

Statement of Reasons

Proposed Experimental Bus Gate, Prohibition of Driving, Waiting Restrictions, One Way Traffic Flows and Weight Restriction Cheltenham Transport Plan Phase 4 Amendment Cheltenham

Proposals

A Cabinet recommendation was made on the 23rd July 2015 to implement Cheltenham Transport Plan using a phased approach as follows for installation:

- Phase 1: Albion Street
- Phase 2: Imperial Square and Oriel Road
- Phase 3: Royal Well
- Phase 4: A 'Boots Corner' experimental Order and trial scheme.

Following the implementation of Phases 1 – 3, Experimental Traffic Regulation Orders (ETROs) were introduced for the trial implementation of Phase 4. These TROs were as follows:

Experimental Order	Roads Affected
Bus Gate 10am – 6pm (with various vehicular exemptions)	Clarence Street, North Street
Prohibition of Driving (with various vehicular exemptions)	Clarence Street, High Street, Pittville Street, Promenade/Colonnade, Imperial Circus, Clarence Parade
One Way traffic flows	Clarence Street, Clarence Parade, Crescent Place
Waiting restrictions	Clarence Street, North Street, Pittville Street, High Street, Promenade/Colonnade, Imperial Circus, Clarence Parade

The first 6 months of the ETROs was used as a consultation period for members of the public to make any representations to any or all of the ETROs.

The key issues which were raised from the formal representations to the consultation were:

1. Traffic increases on other routes around the town and increases in journey time.
2. Requests for additional signage being required, for additional warning in advance of the restrictions ahead and re-directing along alternative routes.
3. Access issues for businesses on Clarence Parade and Clarence Street between Crescent Place and Clarence Parade.
4. Disabled Badge Holder access to some shops within the restricted area.

After consideration of these representations it has been decided to revise the experiment and introduce ETROs as per the table below. As a result of two-way traffic flows being introduced on Clarence Parade and a section of Clarence Street, the original one-way traffic flows ETRO on these streets will be abandoned.

Experimental Order	Roads Effected
Bus Gate (with various vehicular exemptions) (Amendment Order)	Clarence Street
Prohibition of Driving (with various vehicular exemptions) (Amendment Order)	Clarence Street, North Street, Pittville Street, High Street, Promenade/Colonnade, Imperial Circus.
Waiting restrictions (Amendment Order)	Clarence Street, North Street, Pittville Street, High Street, Promenade/Colonnade, Imperial Circus, Clarence Parade, Crescent Terrace, Post Office Lane, St Georges Place, Winchcombe Street
Weight Limit	St Georges Place, Clarence Street, Crescent Place, Clarence Parade

The revisions remove Clarence Parade and a section of Clarence Street from the Prohibition of Driving ETRO extents. This addresses the key issues raised around access to these roads. New two-way traffic flows on these roads further improve access around these roads.

The new ETRO arrangements and set up will provide a clearer access situation which motorists should understand better. This new arrangement and its associated signage should help address restriction understanding and signage issues which were raised.

The revisions include three additional disabled badge holder bays on Winchcombe Street, immediately north of the High Street. This new parking for disabled badge holders helps address concerns around access to town centre shops by providing additional parking for badge holders a short distance from popular shops.

Additional studies, which do not require any amendments to the TROs are being progressed to address comments regarding traffic increases on other routes.

Reasons

The County Council has a duty under section 122 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 when making TROs to consider the expeditious, convenient and safe movement of traffic and other traffic (including pedestrians) and the provision of suitable and adequate parking facilities on and off the highway. This requires the County Council to weigh up several factors when making a decision to proceed with a proposal. These include if applicable:

- The desirability of securing and maintaining reasonable access to premises;
- The effect on the amenities of any locality affected and (without prejudice to the generality of this paragraph) the importance of regulating and restricting roads by HGVs so as to preserve or improve the amenities of the area through which the road runs;
- The Air Quality Strategy for England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland (2007);
- The importance of facilitating the passage of public service vehicles and of securing the safety and convenience of persons using or desiring to use such vehicles;
- Any other matters appearing to the County Council to be relevant.

These proposals are being promoted under the provisions of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 which allows the Council to take measures under Section 1 for the following reasons:

- 1(1)(a) Avoiding danger to persons or other traffic using the road or any other road or for preventing the likelihood of any such danger arising;
- 1(1)(c) Facilitating the passage on the road or any other road of any class of traffic (including pedestrians);

- 1(1)(e) Preserving the character of the road in a case where it is specially suitable for use by persons on horseback or on foot;
- 1(1)(f) Preserving or improving the amenities of the area through which the road runs;
- 1(1)(g) Improving/maintaining air quality specified in paragraphs (a) to (c) of subsection (1) of section 87 of the Environment Act 1995.

For the reasons above the proposed ETROs will assist as part of the project known as the Cheltenham Transport Plan (CTP), which is a Cheltenham Borough Council (CBC) initiative to support the wider town centre vision. The objectives of CTP are:

- Create a more pleasant town centre environment – removal of through-traffic will allow opportunity to improve streets for pedestrians
- Encourage investment by creating the right conditions – retailers, restaurateurs and other service providers respond positively to reduced traffic flows
- Encourage people not to use their vehicles for unnecessary journeys, particularly short ones – evidence shows this to be a key change
- Remove through-traffic from the town centre – by identifying alternatives
- Allow the free movement of buses and other public service vehicles – more people use buses than cars in the town centre
- Allow two-way movements on streets thus reducing the need to follow the clockwise one-way system and promote cycling permeability – two-way traffic reduces traffic speed
- Allow shops to be serviced - many shops only have front access
- Reduce pollution – some areas of the town exceed European standards on pollution levels
- Contribute to health improvements by encouraging walking and cycling – recent data identifies inactivity as a major UK health problem.
- Protect the key features for which Cheltenham is renowned - so no new roads and no demolition work envisaged
- Remove some of the existing frustrations – allow motorists to access car parks as they arrive into the town

Funding for the CTP has previously obtained from the Local Sustainable Transport Fund (LSTF), DfT competitive funding programme which ran from 2011-2015. The LSTF's core objectives were to support the local economy and to reduce carbon emissions. In addition, the Fund aimed to deliver wider social and economic benefits (e.g. accessibility and inclusion); improve safety; improve air quality; and increase physical activity and the resulting health benefits

The CTP Phase 4 proposals support the CTP objectives, helping to improve bus reliability, help to remove some of the traffic from the town centre and help create a safer environment for pedestrians and cyclists.

Experimental TROs are being used to allow an assessment period of the changes and the effects they have on the town centre and surrounding road network, before deciding whether to implement the changes permanently, make further changes or abandon the changes altogether.

Traffic Signs Regulations & General Directions 2016

All signing and lining will be in accordance with the Traffic Signs Regulations & General Directions 2016.

Equality Act 2010

Thorough consideration was given to the equalities duty of the County Council under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010.

Statutory Consultation

Consultation was carried out with statutory consultees, with no objections received from The Police, Emergency Services, Freight Transport Association, Road Haulage Association or the local County Councillor.