

Appendix 1 - Prior consideration of proposals for a modal filter on Mill Road bridge

In June 2020, a Bus Gate was installed on Mill Road railway bridge with the aim of encouraging sustainable travel whilst enabling social distancing during the Covid-19 pandemic. It was implemented under an Experimental Traffic Regulation Order (ETRO) and restricted vehicular traffic over the bridge, except for buses and emergency vehicles, and allowed cyclists and pedestrians. Enforcement was undertaken using Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) cameras. Feedback from the statutory objection period and a separate public survey showed a mixed response from the public on whether or not to make the ETRO permanent.

On 27 July 2021 the [Highways and Transport Committee resolved to remove the Bus Gate restriction](#) but to then undertake a full review and public consultation on the options, and on the use of Mill Road.

On 4 November 2021, the [Highways and Transport Committee resolved to agree to a further consultation on the Mill Road bridge bus gate and ask GCP to carry it out](#) within the context of its City Access proposals.

The [GCP public consultation](#) on Mill Road sought to demonstrate how proposals for Mill Road would work with the City Access strategy, achieve the widest possible exposure of proposals through a multi-channel approach, and provide assurance of the public consultation process. The consultation was carried out in Spring 2022 and included focus group meetings with key stakeholders and a public survey between 7 February and 21 March. 1,986 responses were received in total, with a large amount of qualitative feedback, including responses from a number of different groups and organisations.

Findings from the Spring 2022 GCP consultation

Key findings of the GCP public consultation included:

- 54% of 1,962 respondents indicated 'congestion' was the most important issue affecting the way they use Mill Road. Other issues included pavements (17%), speeding (14%), parking (12%).
- 77% of 1,974 respondents opposed 'Theme 1: Do nothing' whilst 83% supported 'Theme 2: Improve the quality of the place' and 77% supported 'Theme 3: Changes to traffic and access in the medium and long term'.
- 72% of 1,975 respondents supported restricting motor vehicles from crossing Mill Road bridge and 70% supported possible allowances for buses, taxis and drivers with disabilities and/or mobility needs.

Respondents to the public consultation clearly supported a re-instatement of the Mill Road modal filter but with important caveats such as allowing exemptions for disabled people and taxis. They also supported improvements to the public realm, walking, cycling and local parking along Mill Road.

Consideration of the GCP review by Committee

A report on the GCP review and consultation review was provided to the [Highways and Transport Committee at its 12 July 2022 meeting](#). The Committee duly approved the recommendations to:

- consult on a TRO to reinstate the modal filter on Mill Road,
- to consult on exemptions to the TRO, including disabled people and taxis,
- to work with the Combined Authority and GCP to develop a public realm improvement scheme along Mill Road,
- to monitor and review traffic levels in surrounding streets should the modal filter be reintroduced, and
- continue to work with GCP on the Network Hierarchy Review of Cambridge's road network.

Advertisement and consideration of the Mill Road bridge TRO

The Mill Road Bus Gate TRO was subsequently advertised on 28 November 2022. The TRO would restrict vehicular traffic over the railway bridge, but with a greater number of exemptions than the earlier Bus Gate scheme: local buses, cyclists, pedestrians, taxis / Private Hire Vehicles, blue badge holder's registered vehicles, and authorised vehicles would all be exempt. The TRO notice period then followed, from 28 November 2022 to 6 January 2023.

The Policy and Regulation team received 690 objections (and also 291 comments supporting the TRO) from both individuals and different groups and organisations.

Of the representations received in response to the 2022/23 statutory consultation:

- 374 objections provided no rationale; similarly of the 291 supportive comments, 47 did not provide a rationale.
- 316 objections and 244 supportive comments were submitted with detailed feedback.

On 7 March 2023, a [report detailing the representations received during the TRO notice period](#) was considered by the Highways and Transport Committee. The Committee duly agreed the recommendation to approve the proposed modal filter on Mill Road bridge, as advertised.

Following committee approval, from 8 March 2023, blue badge holders were able to register up to two vehicles for exemption from the Mill Road restriction via an online application form. This exemption related solely to the Mill Road bus gate if and when implemented and did not grant any rights of transit through other bus gates or traffic restrictions. 396 registration forms were received.

As explained below, the 2023 TRO was quashed and is of no legal effect. No weight should be given to the decision taken in March 2023 and the matter should be considered entirely afresh.

Legal challenge

In July 2023, the 2023 TRO was challenged in the courts and as a result the County Council agreed in August 2023 not to implement the TRO and any of the planned changes until the legal case was resolved.

In August 2024, Cambridgeshire County Council agreed with the claimant to end the legal proceedings in relation to the Mill Road Traffic Regulation Order challenge by consenting to judgment on the grounds that providing a link to the officer's report and decision summary was not adequate to comply with regulations 7 and 17 of the Local Authorities' Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996 (the 1996 Regulations) in the circumstances of that case. The Court therefore quashed the 2023 TRO.