month notice period.
- 2.2** An experimental order is like a permanent traffic regulation order in that it is a legal document which imposes traffic and parking restrictions such as road closures, controlled parking and other parking regulations indicated by double or single yellow line etc. The Experimental Traffic Order can also be used to change the way existing restrictions function.

An Experimental Traffic Order is made under Sections 9 and 10 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984. An experimental order can only stay in force for a maximum of 18 months while the effects are monitored and assessed. Changes can be made during the first six months of the experimental period to any of the restrictions if necessary, before the Council decides whether or not to continue with the changes brought in by the experimental order on a permanent basis.

- 2.3** The TRO was advertised in the Hunts Post on the 19th July 2017 and came into operation on 26th July 2017. The statutory consultation period ran from the 19th of July 2017 until the 26th January 2018.
- 2.4** 28 comments were received (4 of which have been resolved by the provision for emergency access). The grounds on which the remaining 20 were made have been summarised in the table in Appendix 4 with officer comments alongside them. 4 expressions of support were also received. The traffic management officer for the police had no objection to the proposal.
- 2.5** This proposal will prevent the use of the bus gate, except by pedestrians, cyclists and emergency services, it is recommended that Order be made permanent to prevent the likelihood of collisions between vehicles and vulnerable road users.

3 ALIGNMENT WITH CORPORATE PRIORITIES

- 3.1 Developing the local economy for the benefit of all**
There are no significant implications for this priority.
- 3.2 Helping people live healthy and independent lives**
There are no significant implications for this priority.
- 3.3 Supporting and protecting vulnerable people**
There are no significant implications for this priority.

4 SIGNIFICANT IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 Resource Implications**
The necessary staff resources and funding have been met by Cambridgeshire County Council.
- 4.2 Statutory, Risk and Legal Implications**
The statutory process for this proposal has been followed.
- 4.3 Equality and Diversity Implications**
There are no significant implications within this category.
- 4.4 Engagement and Consultation Implications**
The statutory consultees have been engaged including County and District Councilors, the Police and the Emergency Services.

Notices were placed in the local press and were also displayed on the road where it is proposed to implement the restrictions. The proposal was available to view in the offices of Vantage House and the reception area of Shire Hall.

4.5 Localism and Local Member Involvement

The County Councillor does not support the consultation on the experimental traffic order 2017 for the Prohibition of traffic on Hogsden Leys St Neots for the following reasons:

Given the large developments coming to St Neots East and Wintringham Park I do not feel that permanently closing an access which acts as the sole access road through Loves Farm is prudent. No feasibility study or traffic modelling has been undertaken to support the permanent closure of this access.

St Neots is the largest growing community in the district/county and ease of traffic flow should be encouraged not discouraged.

There is misunderstanding amongst residents regarding this access as an emergency access and residents perceive the access gives quicker access to the Loves Farm development by emergency vehicles. Allowing emergency vehicles free access through this northern access is of paramount importance to the community and must be upheld.

