

Committee:	Rights of Way Committee
Meeting Date:	19 June 2013
Lead Councillor/s:	Councillor Graham Newman, Cabinet Member for Roads and Transport
Local Councillor/s:	Councillor David Ritchie
Director:	Lucy Robinson, Director for Economy Skills and Environment
Assistant Director or Head of Service:	Matthew Riches, Head of Programme Delivery and Construction
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Proposed One-Way Order and associated restrictions in Bungay Town Centre

Brief summary of report

1. To consider objections to the advertised experimental Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) which makes St Mary's Street and part of Lower Olland Street (Bungay) one-way northbound. The experimental TRO also makes changes to some waiting restrictions in the town centre area. The Committee is asked to consider whether the experimental TRO should be made permanent.

Action recommended

2. That the Cabinet Member for Roads and Transport be recommended to approve the permanent making of the Suffolk County Council (Various Roads, Bungay) (Prohibition and Restriction of Waiting, One-Way Traffic, Parking Places and Suspension) (Experimental) Order 2012 as advertised, with the following amendments:
 - a) The proposal for 'no waiting at any time' on the north east side of Trinity Street (starting 6 metres south east of the property boundary of Nos. 13 and 15) to be reduced from 34 metres to 6 metres.
 - b) The proposal for '30 minute limited waiting, 8am-6pm, Mon-Sat' outside Nos. 32 to 38 St Mary's Street to be shortened by 4 metres at its southern end (and suspended restriction reinstated over this distance).
 - c) The proposal for 'no waiting at any time' on the south east side of Wharton Street outside the library be shortened by 11 metres at its southern end (and suspended restriction reinstated over this distance).

Reason for recommendation

3. The order and associated restrictions referred to in this report have been designed as an integral part of a proposed new road layout and enhancement scheme for Bungay town centre. Following concerns from businesses and residents in Bungay to proposed changes to the road layout, Suffolk County Council agreed to implement the one way system initially as a trial scheme under a one-way experimental TRO to better assess the impacts of the alterations. It was considered that the experimental period would allow people a longer period of time to get accustomed to the changes, take a view on its suitability as a permanent layout and provide some data for a direct comparison with the previous road layout. A change to the road layout such as this will impact different stakeholders in different ways and so the experimental period allowed officers to understand better the potential impacts, either positive or negative. Suffolk County Council officers considered that the scheme would have a positive impact on the town, resolving conflicts with traffic travelling on the narrow roads in opposing directions and allowing environmental enhancements to improve the town centre environment for pedestrians and other non motorised users. It was intended to make the changes in this TRO permanent provided that on balance it could be demonstrated that the advantages of the scheme were considered to outweigh the disadvantages.

Alternative options

4. To revert back to the previous situation whereby St Mary's Street and all of Lower Olland Street continues to carry two-way traffic.

Who will be affected by this decision?

5. Residents in Trinity Street and Wharton Street will be most adversely affected by this change due to the significant increase in vehicle flows on these roads.
6. Residents and businesses in other roads making up the one-way gyratory system and surrounding roads will also be affected.
7. This decision will affect the journey of any pedestrian, cyclist or motorist visiting or passing through the town centre, including those children, parents and staff regularly travelling to St Edmund's RC Primary School on St Mary's Street who will be positively affected by reduced congestion outside the school.

Main body of report

Background

8. Bungay is an important market town in the north of Suffolk with a population of just under 5,000 (Source: Office for National Statistics, 2001). It lies in the Waveney Valley surrounded by river and marshes and provides key services to a rural hinterland of villages, most of which are without facilities. Access to Bungay is important if it is to function as a social and economic hub.
9. Unlike most of the other market towns in Waveney, Bungay does not have access to rail services. Reliance on the car and bus services is therefore essential to the movement of goods and services as well as commuting patterns. Along with other towns along the Waveney valley, Bungay is also promoting itself as a visitor destination linked to the Broads tourism industry. With this in mind, a functioning town centre, free of congestion and attractive to shoppers and tourists, is crucial. Like most rural market towns, Bungay has to fight to compete against bigger and more dynamic centres offering a larger retail range. Anything that enhances the ease of movement

and environment of the town centre helps it compete and retain essential services. This in turn also assists the health of the town centre in terms of attracting inward investment (occupiers) and minimising empty commercial premises.

