



FORDER VALLEY

1. INTRODUCTION

This report seeks delegated authority to implement amendments to The City of Plymouth (Traffic Regulation and Street Parking Places) (Consolidation) Order 2004 & The City of Plymouth (Traffic Movement and Speed Limit Regulations) (Consolidation) Order 2022 in association with the Forder Valley TRO.

2. TRAFFIC REGULATION ORDERS REQUIRED

2.1 The elements that need a Traffic Regulation Order are as follows:

Clearway – No Stopping at Any Time:

- Blunt's Lane, all sides from its junction with Platinum Parkway for a distance of 31 metres in a north easterly direction
- Pintail Way, all sides from its junction with Platinum Parkway to a point 29 metres south of William Prance Road
- Platinum Parkway, all sides from a point 358 metres west of the junction with Blunts Lane to its junction with Pintail Way

No Waiting at Any Time:

- **Restricted Parking Zone** - Blunt's Lane, both sides from a point 31 metres north east of its junction with Platinum Parkway for a distance of 45 metres in a north easterly direction
- Peregrine Road, the south side from its junction with Pintail Way for a distance of 17 metres in an easterly direction
- Pintail Way, the east side from its junction with Peregrine Road for a distance of 25 metres in a southerly direction
- Pintail Way, the west side from its junction with William Prance Road for a distance of 29 metres in a southerly direction

School Keep Clear:

- Peregrine Road, the north side from a point 42 metres east of its junction with Pintail Way for a distance of 25.5 metres

Prohibition of 'U' turns:

- Peregrine Road - 23m east of Pintail Way
- Pintail Way - junction with Sandpiper Road

No right turn:

- Platinum Parkway – onto Forder Valley Road
- Forder Valley Road - onto Novorossiysk Road in straight ahead lane only (Right turn is allowed in the correct lane)

Bus Lane:

- Platinum Parkway - from a point 101 metres south of its junction with Sandpiper Road to its junction with Pintail Way
- William Prance Road - left slip lane to Brest Road for its entirety

- Pintail Way - ahead lane to Brest Road for its entirety
- Pintail Way - from Platinum Parkway to a point 106 metres from its junction with Sandpiper Road

Prohibition of Driving

- Blunts Lane - at a point 76 metres from its junction with Platinum Parkway

Apart of this advertisement also included new pedestrian crossings as set out below:

Notice is hereby given that Plymouth City Council, under section 23 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 (As amended); propose to install new controlled pedestrian crossings as detailed below:				
Crossing	Location	No. of Crossings	Controlled/Uncontrolled	Type
William Prance Road	Approx. 61 metres east of Buttercup Road	2	New, Controlled	Toucan
Brest Road	Approx. 18 metres north of Peregrine Road	2	New, Controlled	Zebra
Peregrine Road	Approx. 25 metres east of Pintail Way	1	New, Controlled	Zebra
Pintail Way	Approx. 41 metres north of Buttercup Road	2	New, Controlled	Toucan

3. STATUTORY CONSULTATION

Proposals

The proposals for the Forder Valley Scheme TRO were advertised on street, in the Herald and on the Plymouth City Council website on 24th February 2023. Details of the proposals were sent to the Councillors representing the affected wards and statutory consultees on 20th February 2023.

There have been 2 representations received relating to the proposals included in the Traffic Regulation Order.

Consultation Response	Comments/Response
I have recently become aware of your plans to erect two 'NO MOTOR VEHICLES' road traffic signs at the foot of Blunts Lane at the old Poole Farm end near the new Platinum Parkway junction with the purpose of preventing vehicles access to the lane beyond by use of bollards.	Thank you for your detailed letter and emails in response to the Blunts Lane Traffic Regulation Order consultation. Blunts Lane is considered a country lane and national guidance would advise that national speed limit is appropriate, as can

So far this road furniture is still to be put in place but for now a temporary barrier serves the same purpose there, and allows unfettered access by children, adults, families and cyclists, passage into the lane at this point, free to explore this ancient, narrow, enclosed on either side by high earth and stonebanks, dark and unlit, wonderful lane which acts as a conduit into the nearby Bircham Valley Nature Reserve or a direct route to Derriford and beyond.

Now compare this to the opposite (upper) end of the lane, where vehicles enter via Davy Road, near the Science Park and Derriford Hospital just off Derriford Road / Miller Way.

Forget that it might be one of the very few residents of Blunts Lane driving home in their car but a 'pressed for time - stressed out' delivery driver making a delivery in the lane and completely unaware of the role the lane plays in the life of not an insignificant number of local residents who utilise the lane, especially taking into account its recent change in social movement brought about by the very welcomed and hugely supported public consultation in favour of keeping the lane closed to 'Through Traffic' which I fully supported.

