



**OFFICER REPORT TO LOCAL COMMITTEE
(REIGATE AND BANSTEAD)**

**FRENCHES ROAD, REDHILL
RESULTS OF TRIAL SUSPENSION OF BUS GATE**

4 MARCH 2013

KEY ISSUE

To report on the outcome of the trial suspension of the bus gate in Frenches Road and seek a decision on whether to make the trial permanent.

SUMMARY

In December 2011, Local Committee agreed to suspend the bus gate at the northern end of Frenches Road for a six month trial period. The trial commenced in August 2012. Traffic surveys were carried out before and during the trial to determine changes in traffic movements, and consultation carried out with local residents.

The survey shows that there has been some redistribution of traffic from Ormside Way and Holmesdale Avenue to Frenches Road, as expected, with a maximum recorded two-way flow increase of 138 vehicles being recorded in the am peak period. Analysis of the consultation responses shows support from local residents for making the suspension of the bus gate permanent, with additional measures suggested by a number of respondents.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATIONS

The Local Committee (Reigate and Banstead) is asked to:

- (i) Agree that the suspension of the bus gate be made permanent;
- (ii) Authorise the advertisement of the revocation of The Surrey County Council (Frenches Road, Redhill) (Prohibition of Driving) Order 2005, the effect of which will be to make permanent the experimental order;
- (iii) Approve the installation of a speed table in the existing road narrowing at the bus gate;
- (iv) Authorise the advertisement of a Notice in accordance with Section 90 (A) to (I) of the Highways Act 1980 (as amended), the effect of which would be to give notice of the County Council's intention to introduce a raised table at the existing road narrowing in Frenches Road, Redhill;
- (v) Instruct Officers to review the direction signs to the Holmethorpe Industrial Estate and that new or improved signing be implemented as appropriate; and
- (vi) Authorise delegation of authority to the South East Area Team Manager, in consultation with the Chairman, Vice-Chairman and divisional Member, to resolve any objections or representations received in connection with any of the notices advertised.

1 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The bus gate at the northern end of Frenches Road, consisting of road narrowing and rising bollards, was installed in 2005. A location plan is attached as **Annex 1**.
- 1.2 In December 2011, following requests from residents, supported by the Member of Parliament for Reigate, to lower the bollards to permit access to Frenches Road from the north, Local Committee agreed to suspend the bus gate for a six month trial period. The trial suspension of the bus gate commenced in August 2012.
- 1.3 Traffic surveys were carried out before the trial started and during the trial period. Public consultation with local residents was also carried out.
- 1.4 This report summarises the outcome of the traffic survey and public consultation and makes recommendations as to whether or not to make the trial suspension of the bus gate permanent.

2 ANALYSIS

- 2.1 Traffic surveys were carried out in May 2012 to record existing traffic movements and further surveys were carried out in November 2012 (prior to the emergency gas works on the A23) to determine the changes in traffic movements resulting from the trial. The surveys were carried out using cameras to record vehicle numbers, type and turning movements. The survey locations are shown in **Annex 1** and a summary of the traffic count data is given in **Annex 2**.
- 2.2 The traffic count data shows a small increase in traffic in both directions along the northern section of Frenches Road. There are corresponding decreases in the north-south movements via Ormside Way and Holmesdale Avenue.
- 2.3 The table below summarises the impact on traffic flows on the section of Frenches Road between Trowers Way and Ormside Way. This analysis assumes that the total increase in traffic is a result of the suspension of the bus gate.

Road	Time	Northbound	Southbound	Total
		(average hourly flow)		
Frenches Road south of Ormside Way	am peak	+ 47	+ 91	+ 138
	inter-peak	+ 35	+ 39	+ 74
	pm peak	+ 64	+ 59	+ 123
Frenches Road north of Trowers Way	am peak	+ 28	+ 53	+ 81
	inter-peak	+ 32	+ 32	+ 64
	pm peak	+ 50	+ 39	+89