10. Whilst Bungay does not have any major new industrial estates planned as part of the regeneration process, it is host to some large companies. The most significant of course is Clays the Printers. The biggest growth in jobs in the town over the next 15 years are likely to come from sectors that are reliant on a vibrant and well maintained town centre i.e. retail, health and business services. The potential to enhance the appearance of the high street, along with Bungay's strong historical offer should assist trading conditions, providing disruption during construction is minimised and managed.
11. St Mary's Street, Lower Olland Street and Market Place form part of the A144, which is the main north / south route through Bungay. These roads carried two-way traffic until the experimental TRO became operational on 9 September 2012. Since that time, northbound traffic has been directed along Lower Olland Street, St Mary's Street and Market Place and southbound traffic along Trinity Street and Wharton Street (both of which were already one-way roads and both form part of the B1435).
12. The experimental Traffic Regulation Order, including the schedule of advertised proposals, is shown in Appendix A.
13. A plan of the advertised proposals is shown in Appendix B.
14. Plans of proposed amendments to the advertised TRO are shown in Appendix C.
15. Objections received during the experimental period are shown in Appendix D.
16. There is an HGV restriction at the A143/A144 roundabout junction that prevents vehicles over 7.5 tonnes from entering Bungay via Broad Street (except for access). This effectively prevents HGV's from travelling southbound through the town and instead such traffic is directed along the B1062 through Flixton.
17. There is currently no northbound HGV restriction. At the time the southbound restriction was implemented there was a significant amount of objection from residents in Flixton. As a consequence, it was decided to maintain northbound HGV's through the town centre.
18. Bungay town centre suffered from a history of traffic/highway related problems in the previous two-way arrangement, including:
 - a) congestion caused by illegal parking outside the shops in St Mary's Street
 - b) vehicles having to give-way at the narrow section of Lower Olland Street which was a two-way road, causing congestion at peak times close to St Edmund's RC Primary School
 - c) history of minor accidents in St Mary's Street in particular
 - d) narrow footways (and lack of footway provision in some places)
 - e) buildings being struck by passing vehicles
 - f) high street environment detracted due to the amount of traffic going through St Mary's Street
 - g) difficulties for parents and children accessing St Edmunds RC Primary School (located on St Mary's Street)
19. Many local people have campaigned for a bypass as a solution to the town's traffic problems, but funding for this option was unlikely to be realised in the short or

medium term future. Suffolk County Council and Bungay Town Council together considered other more achievable ways in which the town's issues could be addressed.

20. A public consultation was held between 2 and 17 December 2010. As part of this consultation Suffolk County Council presented three options as potential solutions to help improve Bungay town centre. An exhibition was held in the Chaucer Rooms on the 2 and 4 December where the options were displayed and officers were present. The three options displayed for consideration were Concept 1: one-way in St Mary's Street and Lower Olland Street (northbound direction), Concept 2: one-way in Lower Olland Street (southbound) and Upper Olland Street (northbound) and Concept 3: no changes to one-way system, but relocate the zebra crossing on St Mary's Street. During this consultation the public were asked to complete questionnaires about the proposals.
21. Bungay Town Council agreed to support the most favoured option, which was to make St Mary's Street and part of Lower Olland Street one-way northbound, with southbound traffic being diverted along Trinity Street and Wharton Street (Concept 1). Analysis from the questionnaires returned by people that responded to the consultation showed that 64% of those people considered Concept 1 to be the most suitable option for tackling the town's traffic problems.
22. After the intention to implement a one-way scheme was made public, a local campaign group was set up against the scheme. The group, which called itself the One Way – No Way Group, actively campaigned against the implementation of the experimental TRO during a period of months in an attempt to stop the scheme.
23. The One Way – No Way group submitted a petition to Suffolk County Council in January 2012 which contained over 1200 signatures. This group suggested that the changes would have a significant adverse effect on the town.
24. The campaign group suggested that the increase in traffic flow and HGV's using Trinity Street would cause structural damage to the properties in this street. In view of this, Suffolk County Council took independent expert advice, a technical report is given in Appendix E. Suffolk County Council reviewed the issues and at that time concluded that this would not be the case and agreed to continue and implement the trial as proposed.
25. The experimental TRO became operational on 9 September 2012. In addition to making St Mary's Street and parts of Lower Olland Street and Market Place one-way, it also included new waiting restrictions and changes to existing waiting restrictions. New parking and loading bays were created in St Mary's Street and Trinity Street, while in other areas double yellow lines were introduced to facilitate traffic flow.
26. As part of the trial layout, temporary build-outs and islands were installed using rubber kerbs to help guide traffic through the new one-way road layout. In some places the road was narrowed to replicate situations where the footway could be widened within a permanent scheme.
27. The One Way – No Way Group organised a protest march through the town centre, which took place on Sunday 23 September 2012. The number of protestors attending the march varied according to different sources, but the Eastern Daily Press reported that around one hundred people took part. (Source: EDP24 on-line, 23/9/2012).
28. One of the main concerns and uncertainties that were raised before the experimental layout was implemented, was how traffic flows would displace on to other roads and also how traffic speeds would change. To help monitor this, surveys were carried out in June 2012 prior to the start of the trial, and these were repeated during the first

three months of the trial to see how traffic numbers and speeds changed. A table showing this information is included in Appendix F. In summary, with the exception of traffic increases in Trinity Street and Wharton Street, traffic flows have not increased significantly. Staithe Road has experienced increases in traffic flow, but not as large as those seen in Trinity Street and Wharton Street. Traffic speeds were also shown to have remained largely similar before and after. It is anticipated that the proposed improvement scheme will provide measures that will help to reduce the speed of vehicles further.

