

COUNTY COUNCIL LOCAL COMMITTEE FOR EDEN

Meeting date: 31st March 2022

From: Executive Director – Economy and Infrastructure

HOWTOWN ROAD 24HR RURAL CLEARWAY UPDATE

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 *This report is to update Members in relation to the Experimental 24 hr Rural Clearway and supporting No Stopping on Verge restriction Traffic Order, which was introduced in August 2021 along that section of highway in the Eden District known as 'Howtown Road, Pooley Bridge'.*
- 1.2 *A location plan showing the extents of the Experimental Traffic Regulation Order (ETRO) is attached as Appendix 1.*
- 1.3 *The comments received through the statutory consultation between August 2021 to February 2022 are attached as Appendices 2, 2a, 2b and 2c.*
- 1.4 *A copy of the Notice which summarises the restriction is attached as Appendix 3.*
- 1.5 *The Council's statement of reasons for proposing to make the Experimental Order, is attached as Appendix 4*

2.0 STRATEGIC PLANNING AND EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

- 2.1 *In considering any implications, members must consider if there are any adverse effects on the community and if the proposals impact on the Council's commitments -*
 - *To protect and enhance Cumbria's world class environment*
 - *To provide safe and well-maintained roads and an effective transport network*
 - *The measures contained in these proposals contribute to these commitments by continuing to ensure that the Council are able to provide an effective, efficient and safe Highway Network.*

- 2.2 *No significant equality implications have been identified at this stage, and the statutory processes provide the mechanisms for any Equality Issues to be raised and aired.*

3.0 RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 That Local Committee agree to The County Council of Cumbria (C3042 Pooley Bridge) (Known locally as Howtown Road) (Main Carriageway Clearway and Prohibition of Stopping on Verge) Experimental Order 2021 (the ETRO) remaining in place over the Spring/Summer months thus enabling the restriction to be in place during the tourist season and providing a true reflection of the benefits/impacts in the area and then review the restriction for a final time at the November Eden Local Committee making the decision as to whether the restriction is made permanent after its 18 months or not.

4.0 BACKGROUND

- 4.1 Highway Officers have received complaints and concerns over the years in relation to vehicles parking and causing an obstruction on the Howtown Road.
- 4.2 These concerns were highlighted through the Lake District National Park Management Plan, which was prepared as a result of the increase in tourism during the COVID pandemic following the easing of lockdown restrictions.
- 4.3 The Howtown Road is a narrow section of carriageway with several small passing places along its extent. These passing places are regularly used by visitors for parking, resulting in limited safe areas for 2 vehicles to pass and obstruction of the highway.
- 4.4 The road is an access road to farmland, camping/caravan sites and the Outward-Bound Centre, therefore regularly used by large vehicles which along with inappropriate parking causes bottlenecks of the route, potential hazards and prohibits the free-flow vehicular traffic.
- 4.5 There are times where emergency vehicles have not had clear widths to access the full extent of the road.
- 4.6 Cumbria County Council Highway Officers, supported by partner agencies introduced the Experimental 24hr Rural Clearway supported by a No Stopping on verge restriction in August 2021, the extents of which can be seen in the location plan attached as Appendix 1 to this report.
- 4.7 A 24-hour clearway order prohibits stopping on the main carriageway for any purpose at all times. It is suitable for use only on semi-urban or rural roads where there are very few premises requiring access from the main carriageway and its main purpose is to ensure the free flow of traffic. This restriction can also be supported by another order prohibiting either waiting or stopping on the verge.