- 2.4 The data shows that the number of HGVs using this section of Frenches Road is minimal, are likely to have business in the area and has not increased as a result of the bus gate being suspended.
- 2.5 The above figures imply that there has been a small redistribution of traffic from Ormside Way and Holmesdale Avenue to Frenches Road to take advantage of the direct route through the suspended bus gate.
- 2.6 The survey also record a decrease in traffic turning left into Holmedale Avenue from Nutfield Road and turning right out of Holmesdale Avenue into Nutfield Road. It is not possible to conclude from the data collected if this traffic has rerouted through the area but it is unlikely that this reduction is related to the suspension of the bus gate

3 OPTIONS

Option 1 – Permanent suspension of the bus gate

- 3.1 The bollards and associated equipment would be removed, the priority give-way at the existing road narrowing retained and access maintained for all vehicles. The Traffic Regulation Order restricting access to buses and emergency services only at the bus gate would be revoked.
- 3.2 The small redistribution of traffic recorded during the trial period would be maintained under this option. This option has the advantage of improving access, as previously requested by residents.

Option 2 – Permanent suspension of the bus gate with additional measures in Frenches Road

- 3.3 As option 1, but with additional measures in Frenches Road. Measures suggested by residents as part of the consultation include improvements to the Holmethorpe Industrial Estate direction signing, traffic calming, speed enforcement measures or parking restrictions.
- 3.4 The redistribution of traffic recorded during the trial period would be maintained under this option, but the additional measures may mitigate the impact of the small increase in traffic in Frenches Road . This option has the advantage of improving access, as previously requested by residents.

Option 3 – Reinstate the bus gate

- 3.5 The bollards would be brought back into operation, the priority give-way working removed, the previous signing reinstate, the effect of which would be to restrict access at the northern end of Frenches Road to buses and emergency vehicles only.
- 3.6 It should be noted that the bollards were regularly checked during the trial period and briefly raised and lowered to ensure they continued to function. Unfortunately, they stopped working after the snow in January

2013 and so would require maintenance work to bring them back into operation.

- 3.7 This option will result in the situation reverting to that of before the trial suspension. This does not address the issue of improving access, as previously requested by residents.

4 CONSULTATION

Questionnaire to residents

- 4.1 Consultation with local residents was carried out after the trial had been in place for 3 months. This allowed time for new traffic patterns to become established. A letter and questionnaire was sent to 512 local residents in November 2012 to seek their views on the impact of the trial. The questionnaire asked residents to indicate if they supported:

- (i) Option 1: Make the suspension permanent
- (ii) Option 2: Make the suspension permanent but with changes (respondents were asked to specify what additional measures they would like to see implemented)
- (iii) Option 3: Make the bus gate operational again

- 4.2 The results of the consultation are given in **Annex 3**. 251 completed questionnaires were received, a response rate of 49%. Annex 3 sets out the responses by road and Figure 1 below shows the overall response to the three options.

- 4.3 Figure 1 shows that the majority of respondents (60%) supported making the suspension of the bus gate permanent with an additional 22% supported making the suspension permanent but with changes. This gives an overall level of support for making the suspension of the bus gate permanent of 82%. 18% of respondents supported making the bus gate operational again.