29. One of the concerns raised by local businesses was potential problems with receiving deliveries in St Mary's Street. Although there were initial problems at the start of the trial, it has since been shown that deliveries can be made more easily and without interfering with the flow of traffic.
30. As part of the experimental Order's 'trial' period, an Evaluation Group was set up to discuss various issues and to form a view as to whether the experimental order should continue. The group met twice during the trial; once in November 2012 and again in February 2013. The group included representatives from Bungay Town Council, the police, the Chamber of Trade and Commerce, the One Way – No Way Group, Trinity Street (residents), the local county councillor and Suffolk County Council officers. Although there were negative issues highlighted by some group members, it was felt that the trial layout would work and enable the enhancement scheme to be progressed.
31. The scheme has been screened under Suffolk County Council's Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) guidance and the recommendation is that a full EIA is not required. Whilst there may be the potential for a degree of negative impact on some groups due to the proposed removal of two existing controlled pedestrian crossings, there is mitigation proposed which on balance will create an overall improvement in safety throughout the area for all pedestrians.

Consultation

32. During May 2012 formal consultation was carried out prior to advertisement and implementation of the experimental TRO.
33. Bungay Town Council considered the proposals at their meeting on 21 May 2012 and these were received without adverse comment.
34. The local county councillor for Bungay has been consulted throughout the process and fully supports the proposals. The Cabinet Member with responsibility for roads and transport at the time of the experimental scheme supported the proposal.
35. The local police acknowledge that action was needed to try to resolve the town's traffic problems, though they had concerns that the loading bay in Trinity Street might be abused by motorists stopping illegally to use the nearby ATM.
36. The local fire service expected that the proposals would not have a significant impact on their station, though there was some concern about potential blockages on Trinity Street.
37. The local operations manager for the East of England Ambulance Service was shown the proposals and did not foresee any direct impact on their ability to respond to calls in Bungay.
38. The local Cyclist Touring Club representative was consulted and suggested that St Mary's Street could remain two-way for cyclists. Local police were concerned that an exemption in the TRO for cyclists could be potentially dangerous and were unwilling

to support this view. Therefore, cyclists have to adhere to the one-way system like all motorised traffic.

39. Godric Cycle Club was consulted and the responses received from its members were mixed. However, many requested a cyclist contra-flow facility along St Mary's Street (if such a facility could be executed safely). Lower traffic speeds and a 20mph limit were also common requests.
40. The following bodies/individuals were consulted, but did not make any formal comments: Waveney Chamber of Commerce, Waveney District Council, Road Haulage Association, Freight Transport Association and the Beccles & Bungay Cycle Campaign.
41. Optua and the Guide Dogs for the Blind Association were consulted informally in August and September 2012 respectively, to ensure that the new (temporary) road layout would not disadvantage more vulnerable members of society. Optua confirmed that they could not see anything detrimental in the proposals. A representative from Guide Dogs offered to attend a site meeting with a Suffolk County Council officer. The temporary road layout was considered satisfactory, although a small number of concerns were highlighted, most of which already existed in the old two-way arrangement.
42. During February 2013, Suffolk County Council presented its proposal for the Bungay Town Centre Improvement Scheme by holding an exhibition at the Fisher Theatre held over four days, including a Saturday morning. The proposed scheme would only be possible if the experimental one-way Order is made permanent. The exhibition provided an opportunity to show people the plans for the permanent scheme and also gauge public opinion. The exhibition was well attended and although there was not a 'public vote' to support the scheme or not, there was the opportunity to complete feedback forms and this was done by 199 people. There were some forms completed that didn't express an opinion as to whether they were in support of the scheme or not, but of the 156 that expressed an opinion either way 71% were in support of retaining the one-way layout.
43. During this exhibition, information was displayed showing how to formally object to the Order and people that were strongly against the scheme were made aware of this.
44. On 18 March 2013, Suffolk County Council officers attended a meeting at St Edmund's RC Primary School, which is situated on St Mary's Street, to discuss the impact of the experimental one-way system on the school, its pupils and its staff. In attendance were the head teacher and deputy head, both of whom expressed great support for the scheme and the improvements already realised by limiting the traffic to one direction.
45. The emergency services were contacted again in May 2013 to provide an opportunity for further comment. (The experimental TRO would have been in operation for nearly eight months). The local police commented that the overall traffic flow in Bungay had improved under the experimental TRO. However, they still had concerns about misuse of the loading bay in Trinity Street and suggested that further improvements were required to make the facility self-enforcing. At the time this report was prepared no response had been received from either the East of England Ambulance Service or the fire service. The comments received from the police are shown in Appendix G.
46. Suffolk County Council officers and Bungay Town Council have been working together throughout the experimental period to discuss issues and develop ideas for the permanent improvement scheme. The Town Council held a special meeting on 7

May 2013 to discuss the experimental layout and to vote on whether it should be retained as a permanent layout or not. The vote was cast 12-2 in favour to keep the one-way layout, minutes of this meeting are shown in Appendix H.