All that delivery driver sees as he/she enters the lane is a 30 mph and a 'NO THROUGH ROAD FOR VEHICLES' sign, no signs to warn of pedestrians or cyclists that are making their way up from the bottom end near Poole Farm having been drawn in there by the proposed signs saying: 'NO MOTOR VEHICLES' and a series of bollards thus putting the vulnerable pedestrian in direct conflict with potentially a 5-Tonne van! legally travelling at up to 30 mph. Add into the equation the time of year such as Autumn when the lane is covered in a blanket of thick rotting leaves which cause a vehicle to lock up their front wheels and skid forward into the banks under sudden braking or worse into a pedestrian who is encountered and cannot escape the confines of the lane due to the high banks.

Yes, granted . . . there are a series of newly erected posts throughout the lane fitted with the 30 mph speed limit (down from the previous, I am led to believe National Speed Limit) but would a group of children venturing into the lane for the first time, say, from the nearby housing estates of Egguckland or Fort Austin comprehend their significance when they have just passed through two signs clearly showing the symbols denoting 'NO MOTOR VEHICLES' at their entry point into Blunts Lane at the Poole Farm end.

Like these children that will surely arrive at some point in the present and future, I too explored this lane as a child

be seen with many thousands of other narrow rural lanes across the country.

However, feedback from the local community can also be considered and we received representations that the lane had been better for all road users since its temporary closure to through traffic and reduced 30mph speed limit. We therefore proceeded with the public consultation and subsequent Traffic Regulation Order consultations to make these two arrangements permanent.

We have seen no evidence that the lane is unsafe and should have been considered for a 20mph speed limit. There has been one slight injury collision on Blunts Lane in the last 10 years (which involved a car slipping on ice at low speed) and none in the period since the lane has been temporarily closed to through traffic with a 30mph speed limit and so there is no apparent safety issue on the lane.

The layout of Blunts Lane makes it very difficult to exceed 20mph on the most part but there are short wider sections and we also have to consider whether a speed limit is self-enforcing to avoid drivers regularly exceeding this and enforcement measures becoming a requirement.

The signing requirements for a 20mph speed limit would also be much greater than what is required for a 30mph speed limit and there is limited space to install additional infrastructure along the lane to support this without significant vegetation clearance and altering the Devon hedge bank.

It also goes without saying that road speeds are upper limits and drivers should always drive to the road conditions. Pedestrians should also follow the Highway Code and keep to the right-hand side of the road if there is no pavement, so that oncoming traffic can be seen. Extra care should always be taken on rural roads, with pedestrians being prepared to walk in single file (especially on narrow roads or in poor

among a group of children around the age of ten having cycled up from the Southway housing estate when Blunts Lane was really in the country, this was before Estover, Thornbury housing estates, before Derriford Hospital, Marjons, Science Park were built and Roborough Aerodrome was just a grass field and we played in the World War Two concrete ' Pill-Box ' (machine gun post) in the lane and collected conkers from the horse chesnut trees there that still exist.

Even though the lane was a 'through lane' back then and there was no where near the amount of traffic as there is now , one of our group of children had his bicycle run-over by a vehicle in the lane fortunately without injury to the child. The incident was in the 1960's .

This is why I am so passionate about trying to convey how dangerous it is to have these two apposing elements within Blunts Lane and not giving more consideration to the safety aspect now that there is a huge population bordering the lane. No longer is it an isolated lane in the countryside despite being changed to a no through road.

At the very least, provision should be made to include a 'PEDESTRIANS IN ROAD AHEAD' sign (a white triangle with red border and an adult holding a child's hand - walking image) to the already newly erected 30 mph post at the top entrance to Blunts Lane (Davy Road) and further down the lane to remind residents and visitors to the presence of pedestrians in the lane as they drive back out.

A reduction to a maximum of 20 mph or lower from the current 30 mph along with the 'Pedestrians In The Road' signs would represent a shift of emphasis away from the driver onto the pedestrian or cyclist as already provided for in the area along Miller Way from Thornbury Primary School to the ASDA superstore by means of a ' 20 mph Zone ' with just a short interruption back to 30 mph. And this is an area of wide open , two lane road, with speed humps, street lighting and pavements !.

If further evidence is needed to convince you of the dangers the lane poses I can do no better than to quote your own case study made for a proposed Gypsy / Traveller site in the immediate vicinity of Blunts Lane in 2003 and found online in the link :-

www.plymouth.gov.uk/sites/default/files/EstoverBluntsLaneGypsyAndTravellerAssessment.pdf

Within the statement it makes several references to Blunts Lane as indicated in the following paragraphs :-

(1.8) Blunts Lane adjacent to the site is not lit.

(2.2)Vehicular access to the site is very poor. Access can be gained to the site either from the South via

light) and keep close to the side of the road. The Highway Code also advises that it may be safer to cross the road well before a sharp right-hand bend so that oncoming traffic has better visibility.