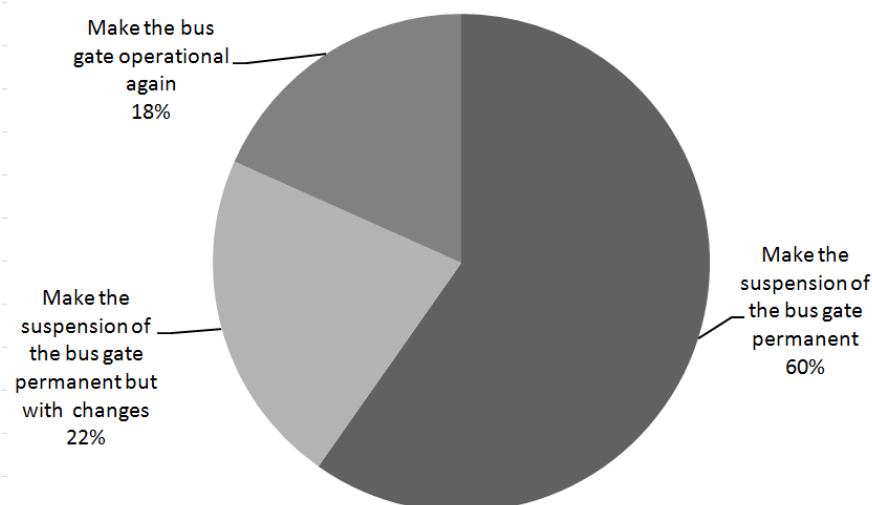


Figure 1

- 4.4 Responses received from Frenches Road residents have been separated by whether they live north or south of the junction with Trowers Way. 62% of respondents living in Frenches Road north of Trowers Way indicated that they support reinstatement of the bus gate whereas only 38% supported making the trial suspension permanent, with or without changes. Whilst they benefit from improved access, they are directly affected by the increased traffic volumes resulting from the trial suspension of the bus gate. As set out in para. 4.6 and 4.7, measures are proposed to try to mitigate some of the concerns raised by residents living in this section of Frenches Road.
- 4.5 Respondents from the other roads were strongly in favour of the permanent suspension of the bus gate.
- 4.6 The changes or measures in addition to the bus gate suspension that were suggested are summarised in Annex 3. The most common suggestions made are given below, together with Officer comments:
- (i) **Increase parking restrictions near the gate**
Parking in the vicinity of the priority give-way could cause safety issues. If the trial suspension of the bus gate is made permanent, the need for restrictions to prevent parking in the vicinity of the priority give-way at the road narrowing will be considered as part of a future road safety audit.
 - (ii) **Provide additional traffic calming, such as humps/ramps**
It is proposed that a raised table be constructed within the existing road narrowing to slow vehicles at the priority give-way. Traffic speeds will be monitored in the section of Frenches Road between the narrowing and Trowers Way. If speeding is found to be an issue, this will be raised with the Police who are responsible for enforcement.
 - (iii) **Restrict HGVs**
The survey data does not show that there has been a significant diversion of HGVs onto Frenches Road as a result of the trial. It is proposed that the existing direction signing to Holmethorpe Industrial Estate is reviewed to ensure that it directs HGVs along appropriate roads. New or improved signing could be provided, as appropriate.
 - (iv) **Maintain the width restriction at the gate**
It is not proposed to remove the existing width restriction if the trial suspension of the bus gate is made permanent.

4.7 Respondents were also invited to make additional comments. The most common of these were:

(i) **Traffic speed has increased**

Traffic speeds will be monitored, as set out in para.4.6 (ii) above.

(ii) **Traffic volume has increased**

It was always expected that traffic volumes in Frenches Road would increase once access was provided to all vehicles through the bus gate. The largest increase in traffic flows were recorded in the am peak, with an additional 138 vehicles (two-way flow) using Frenches Road at its junction with Ormside Way.

Police

4.8 The Police did not object to the trial suspension of the bus gate. The Police have been consulted as part of the trial and the Central Neighbourhoods Road Safety and Traffic Management Team officer has made the following comments.

"I have undertaken a collision review of the site and no problems were identified during the course of the trial.

I have spoken to the local Casualty reduction officer and he has received no complaints and is not aware of any problems since the trial was first implemented.

Making the order permanent would remove the potentially dangerous manoeuvre of reversing goods vehicles into Elmwood Road.

Making the order permanent would eliminate the problems of criminalising those individuals who used the access unlawfully when the bollards were not working

I am unaware of any speed enforcement or collision issues that existed on this part of Frenches Road, prior to the original implementation of the scheme.

From my observations, the current prioritisation system at the location of the gates is working well. Indeed this helps to moderate the traffic speed at this location.

Making the order permanent could possibly assist with emergency vehicle response times.

In view of all of these factors I would not object to (and indeed would support) the trial being made permanent."

Surrey County Council

4.9 The Passenger Transport Group previously indicated that they did not have any strong feelings either way on the proposal to temporarily suspend the bus gate. Following the suspension of the gate, they have consulted with the bus operator who indicated that the drivers are fairly happy about the bollard being permanently down. Opinion was expressed that although they sometimes have to give way to cars, they previously had to wait for the bollards.

- 4.10 The Traffic Signals Team commented that they would welcome removal of the bollards. There have been on-going issues with maintaining the bollards and their frequent failure to operate.