Objections (Appendix D)

47. A total of 21 objections were received between 9 September 2012 and 3 May 2013.
48. A brief summary of each objection is shown below, however copies of the full objections are included in Appendix D:
 - a) **Mr Steven Woodcock** objected to the proposed removal of free parking outside numbers 17–19 Trinity Street.
 - b) **Mr and Mrs Robinson** objected to the proposed removal of parking outside numbers 11–19 Trinity Street. They expressed concern that the experimental one-way system would dramatically affect their quality of life and the value of their property (17 Trinity Street).
 - c) **Ms Debra Guterres** wrote to Councillor Guy McGregor suggesting that only a minority of shopkeepers wanted the experimental one-way system and those that did, now regret supporting it. She explains that it has had a detrimental effect on trade, caused congestion, confused elderly motorists and vulnerable pedestrians are now at more risk than before.
 - d) **Ms Susan McDonald** wrote to Councillor Guy McGregor about her concerns of increased traffic volumes being sent along Trinity Street, removal of parking outside the library and the pedestrian crossing by St Mary's Church, which was temporarily out of action. She also pointed out that St Mary's Street is sufficiently wide to accommodate two-way traffic.
 - e) **Mrs Nadine Lipscomb** wrote to Councillor Mark Bee about a variety of issues, suggesting that the new parking/loading bays in St Mary's Street were not thought through, cyclists had been completely overlooked, trade was down and businesses would have to close as people decide to shop elsewhere. She says that the loading bay in Trinity Street is abused by NatWest customers and the crossing outside St Edmund's RC Primary School (St Mary's Street) is no safer. She also mentions some unrelated highway issues that she believes require attention.
 - f) **Mr Plumley** objected to the main town centre route being made one-way. He has owned a business on the junction of Upper Olland Street and Lower Olland Street for 20 years, during which time his premises has been perfectly sited to attract the attention of southbound traffic. With the experimental one-way in operation, he believes his business is hidden from all through traffic. He says that his turnover has declined dramatically since the implementation of the experimental TRO and fears for the closure of his business.
 - g) **Ms Judith Hellary** objected to the removal of parking in Trinity Street and Wharton Street, the increased traffic volumes being sent southbound along these roads and the impact of this; noise, pollution, speeding traffic (above the advisory 20mph), difficulty in crossing the road and potential damage to listed buildings and other ancient structures.
 - h) **Mrs Lesley Ward** objected to the increased traffic volumes being sent southbound along Trinity Street and the detrimental effect this is having on residents' quality of life and pedestrian safety. She believes that the town's traffic problems have simply shifted from a mainly commercial road to a mainly residential street. Amongst other things, she also requests better

signing to prevent HGVs from travelling illegally through the town southbound.

- i) **Mrs Melanie Taylor** objected to the experimental one-way system in general. She does not think it should be made permanent, because she believes that the proposal for the permanent scheme is unsafe for a number of reasons. She also asks what would happen if St Mary's Street becomes gridlocked.
- j) **Ms Sandra Flatt** objected to the increased traffic volumes being sent southbound along Trinity Street. She says that it is now much more difficult for pedestrians to cross the road and for residents' vehicular access.
- k) **Ms Shirley Russell** objected to the experimental one-way system in general and believes that funding could be better spent by focussing on what she describes as the town's 'real' problems – heavy through traffic and HGVs. She also raises some concerns about the permanent scheme proposals.
- l) **Mr Simon Taylor** objected to the one-way system in general. He is concerned about traffic hold-ups in Trinity Street and the impact that this may have on the emergency services (he witnessed an ambulance being delayed while on emergency call). He also raises a number of concerns about the permanent scheme proposals.
- m) **Ms Jean Testro** objected to the one-way system as she believes that Trinity Street is unsuitable for accommodating the southbound traffic. She states that Trinity Street has come to a standstill many times since the experimental one-way system was implemented and it would be a tragedy waiting to happen if the emergency services are unable to get through. She is concerned about the effect that higher traffic volumes will cause to the listed buildings in Trinity Street and she also raises some concerns about the proposal for the permanent scheme.
- n) **Ms Jenny Hyams** objected to the one-way system as she believes it encourages faster traffic speeds. She says that it is extremely dangerous for pedestrians attempting to cross Trinity Street itself and on the junction of Trinity Street/Wharton Street.
- o) **Mr and Mrs Lewis-Smith** objected to the one-way system as they believe that it encourages vehicles to travel faster. They believe that a residential street in a conservation area (i.e. Trinity Street) has effectively become a southern bypass which now experiences a fourfold increase in all traffic. They note that there is a significant increase in noise, speed, emissions and vibrations and there is no longer any safe place for pedestrians to cross the road.
- p) **Mr Robert Prior** objected to the one-way system and the permanent scheme proposal, which he says bears no similarity to the original proposals supported by Bungay Town Council (during June 2011), nor the trial road layout that has been in place since Sept 2012. He is concerned about the impact on those pedestrians with impaired vision and claims that consultation with disability groups has been inadequate. He raises a number of other concerns relating specifically to the permanent scheme proposal. During the experimental period, he says that the advisory 20mph speed limit has not been adhered to and since experiencing a 400% increase of traffic along its length; Trinity Street has become extremely dangerous for pedestrians, cyclists, children and residents.