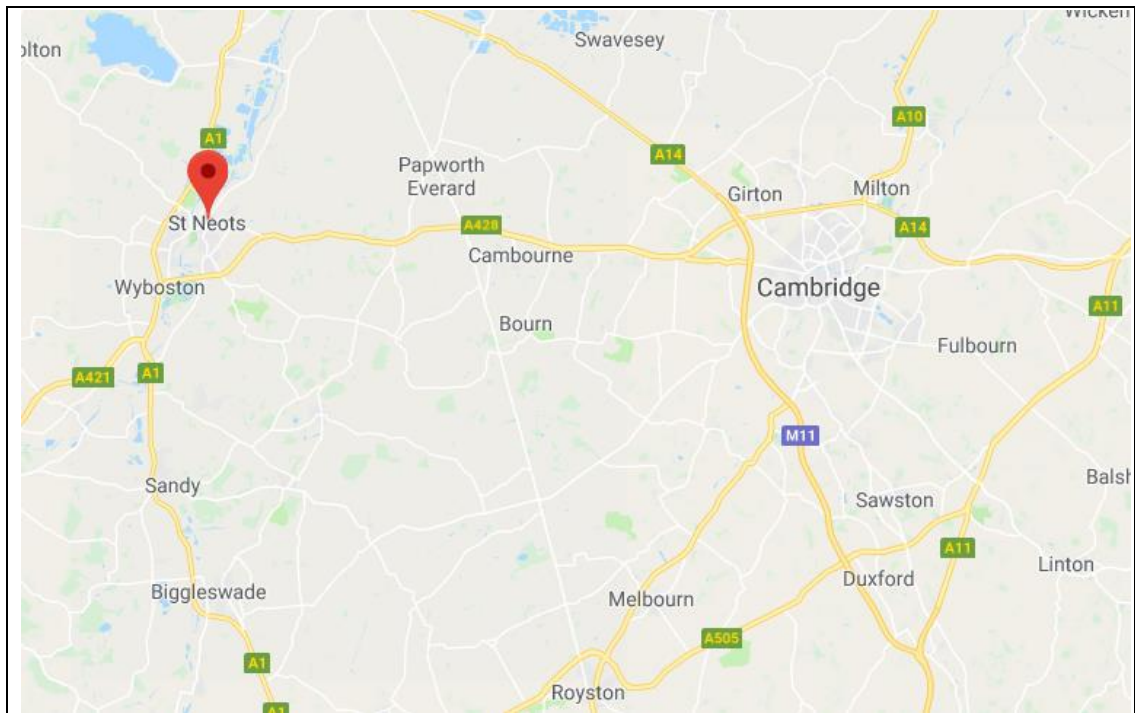
Implementing an experimental traffic order which gives the county council the right to take action and then consult with residents on the outcome which has already been put in place does not feel democratic or consultative.

4.6 Public Health Implications

There are no significant implications within this category.

Source Documents	Location
Consultation responses Draft Traffic Regulation Order Letters of objection Safety Audit ref: G526/safety audits/808	Vantage House Vantage Park Washingley Road Huntingdon PE29 6SR

Appendix 1 – Location of St Neots relative to Cambridge



Appendix 2 – Location of the bus gate in Hogsden Leys



Appendix 4

No	Objection	Officer's Comments
1	A light allowing one way flow across the northern bridge should be installed.	Making the route one way would not be possible as this is the only access/egress for specialised machinery used by the land owner to farm the arable land adjacent to Loves Farm. This proposal is beyond the scope of the current scheme.
2	Opening the Northern access could improve traffic flow on the estate. (15 similar comments)	It is the Council's opinion that if Hogsden Leys were open for all to use it would increase the potential for collisions between vehicles and vulnerable road users as forward visibility is severely restricted and engineering difficulties make it impossible to provide a footway. This proposal is beyond the scope of the current scheme.
3	<p>Although there are two entrances on the south of Love's Farm, this narrows to one on Great High Ground – any traffic in the north (east and west) of Love's Farm can ONLY use Great High Ground to enter / leave the estate. If there is a blockage (as there was recently with the road resurfacing but also with an emergency, car breakdown, large stationary vehicle etc) there is no other means of access.</p> <p>Due to over capacity at the Round House School, many parents living at the top of the estate have been unsuccessful in getting their children into the local school and are having to drive their children to Priory Infants and Juniors which involves them driving all the way through the estate an adds on at least 5 minutes to the journey – at a time when there are lots of children on the roads and pavements.</p> <p>Without this access, there are only two means of entry / egress to Love's Farm, both on the south side. This is extremely unhelpful in terms of Love's Farm integrating</p>	<p>Access for emergency vehicles will be maintained via a gate with a padlock.</p> <p>The Movement Strategy which accompanied the planning application clearly showed this access being restricted to buses and cycles, there has never been any suggestion that it will be opened to other traffic. This proposal is beyond the scope of the current scheme.</p> <p>As above</p>