5 FINANCIAL AND VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The two year Integrated Transport Scheme programme is the subject of a separate report to this meeting of the Local Committee. The report proposes allocating £10,000 to either make permanent the suspension of the bus gate or to reinstate the bollards.

6 EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The Highway Service is mindful of its needs within this area and attempts to treat all users of the public highway with equality and understanding.

7 CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 A well-managed highway network can reduce fear of crime and allow the Police greater opportunity to carry out their enforcement duties.

8 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- 8.1 The bus gate at the northern end of Frenches Road was temporarily suspended in August 2012 for a six month trial period, following a request from residents to permit access. Traffic surveys were carried out before and after the suspension, and consultation with local residents undertaken.
- 8.2 The survey data shows a small redistribution of traffic from Ormside Way and Holmesdale Avenue to Frenches Road. The consultation showed strong support to make permanent the suspension of the bus gate. Additional measures were also suggested by some respondents. The Police expressed support for the trial being made permanent.
- 8.3 Based on the outcome of the trial, it is recommended that the suspension of the bus gate is made permanent. It is also recommended that a raised table be introduced within the existing road narrowing at the bus gate.
- 8.4 To address concerns raised by residents, it is proposed that officers review the existing directions signs to the Holmethorpe Industrial Estate, providing new or improved signing as appropriate and that the need for restrictions to prevent parking in the vicinity of the priority give-way at the road narrowing is considered as part of a future road safety audit.

8.5 Officers will monitor traffic speeds in the section of Frenches Road between the bus gate and Trowers Way, and liaise with the Police as appropriate.

9 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

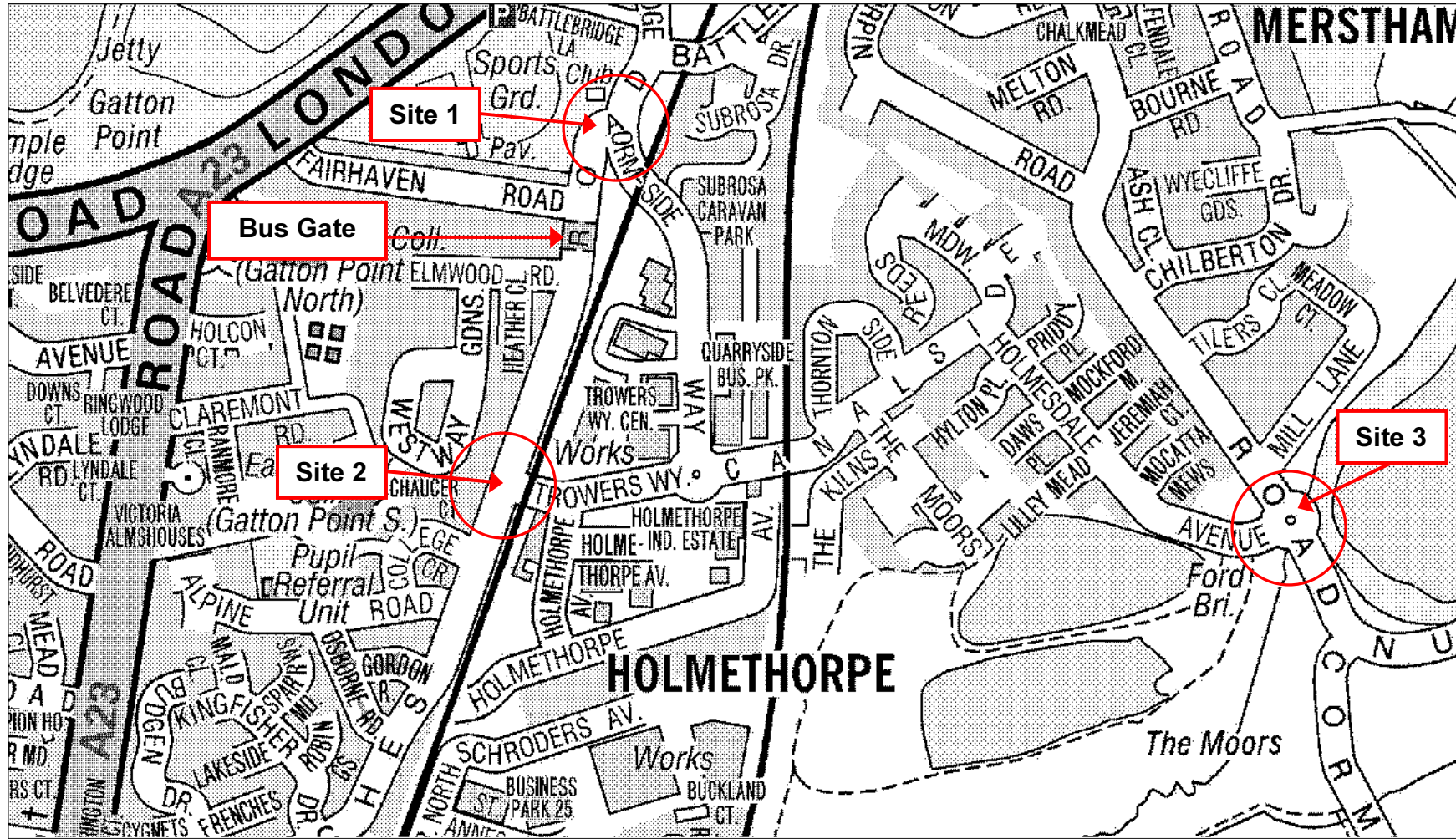
9.1 The trial suspension of the bus gate has not resulted in a significant redistribution of traffic to Frenches Road. Public consultation has indicated a strong level of support for making the suspension of the bus gate permanent, which will improve access for the residents in the Frenches Road area.