- q) **Mr Keith Kerrison** objected to the one-way system, suggesting that money has been wasted on a scheme that has done nothing at all to improve the town. He believes that the matter could have been dealt with in a far more professional and democratic way.
- r) **Miss Janet Read** objected to the one-way system as she believes it has made St Mary's Street even more dangerous, particularly for blind people.
- s) **Mr Derek Ward** objected to the four-fold increase in traffic being sent southbound along Trinity Street as a result of the experimental one-way order. He says that the resulting noise, pollution and congestion is having a very detrimental effect on the quality of life for residents. He also raises some concerns about the permanent scheme proposal.
- t) **Mr James Hartcup** objected to the one-way system claiming that it has not delivered the results which it set out to achieve. He suggests that the 'vision, purpose and action' envisaged for Bungay town centre could be achieved in other ways. He says that the experimental system has failed to reduce traffic speeds or volume of HGV traffic.
- u) **On-line petition (sponsored by Mr Robert Prior):** This was an e-petition on the Suffolk County Council website that objected to the one-way system in Bungay and was open between 19 October 2012 and 18 March 2013. This petition closed with a total of 64 signatures.

Officers Comments

49. Many of the objections refer to a number of common issues and highlight these as reasons that the one-way layout is unsuccessful. These are discussed below (in no particular order):

a) Removal of parking in Trinity Street and Wharton Street

- i) The advertised TRO includes new 'no waiting at any time' restrictions outside Nos. 11-19 Trinity Street. This was included in the experimental Order to provide improved access for larger vehicles at a localised narrow section and improve visibility at the entrance to the church grounds where pedestrians often cross. This section of road was previously unrestricted and residents were very concerned about the loss of parking. In recognition of these concerns, only 6m of this restriction was actually marked out during the experimental period, to prevent parking on the narrowest part of the road. An 'H' marking was also painted to ensure that a space between parked vehicles was retained opposite the church entrance to help pedestrians cross between parked cars. It is proposed that the advertised TRO be amended to reflect the shorter length of 'no waiting at any time' applied on site during the experimental period. This is shown as amendment (a) in Appendix C.
- ii) The advertised TRO also included new 'no waiting at any time' in Wharton Street, where there had previously been some one hour limited waiting bays. The purpose was to allow a 'pedestrian area' to be trialled where no footway provision existed and to allow traffic to queue back from its junction with Lower Olland Street. It is proposed that the advertised TRO be amended to retain a bay (11m long) outside the library. This is shown as amendment (c) in Appendix C.
- iii) Although on-road parking has been removed or reduced in some places, the one-way system has enabled two new parking bays and a loading bay

to be created in St Mary's Street. It is proposed that the advertised TRO be amended to shorten the 30 minute limited waiting bay outside numbers 32-38 St Mary's Street by 4m. This will enable an additional crossing point to be accommodated within the proposed permanent scheme. This is shown as amendment (b) in Appendix C.