	<p>with St Neots more widely. There is already a 'them and us' situation which is not helped by the lack of physical connection.</p> <p>The masterplan for Love's Farm East shows a bus route which uses the Northern Access. It is imperative that Love's Farm East has sustainable transport options to reduce car use, and yet this bus route cannot function if the gate is closed.</p>	<p>.</p> <p>Local bus services are not currently using the bus gate into Loves Farm.</p>
4	<p>Allowing access via the bus gate with camera controlled access and traffic lights (this allows emergency vehicle access)</p> <p>Traffic lights could allow one way traffic only or be phased depending on time of day, for example egress from the estate in the morning and access in the evening (note in this case the traffic lights would replace the bollards)</p> <p>Add traffic lights covering the bridge to overcome the safe pedestrian route issues raised (which I agree with) and install a mini-roundabout on Priory Hill – there is sufficient public land to do this</p> <p>Allow two way traffic over the bridge (cars / motorbikes only with an exception for access to the farm – this could be controlled with cameras into the estate) and install a separate pedestrian / cycle bridge over the train line</p> <p>Opening or allowing some traffic flow via the top end of the estate would be beneficial towards reducing pollution in general by cutting traffic travel time (as an example if travelling towards Huntingdon Street from the top of the estate access via the bus gate can reduce travel by 10 minutes) which must be in the public interest</p>	<p>Access for emergency vehicles will be maintained via a gate with a padlock.</p> <p>The estimated cost (Assuming provision of traffic signals only) is £150,000 additionally, Railtrack will not accept any civils works on the existing bridge deck which would cause significant design issues.</p> <p>As above</p> <p>St Neots is not within a civil enforcement area therefore camera enforcement cannot be operated by Cambridgeshire County Council.</p> <p>It is the Council's opinion that if Hogsden Leys were open for all to use it would increase the potential for collisions between vehicles and vulnerable road users as forward visibility is severely restricted. This proposal is beyond the scope of the current scheme.</p>

	<p>Reducing pollution on Love's Farm by reducing the amount of traffic travelling through the estate</p> <p>Reducing congestion through the estate (caused through the poor road design and traffic calming measure which did not take into account poor parking)</p> <p>Allowing prompt and immediate emergency services access to the top of the estate (a delay of 5 minutes due to increased travel time could be life changing)</p>	<p>Love's Farm Community Association have submitted an application for parking restrictions to reduce obstruction by cars parked in unsafe places, and improve traffic flow through the Estate and Officers are currently working with the association to design an appropriate scheme.</p> <p>Access for emergency vehicles will be maintained via a gate with a padlock.</p>
5	Objection to the making permanent of the Experimental Order until a comprehensive feasibility and impact assessment is undertaken	There is currently no funding to investigate any potential solutions.
6.	Could be a useful link for buses in future	Local bus services are not currently using the bus gate into Loves Farm. The cost of maintaining the rising bollards to facilitate possible future use is not cost effective.

No	Support	Officer's Comments
1	Under no circumstances should the northern access be opened permanently. The north of the estate is quiet and we do not want through traffic.	Noted
2	As a resident of Field Gate Close, I'm happy for the access to be only for emergency vehicles and cycles; I like the quiet road so would prefer not all motorists to have	Noted
3	I fully agree that there should not be vehicle access to Loves Farm from Priory Hill Road, especially as you mentioned that the emergency services will not use this access route and of course there is no longer a bus service to Loves Farm using the bus gate	Noted
4	I am strongly against this gate being opened to road traffic from the	Noted

	public, on either a permanent or temporary basis. We chose this location to buy a house because of the great appeal from the fact that this is in effect a large cul-de-sac, with no through-traffic, which means the roads are much quieter than they would otherwise be, and therefore safer and much less noisy to raise a young family.	
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