10 WHAT HAPPENS NEXT


10.1 Subject to Local Committee approval, design of the raised table within the road narrowing will be carried out, the necessary legal notices advertised and the works carried out to permanently suspend the bus gate in Frenches Road.

LEAD OFFICER:	John Lawlor, Area Team Manager (SE)
TELEPHONE NUMBER:	03456 009 009
E-MAIL:	highways@surreycc.gov.uk
CONTACT OFFICER:	Peter Shimadry, Engineer, South East Area Team
TELEPHONE NUMBER:	03456 009 009
E-MAIL:	highways@surreycc.gov.uk
BACKGROUND PAPERS:	Letter from Crispin Blunt, MP dated 8 June 2011 Reigate & Banstead Local Committee – 5 December 2011, Item 9 Consultation responses Traffic survey data May 2012 and November 2012

LOCATION PLAN



Page 182

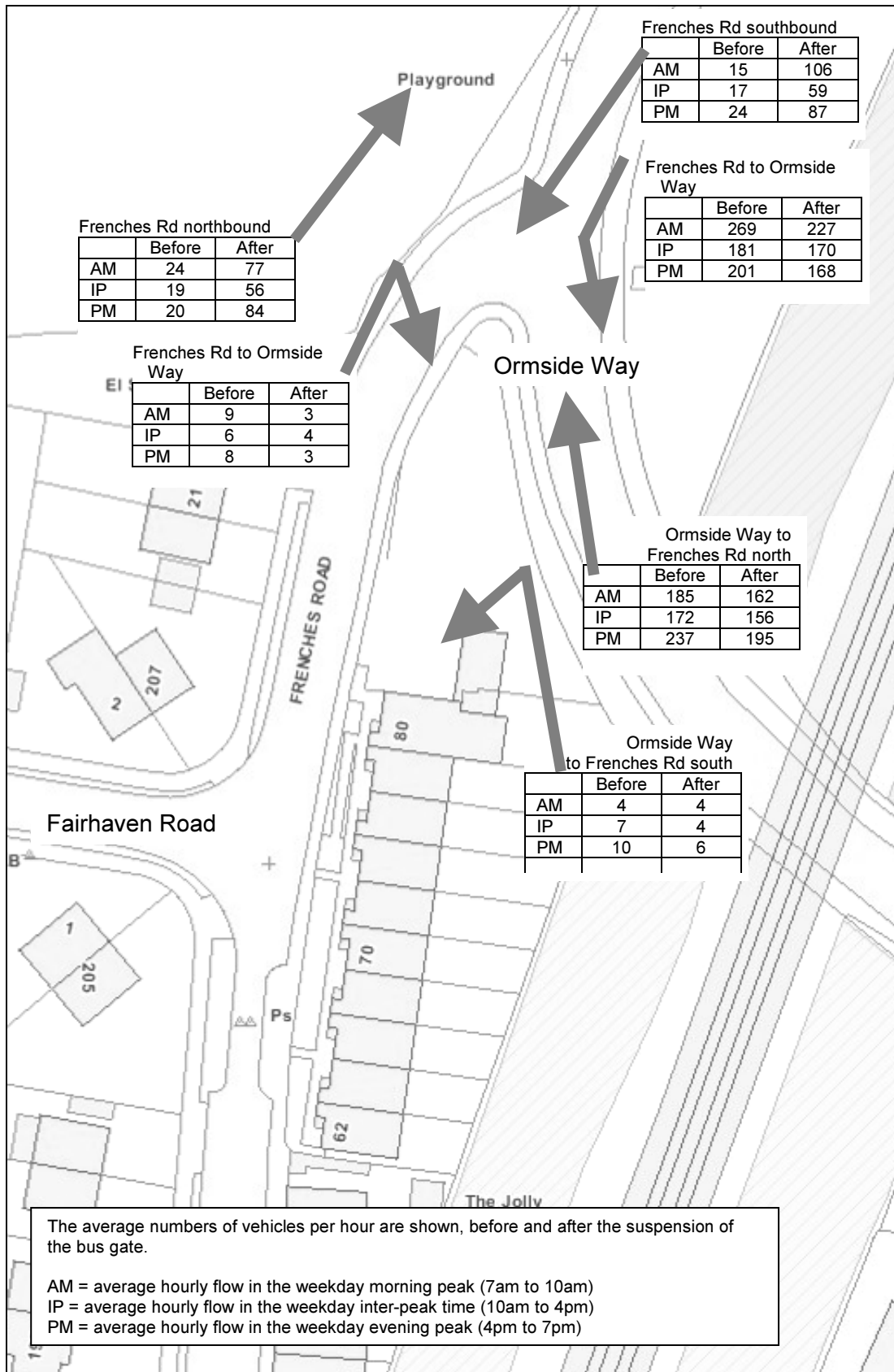
 GRID NORTH	Scale (approx):	1:6500
	Date Printed:	12/02/2013
	Printed By:	
	Drawing Number:	