b) Increased traffic volumes on Trinity Street and Wharton Street

- i) Prior to implementation of the experimental TRO, both Trinity Street and Wharton Street could be described as very quiet town centre streets, despite forming part of the B1435. Traffic modelling undertaken long before its implementation showed that a significant increase in traffic along Trinity Street and Wharton Street was to be expected, however data recorded during the trial shows that the actual traffic flow has increased by approximately 3.5 times. Actual traffic data recorded before and during the experimental scheme is shown in Appendix F.
- ii) The additional traffic brings along additional noise, vibration and car fumes, which with such a great traffic increase has been a considerable change for residents. The increased frequency of passing vehicles has made it more difficult for pedestrians to cross the road as they now have to wait longer to find a safe opportunity to cross. Similarly, it is more difficult for residents and businesses to access their properties by car. Although it is clear that these roads have been most significantly affected by the increases in traffic on them, the actual amount of traffic is arguably not significant in the context of a town centre location or a 'B' Class road on a bus route.
- iii) If the experimental TRO is made permanent, there are plans to build a new footway on the south side of Wharton Street to improve pedestrian access into the town centre. In Trinity Street, the eastern footway would also be widened (at its southern end) to overcome localised narrowing within the existing pedestrian facility.
- iv) There were concerns that air quality may have deteriorated since the one-way layout was implemented. Air quality monitoring is currently being carried out in Trinity Street to investigate this and check how it compares with other sites in Suffolk. There is a short localised section of Trinity Street, between the Market Place roundabout and Cross Street, which was of particular concern due to the width of the road and the proximity of the buildings on both sides. Air quality monitoring is usually carried out over a 12 month period because the nitrogen dioxide concentration levels will vary by season and both topography and meteorological conditions can affect the results. But Initial results show a maximum nitrogen dioxide concentration at the entrance to Trinity Street with a tapering off of the measured concentration with distance down the street – which is what would be expected. The national air quality objectives will provide some context for this and these are set out in the Air Quality (England) Regulations 2000 and the Air Quality (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2002. The specified objectives are that any site should not exceed 40 microgrammes per cubic metre (ug/m³). The samples analysed in Trinity Street to date have shown a maximum nitrogen dioxide average mean, after bias adjustment of 32ug/m³ (outside 1 Trinity Street), which is relatively high for the location and this can be compared to the 18ug/m³ further down the street (outside 11 Trinity Street) which is close to normal

ambient levels where the street is more open which aids dispersion. Although the maximum levels recorded in Trinity Street to date are relatively high for the location, they are localised to a small area and do not exceed the recommended thresholds. Suffolk County Council has agreed to continue to monitor this site for 12 months to complete the assessment.

c) Effect on local trade

- i) Various people have claimed that the experimental one-way system has had a detrimental effect on local trade and that less people are now visiting the town centre. It is difficult to know how accurate such claims are, but it should perhaps be noted that only one business has formally objected to the experimental Order citing loss of trade as the basis of their objection.
- ii) It is proposed that should the experimental TRO be made permanent, the Town Centre Improvement Scheme will be implemented creating a safer, more attractive shopping environment for local residents and visitors, and over time provide conditions for local trade to develop.
- iii) The Chamber of Trade was approached during May 2013 for its comments on the experimental one-way system, which would have been operating for eight months. Although members had initially voted to support the trial, no further feedback has been received from the organisation.

d) Congestion / traffic hold-ups / maintenance

- i) During the experimental period we have been made aware of some instances where traffic has been held-up due to congestion in Trinity Street. We believe this is mainly caused by large vehicles not parking wholly within the loading bay (adjacent to number 2 and 2a Trinity Street). This particular bay was provided in July 2012 (and extended under the experimental TRO) to provide a loading area for nearby businesses. Prior to this, delivery vehicles would stop partly over the old footway and NatWest customers would often park in the same manner despite waiting restrictions being present. The loading bay is narrower in width than a standard loading bay - this aspect was limited by the physical constraints of the site. However, it should be noted that there are loading opportunities by the Market Place roundabout for larger vehicles that cannot park within the limits of the bay in Trinity Street. The local police are well aware of this issue and have been providing extra inspections in this area to help this.
- ii) A disadvantage of the experimental one-way system is that if any part of the gyratory becomes obstructed, then the potential for a knock on effect on other roads within the system is far greater than in the previous two-way arrangement. Consideration of this aspect however, should be balanced against the daily benefits realised by reduced congestion in Lower Olland Street and St Mary's Street.
- iii) Occasionally it will be necessary for maintenance works to be carried out on those roads forming part of the one-way gyratory system. If such works require a road closure, traffic would need to be diverted over an increased distance. For example, a closure on St Mary's Street would involve diverting traffic via the B1062 Flixton Road and along the A143 (a distance of approximately nine miles). Similarly, a closure on Trinity Street may

involve sending traffic along Bridge Street, Ditchingham Dam, Pirnhow Street and the B1062 Hillside Road East (a distance of approximately three miles).

e) Traffic speed

- i) An advisory 20mph limit is currently in operation to compliment the experimental one-way road layout. If the experimental TRO is made permanent, it is proposed that a mandatory 20mph zone would be introduced as part of the town centre improvement scheme.
- ii) A number of people suggest that vehicles are exceeding the advisory limit. Many highlight Trinity Street as an example, though there are concerns this is happening throughout the one-way system by a minority of motorists.
- iii) It is generally expected, that traffic speeds will increase when a two-way road is made one-way. However, in the case of Bungay, recorded mean and 85th percentile traffic speeds have remained almost the same at those points where survey data has been collected. This obviously does not account for the occasional inconsiderate motorist travelling above and beyond the recommended limit. Speed data collected before and during the experimental phase is shown in Appendix F. It is anticipated that the measures included as part of the permanent scheme proposals will further reduce traffic speeds.