- 4.8 Cumbria County Councils Parking Enforcement team are responsible for the enforcement of the restriction and have been since its implementation in August. The team undertake their visits during the tourist season and focus on the Town Centres during the Autumn/Winter months. However, through regular communications from residents and business owners in the area, it is understood that there is a need for regular enforcement in the area during the Autumn months. This is something which could be improved should the restriction be approved to remain.
- 4.9 There are no requirements for road markings to be laid to facilitate this restriction which is a benefit. It has been noted from previous restrictions implemented along the route that road markings deteriorate due to standing water and tree foliage, this results in ongoing maintenance costs and difficulties with enforcement.
- 4.10 There is however a requirement for signage at the entrance to the restriction and at the end, which has been installed and is mounted back-to-back.
- 4.11 There is no requirement for repeater signage, however these have been installed along the route as a reminder to motorists. The restriction is not common within the County of Cumbria and experience has been gained by Officers from the restriction being implemented outside of the Eden District, where the lack of repeater signage meant Enforcement of the restriction was difficult and additional signage has been introduced.
- 4.12 During the first 6 months of the restriction being in place Officers received a total of 20 representations. 8 representations were in favour of the restriction and supported it whereas 12 were not in support. The representations are attached as Appendix 2, 2a, 2b and 2c of this report.
- 4.13 7 of the representations were received from Visitors to the area, who use the Lake for wild swimming. Whilst Officers appreciate the disruption that this restriction has caused to the Lake users, there are car parks around the lake as well as alternative safe parking areas therefore this restriction should not discourage those from utilising the lake.
- 4.14 The remaining objections received through the 6 months were mostly in relation to the signage which is in place to facilitate the restriction. As detailed within this report there is no requirement for repeater signage therefore it is possible that over time the signage can be reduced, however there is a need for this signage whilst the restriction is only new to remind motorists using the route. The repeater signs are mostly within passing places, and whilst it is appreciated that the Howtown Road is in an area of beauty, unfortunately the dangerous and inconsiderate parking we have seen in the County over recent years is why Local Authorities have been required to act in such ways.
- 4.15 1 of the objections was in relation to the impact that the parking restriction has had on surrounding areas, whilst this is appreciated this does identify that there was a problem in the area and that the restriction is deterring the inconsiderate parking.

- 4.16 There are proposals by the LDNPA to install pop up car parks within the Ullswater area, therefore creating additional spaces during the tourist season and the Ullswater steamers will begin to operate again during this year which will provide an alternative form of travel to Howtown. Therefore, reducing the need for available on-street parking.

5 OPTIONS

- 5.1 That the Local Committee approves the recommendation set out in paragraph 3.1 of this report
- 5.2 That the Local Committee does NOT approve the recommendation set out in paragraph 3.1 of this report.

6 RESOURCE AND VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The ETRO is already in place and came into operation on 16 August 2021.
- 6.2 The Members are asked to note that there will be some future maintenance costs in relation to the restriction should it be made permanent, (which must take place prior to its expiry after 18 months of operation), which will need to be met from future revenue budget allocations.

7 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 There are no legal implications in relation to the recommendation in this report. However, Members should note that any (less onerous) amendments to the ETRO cannot be made after 12 months of the ETRO's operation, i.e., after 16 August 2022, without having to recommence the Experimental TRO procedure. (KB – 22.3.2022)

8 CONCLUSION

- 8.1 That the Local Committee agree to allowing the ETRO to remain in place over the summer period as referred to at paragraph 3.1 of this report.

Angela Jones

Executive Director - Economy and Infrastructure.

March 2022

APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Location plan showing extents of restriction

Appendix 2 – Summary of representations received during consultation
Appendix 2a – Letter of representation received during consultation
Appendix 2b – Letter of representation received during consultation
Appendix 2c – Letter of representation received during consultation
Appendix 3 – A copy of the Site Notice summarising the restriction
Appendix 4 - The Council’s statement of reasons for making the ETRO

Electoral Division(s): Eden Lakes

Executive Decision	<input type="button" value="Yes"/>
Key Decision	<input type="button" value="No"/>
If a Key Decision, is the proposal published in the current Forward Plan?	<input type="button" value="N/A"/>
Is the decision exempt from call-in on grounds of urgency?	<input type="button" value="No"/>
If exempt from call-in, has the agreement of the Chair of the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee been sought or obtained?	<input type="button" value="N/A*"/>
Has this matter been considered by Overview and Scrutiny? If so, give details below.	<input type="button" value="No*"/>
Has an environmental or sustainability impact assessment been undertaken?	<input type="button" value="No*"/>
Has an equality impact assessment been undertaken?	<input type="button" value="No*"/>

PREVIOUS RELEVANT COUNCIL OR EXECUTIVE DECISIONS

Leader Decision Record to approve the implementation of the ETRO

CONSIDERATION BY OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

Not considered by Overview and Scrutiny.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Leader Decision Record to approve the implementation of the ETRO

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REPORT AUTHOR

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