Frenches Road
Trial Suspension of bus gate

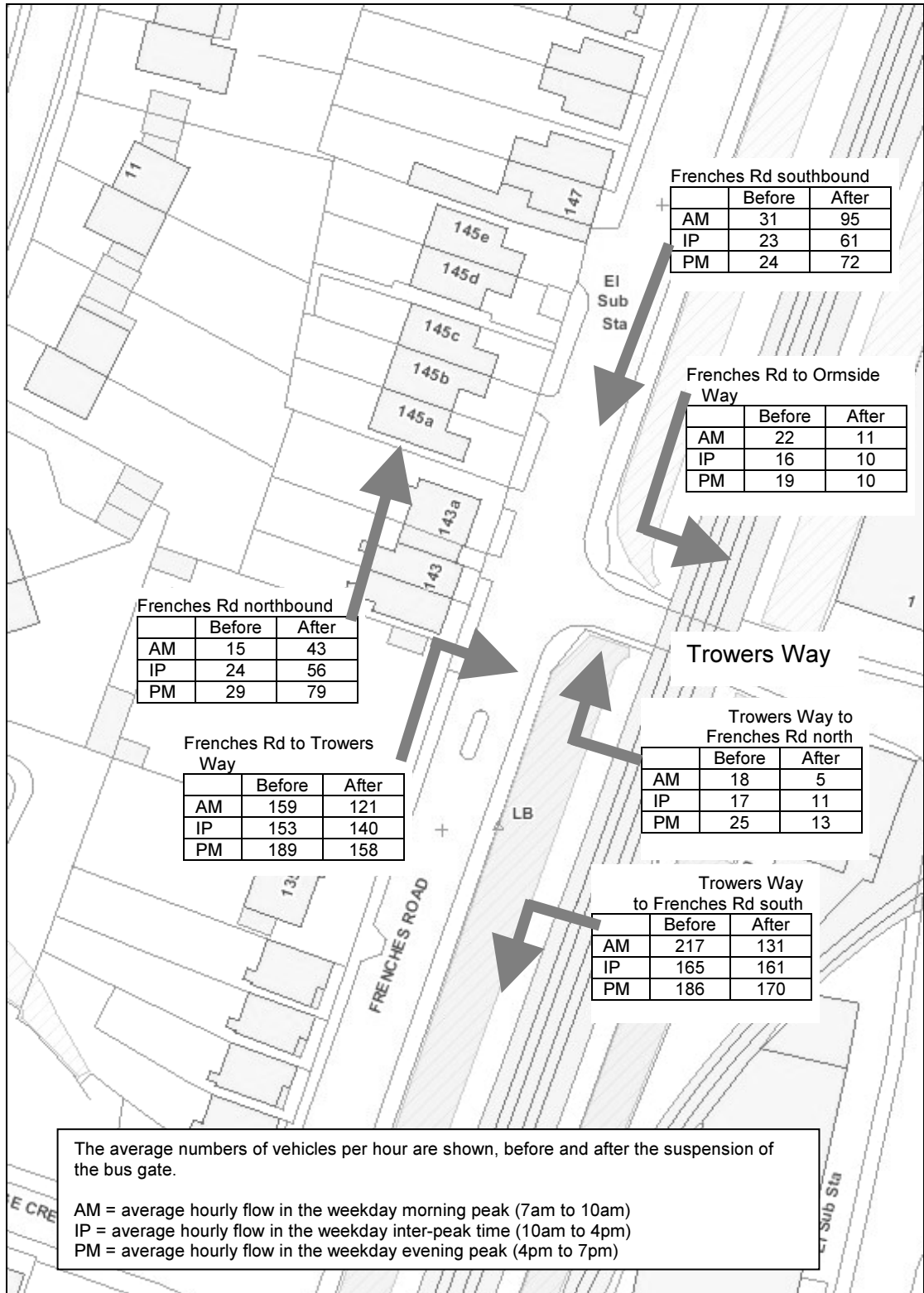
Crown copyright © Licence No. 100019613, Surrey County Council, 2013
 Except as stated in the Public Rights of Way Act 1995, all other rights reserved.