f) HGV traffic

- i) The amount of HGV traffic travelling through Bungay has been a problem for many years and in the previous two-way arrangement HGVs would frequently mount the footway, particularly along the narrow section of Lower Olland Street. Damage to properties caused by HGVs was also a concern. In 2006 a restriction was brought in to prevent heavy commercial vehicles from entering Bungay via Broad Street (except for access), i.e. the southbound ban. Instead these vehicles are directed along the B1062 via Homersfield and Flixton. The purpose of the restriction was to balance the number of HGVs travelling through the area – Bungay did not want the heavy traffic and neither did the parishes of Homersfield or Flixton.
- ii) No northbound HGV ban is proposed for this reason, although the matter has been considered in some depth and there is nothing to say that this could not be reconsidered at some point in the future or if other factors in the locality cause a significant change in vehicle movement.
- iii) The experimental one-way scheme (as it was presented during consultation in Nov/Dec 2010) included an HGV ban on Wharton Street. At this time it was anticipated that larger vehicles would be unable to make the turn out of Wharton Street. Therefore an alternative route was proposed along Staithe Road and Hillside Road East. To facilitate the passage of heavy traffic, it would have been necessary to severely restrict parking along Staithe Road which would have proven very unpopular with residents. Once the experimental one-way system was implemented, initial monitoring revealed that the extent of this problem was significantly less than initially feared and the HGV ban on Wharton Street was not considered necessary.

- iv) Various people have complained about the HGV's entering the town illegally and these are often noticed as they travel along Trinity Street. (Traffic data is shown in Appendix F). Bungay Town Council has recently become involved in setting up a Lorry Watch scheme in association with Trading Standards to help identify those companies flouting the restriction and to issue warnings and prosecute where appropriate. It is hoped that Lorry Watch will be an effective deterrent, helping to improve the situation for residents of Trinity Street and Wharton Street.

g) Pedestrian experience in St Mary's Street

- i) A small number of people have claimed that the experimental one-way system has caused increased difficulty for pedestrians in St Mary's Street. Many of these complaints actually refer to a short period of time when the pelican crossing was taken out of action. (Electrical work was necessary shortly after the one-way system was implemented to adjust the signals to the new one-way traffic flow). Others claim that the system is dangerous for the most vulnerable pedestrians, particularly those that are blind or partially sighted.
- ii) The majority of general correspondence received from members of the public indicates that St Mary's Street is considered a much safer and relaxed place to shop with traffic only moving in one direction. The nearby school (St Edmund's RC school) also strongly supports this view. The potential for footway widening within the permanent improvement scheme would provide benefits to all pedestrians and allow for significant improvement of the narrow roads and footways, which are typical of this market town. What has been observed more recently in St Mary's Street is that pedestrians are becoming more accustomed to the one-way flow and are now able to cross the road with confidence wherever they choose. This is because it is much easier to make a judgement about when it is safe to cross with vehicles one travelling in one direction. This together with the physical enhancements which are proposed in the permanent scheme will provide a better pedestrian experience in St Mary's Street.

h) Proposals for the Bungay town centre improvement scheme

- i) During February 2013, Suffolk County Council displayed its proposals for the permanent town centre scheme based on the one-way layout. It was considered important to show the public about what improvements were envisaged, as there had been significant criticism about the trial road layout and temporary kerb build-outs. Some people believed these were permanent features to remain.
- ii) The concept behind the permanent scheme proposals is to create a more pedestrian friendly environment through use of different paving materials and changes in surface levels. The idea is to change the nature of the surroundings so that motorists are aware they are entering into a 'special area' that doesn't feel like an 'A' road and is more about people than vehicles. A restricted parking zone (no waiting at any time, except in marked bays) is proposed to coincide with the extent of physical works between Wharton Street and the Market Place roundabout. This removes the requirement for yellow lines to be painted on the ground. The proposed 20mph zone will encompass a slightly wider area and incorporate all those roads making up the one-way gyratory system. The physical and visual features proposed aim to make the 20mph zone self-enforcing.
- iii) Some people have labelled the proposals as 'shared space', but this term is misleading and would implicate a very blurred distinction between the space intended for pedestrian use and that used by vehicles. Although the proposals depart from a conventional kerb edge in some places, clear delineation between the footway and carriageway is maintained through other means.
- iv) The permanent improvement scheme also replaces the two existing controlled crossings with courtesy crossings. This aspect of the proposals has raised some concern amongst members of the public, particularly in relation to blind or partially sighted pedestrians; however the presence of traffic signals would be detrimental to the environment trying to be achieved. This is because when vehicles drivers see a 'green' light at signals this encourages them to proceed with priority without the consideration of pedestrians. Experience has shown that if you take away the signals and all the road markings that drivers are use to, drivers behave differently – in a positive way.
- v) Early engagement with the Guide Dogs for the Blind Association confirms that the organisation would always have a preference for controlled crossings, but in the case of the Bungay proposals they acknowledge that appropriate measures have been taken to ensure that the town centre environment remains accessible for blind and partially sighted pedestrians.
- vi) Formal consultation on the proposed permanent scheme is due to commence shortly, subject to approval to make the Order permanent. The current proposals for the Town Centre Improvement Scheme are included in Appendix I. These proposals have been amended and improved further since the public exhibition of February 2013 in response to some of the feedback received.