Thank you for your suggestion of introducing 'pedestrians in road ahead' signs. We would be happy to consider this as part of the scheme design to help warn drivers who may be unfamiliar with this area that they are sharing this road space with pedestrians.

There are private land access points at both the northern and southern ends of Blunts Lane which need to be maintained and the lane must therefore remain open to motor vehicles along the full length. The closure to through traffic therefore requires a point of closure at the southern end (where bollards will need to be erected, as you note), with the associated 'prohibition of motor vehicles' sign. If this signage is misinterpreted, there are other signs to highlight motor vehicles being present, for example the new speed limit signs which face in both directions. The addition of 'pedestrians in road ahead' signs is a warning sign for drivers and will also help to highlight the presence of motor vehicles on the lane.

We hope this helps to address your concerns.

<p>Plymbridge Lane or from the North via the Science Park, Blunts Lane is a historic, narrow, winding single track lane with few passing places. It is unlikely that large vehicles and caravans could navigate in its current form. It will not be possible to alter it to highways adoptable standards without compromising the historic nature of the lane and any such alterations would be expensive. It is unsuitable for safe pedestrian use as it is a dark, wet, steep sided, unlit and without pavements. There are a number of pedestrian entrances to the adjacent residential estate from the lane so walking distances to community facilities are reasonable.</p> <p>(3.3)The Bircham Valley (Greenspace 108 and of which the site forms part) and to a lesser extent, Forder Valley (Greenspace 109) provide for informal recreation of neighbourhood importance.</p> <p>(4.1)Due to the mature trees, steep sided lane and the fact that the Estover houses gardens back onto Blunts Lane</p> <p>Holding the recent public consultation was inspirational and as a result of this positive change to the lane's usage , I urge you not to squander the chance to put the final pieces in place that will go towards making the lane a safer environment for everyone !</p>	
<p>I am contacting you regarding the permanent closure of Blunts Lane and, while I commend the council in upholding the views of many of the local residents including myself, I am concerned that by closing the lane at Poole Farm, it will not stop the large courier vans from driving down the lane to drop off parcels to various locations on the housing estate, which is what is currently happening.</p> <p>Now they just move the temporary road closed sign out of the way and drive down almost to the farm and they do not have to worry about meeting other vehicles so are using it as their own personal access route.</p> <p>This has now made the situation worse as they are much larger vehicles leaving no room for pedestrians, including school students, to get out of the way and they are often in a rush. They also do not need to slow down at bends as they know nothing will be coming the other way.</p> <p>The signage to say no through road will not deter them as they only want to access the houses so can no entry signs be put up instead at Fursden where the current np through road sign is?</p>	<p>There are private land access points at both the northern and southern ends of Blunts Lane which need to be maintained and we therefore cannot consider a full closure to motor vehicles.</p> <p>As you will be aware, we received feedback from the local community that Blunts Lane had been better for all road users since it's temporary closure to through traffic, as it was not being used as a 'rat-run' and traffic volumes had significantly reduced. It should be noted that, whilst making this closure to through traffic and reduced speed limit permanent does provide benefits to pedestrians to enjoy a relatively traffic-free route, Blunts Lane is still a country lane for all road users and vehicles can still access the full length of the lane from the junction with Davy Road in Derriford.</p> <p>There has been one slight injury collision on Blunts Lane in the last 10 years (which involved a car slipping on ice at low speed) and none in the period since</p>

	<p>the lane has been temporarily closed to through traffic at the southern end and the speed limit reduced to 30mph. There is therefore no apparent safety issue on the lane.</p> <p>Having now reviewed the comments received as part of the Traffic Regulation Order consultation, we will be considering a suggestion to include 'pedestrians in road ahead' signs to help warn drivers who may be unfamiliar with this area that they are sharing this road space with pedestrians.</p> <p>It goes without saying that drivers should always drive to the road conditions. Pedestrians should also follow the Highway Code and keep to the right-hand side of the road if there is no pavement so that oncoming traffic can be seen. Extra care should always be taken on rural roads, with pedestrians being prepared to walk in single file (especially on narrow roads or in poor light) and keep close to the side of the road. The Highway Code also advises that it may be safer to cross the road well before a sharp right-hand bend so that oncoming traffic has better visibility.</p>
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4. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended to proceed with original proposals as advertised and make the Traffic Regulation Order

5. LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

The lawful implications and consequences of the proposal have been considered and taken into account in the preparation of this report.

When considering whether to make a traffic order it is the Council's responsibility to ensure that all relevant legislation is complied with. This includes Section 122 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 (as amended) that sets out that it is the duty of a local authority, so far as practicable subject to certain matters, to secure the expeditious, convenient and safe movement of vehicular and other traffic (including pedestrians) and the provision of suitable and adequate parking facilities on and off the highway. It is considered that the proposals comply with Section 122 of the Act as they practically secure the safe and expeditious movement of traffic in and around Plymouth and provide for suitable and adequate associated parking facilities.