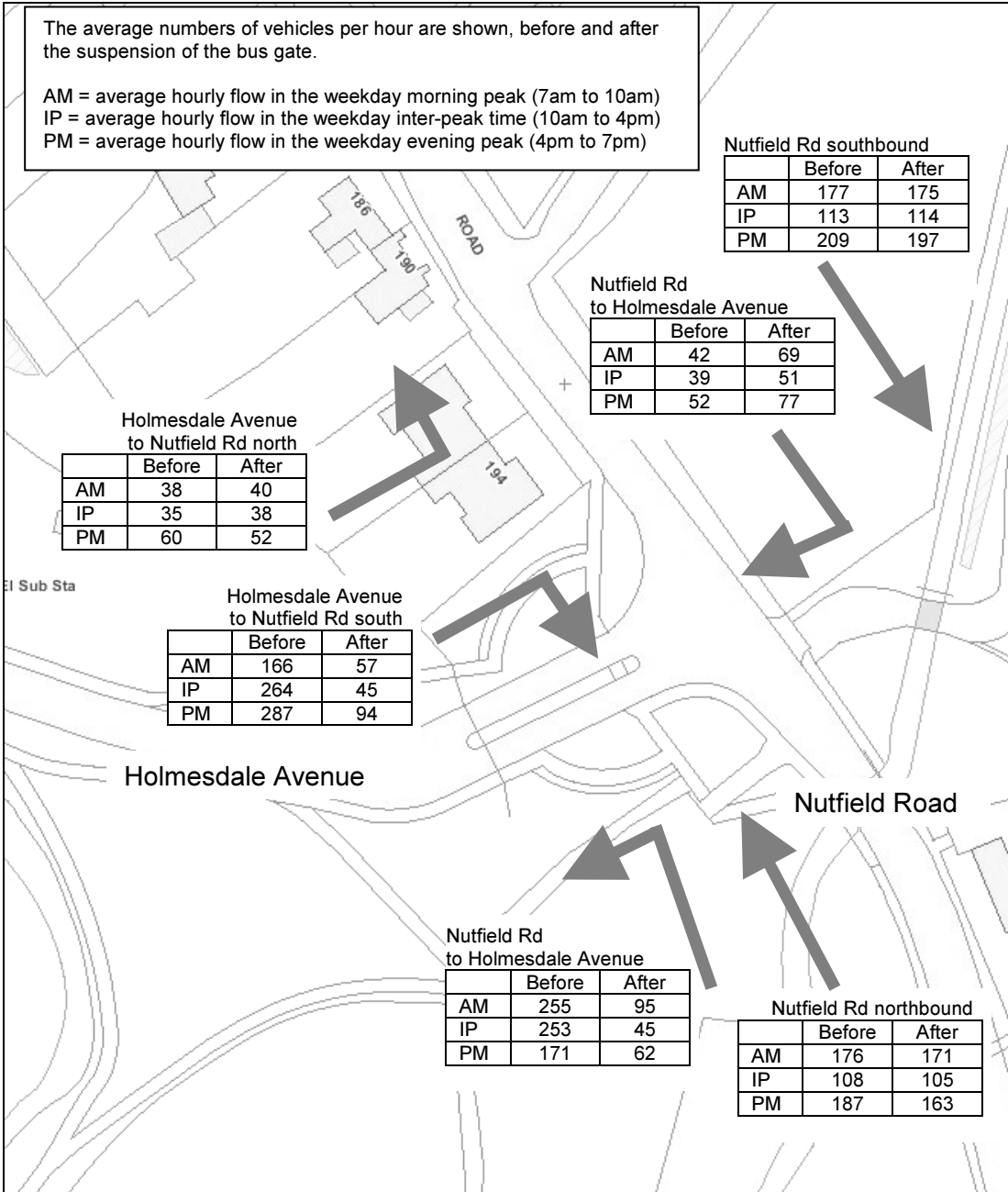
ANNEX 1



Site 1: Frenches Road/Ormside Way Traffic Flows



Site 2: Frenches Road/Trowers Way Traffic Flows



Site 3: Nutfield Road/Holmesdale Avenue Traffic Flows

ANNEX 3

QUESTIONNAIRE RESPONSES

Number of questionnaires distributed: 512.

Number of completed questionnaires received: 251 (49% response rate)

Address of respondent (by road)	Option1 Make Permanent (%)	Option 2 Make Permanent with changes (%)	Option 3 Reinstate bus gate (%)	Letters delivered (No.)	Total responses (No.)	Response rate (%)
Frenches Road North of Trowers Way	19%	19%	62%	43	21	48%
Frenches Road South of Trowers Way	38%	19%	43%	90	37	42%
Fairhaven Road	51%	31%	18%	76	39	51%
Elmwood Road	69%	23%	8%	44	26	59%
Heather Close	67%	0	33%	10	6	60%
Westway Gardens	61%	35%	4%	57	49	86%
College Crescent	75%	0	25%	24	4	17%
Alpine Road	83%	7%	10%	100	42	42%
Gordon Road	91%	9%	0	22	11	50%
Osborne Road	69%	31%	0	46	16	35%
Total responses	60%	22%	18%	512	251	49%

Responses by Road

Type of change/measure	Number of comments
Increase parking restrictions near the gate	31
Provide additional traffic calming, such as humps/ramps	13
Restrict HGVs	12
Maintain the width restriction at the gate	11
Provide residents with electronic passes for the gate	9
Change the traffic priority at the gate	5
Installation of a speed camera	4
Remove the width restriction at the gate	4

Changes or additional measures suggested by respondents

Subject	Number of comments
Traffic speed has increased	16
Traffic volume has increased	10
Noise has increased	3
Traffic flow has improved	3
Speeds should be reduced	3
Conditions have improved for residents	2

Other comments made by respondents

This page is intentionally left blank