Local County Councillor's Comments

50. The local county councillor for Bungay has provided the following statement: "How do you improve traffic management in the historic centre of a small market town like Bungay? The A143 to the north of the town is the main east/west bypass. The B1062, to the south of the town centre, also running east/west, takes much of the other traffic. A north/south bypass to connect the two is desirable, but would be prohibitively expensive and would have to cross the environmentally sensitive Waveney Valley. Although traffic volumes are low in the town centre, the roads are narrow and confined and when St Mary's Street was two-way it was not safe. Making the temporary one way system permanent makes the town centre safer, allows the traffic to flow more smoothly and facilitates loading and short stay parking. More importantly it will allow the planned improvements to go ahead. The temporary scheme works well, but it is not attractive, the permanent scheme, which has been developed with the help of the Waveney District Council conservation officer and members of the town council, will greatly enhance the historic town centre making Bungay a better place for shopping, for visitors, and for locals".

He adds that: "Those living on Trinity Street and Wharton Street experience more traffic passing through, but these are still relatively quiet streets for a town centre. They are not disproportionately disadvantaged. The scheme has my 100% backing and I have been supporting it since before I was elected county councillor for the first time over four years ago".

Conclusion

51. Officers have considered the positive and negative effects of this one-way Order and looked into a significant number of issues that have been raised during the trial period and development of this scheme. The experimental TRO has allowed officers to review the impacts of the changes and gauge opinion from the public and consultees who have become more informed with the benefit of implementing the changes over a trial period.
52. From the outset, this scheme has been controversial and there was a large group of people that tried to prevent it being implemented. Although officers are aware that there are still people opposed to this scheme, officers are confident that there is still a strong level of public support. Bungay Town Council has voted in support of this scheme and is keen for this to progress. The police and the local county councillor fully support the new layout.
53. Officers acknowledge that conditions have been made worse for some people particularly those that live in Trinity Street and Wharton Street and that this is an unavoidable consequence of the one-way layout. Although in general the one-way system creates improved access through the town centre, officers also acknowledge that there are times when the one-way layout can cause congestion. However, on balance, officers are confident the benefits that can be realised by the introduction of this new layout and the proposed improvement scheme will outweigh the disadvantages overall and create a significant improvement for the town as a whole.

Human Rights Act 1998

54. The objections need to be considered in light of the Human Rights Act 1998, Section 6 of which prohibits public authorities from acting in a way which is incompatible with the European Convention on Human Rights. Two specific convention rights may be relevant:
 - a) Entitlement to a fair and public hearing in the determination of a person's civil and political rights (Convention Article 6) which includes property rights and can include opportunities to be heard in the consultation process; and
 - b) Peaceful enjoyment of possessions (including property), subject to the State's right to enforce such laws as it deems necessary to control the use of property in accordance with the general interest (First Protocol Article 1).
55. Other rights may also be affected including individuals' rights to respect for private and family life and home.
56. Regard must be had to the fair balance that has to be struck between the competing interests of the individual and of the community as a whole. Both public and private interests are to be taken into account in the exercise of the Council's powers and duties as a traffic authority. Any interference with a Convention right must be necessary and proportionate.
57. The Council is required to consider carefully the balance to be struck between individual rights and the wider public interest. In this case, officers consider that the interference with Convention rights, if there is any, will be justified in order to secure the significant benefits in improving access and road safety.

Sources of Further Information

- a) Appendix A – Experimental TRO including schedule of advertised proposals
- b) Appendix B – Plan of advertised proposals
- c) Appendix C – Proposed amendments to the advertised TRO
- d) Appendix D – Objections received during the experimental period
- e) Appendix E – Report on structural surveys (Trinity Street)
- f) Appendix F – Traffic flow and speed data
- g) Appendix G – Police comments (May 2013)
- h) Appendix H – Bungay Town Council minutes of meeting 7 May 2013
- i) Appendix I – Bungay Town Centre Improvement Scheme (current proposals)