

Consultation replies	Officer's comments
<p>The Police have no objection to a seasonal TRO.</p>	
<p>The Ramblers also have no objection to a Seasonal TRO.</p>	
<p>Objection The Byways and Bridleways Trust responded to the initial consultation with the following: "4ft 11 in is not legally wide enough for a bridleway, which for centuries has had a minimum width at gateways and gaps of 5ft. 5ft 6in would be a far better width than 4ft 11 in, but 5ft could be accepted as the minimum, since this would still allow some of the two wheeled traps used by drivers of horses to these routes. I believe that 5ft 6in (168cm) would deny access to the majority of those whose rights are being stopped, and at the same time would make life much easier for lawful users. Another alternative, which is worth considering, is the Kent Carriage Gap. Which would be an even more acceptable means of denying access to 4x4's and larger driven carriages."</p>	<p>The 4ft 11in width was chosen because it was critical for restricting the smallest 4x4s (for example, a Suzuki Jimmy is up to 160cm wide), but at the same time striking a balance and allowing as many other users through the gap. The vast majority of horse drawn carriages are between 125- 138cm, however the older vehicles can be 140cm+. There have been no objections from equestrians or carriage users over the previous implementation of the 4ft 11in width restriction TRO.</p> <p>The Kent Carriage Gap is made up of two bollards 0.33m high which would ground all motorised vehicles except motorbikes, whilst allowing horse drawn carriages over. Officers consider that the Kent Carriage Gap would not be appropriate in this instance because the landowner requires access to the Byway and a lockable gate is needed. There is not enough room to fit a gate allowing the landowner's vehicle through and the 2+ metres gap that the Kent Gap requires to be successful.</p>
<p>Objection It is with great concern that we, The Four Wheel drive Club, feel the need to respond to you on these matters.</p> <p>As a club we have put a lot of effort into looking after our lanes and informing our members on responsible use. We have worked closely with The Surrey Hills AONB Board, and the Council on producing signs to inform the public of the legal use of Byways. Many, in fact</p>	<p>Officers appreciate all the help the 4WDC have provided. The signs and information leaflets have been very useful.</p> <p>A width restriction was chosen because it is very difficult to restrict motorcycles whilst allowing equestrians, carriage drivers and mobility scooters through. Other byways that have had the width</p>

<p>most Byways in Surrey now have the Byway Signs with our logo on. We feel it is possible that people are beginning to associate our club with lane closures!</p> <p>We feel strongly that these lanes should not be closed as this would be unfair to members of our club and other legal Four Wheel Drive users. The vast majorities are well behaved and stick to the actual lanes. There is feeling among some of our club members that <i>“we abide by the rules and suffer because of a few and the council just close the lanes because of this.”</i></p> <p>We also feel it is unfair to target just 4x4 users, but still allowing use by quads and motorcycles. There is plenty of documented evidence proving that motorcycles go much faster, wheelspin much more easily, are much noisier and in numbers cause just as much damage, if not more, than legitimate 4x4 users, who travel sedately and with thought for other users. I urge you to ask horseriders or rambles who they would prefer to meet on a lane and I’m sure it would generally be 4x4’s.</p> <p>Your own data shows that 4x4 usage of the byways is actually quite small, but unfortunately motorcycle and quad data was not given. From experience I know that motorcycle usage is much higher than 4x4’s and it is logical that larger numbers of bikes and quads using byways will have just as much impact as a few sensible 4x4 users.</p> <p>As mentioned earlier, High Button and indeed all three byways have not deteriorated much in the last few years. They are all in similar condition to they were three or four years ago. A seasonal TRO in our opinion would solve nothing unless they are closed to all traffic and then only if repairs are carried out.</p>	<p>restriction have withstood motorcycle traffic quite well. However, this is always monitored.</p> <p>A Seasonal TRO will prevent damage to the surface during the winter months when it is most susceptible.</p> <p>Officers will continue to investigate alternative solutions to TROs. However, in this instance a winter closure will increase the durability of the byway. For this to be effective allowing even small numbers of 4x4s via a permit pass system would not be appropriate.</p>
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<p>As a solution, we would like to offer further voluntary work that could help prevent 'off piste' activity. Such work would need to be discussed but measures preventing users attempting to climb the banks would be a priority.</p> <p>As a last resort we would like to suggest that rather than simply closing lanes that SCC consider the possibility of a permit system, which works very well in other sensitive areas. This would limit and control the number of times the lane is used. We would be happy to organise this and could arrange management of this through club volunteers, though obviously this would have to be carefully considered.</p> <p>To understand what we mean, please look at -- http://www.lakedistrict.gov.uk/index/visiting/outdoors/green_road/green_road_gatescarth.htm They use a permit system which appears to work very well. 12 vehicles a month wouldn't be sufficient but we could agree on what would be the right balance on these lanes.</p> <p>If this were to be considered, it could be used on other lanes which have similar issues. Surely it would be better and fairer to keep the lanes open this way? These particular lanes could be kept as "challenging lanes" and suitable tyres and capable vehicle would be required which could also discourage users whose vehicles are not appropriate.</p> <p>It is essential that amenities are open to all users – not just walkers, motorcyclists and Horse riders. Responsible 4x4 Users do not get a fair deal despite our UK wide efforts to assist the public in adverse weather conditions and times of need. I urge you to reconsider the proposed</p>	
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<p>Objection Mr Isles states: "Stop hammering 4x4s, a lot of the erosion on these byways is caused by water trying to find a way out, leaving step sided washouts which bikes, walkers and horses use because they cannot balance on the slopes. All users are responsible."</p>	<p>Officers agree that there is a lot of water erosion on the byway. But 4x4s exacerbate the amount of material that is churned up and washed away and have caused ruts and wallows, when the surface cannot withstand even light vehicles during the wet months.</p>
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