

LOCAL COMMITTEE (MOLE VALLEY)

DATE: 20 JANUARY 2021

LEAD OFFICER: ZENA CURRY, HIGHWAYS ENGAGEMENT & COMMISSIONING MANAGER

SUBJECT: HIGH STREET & CHURCH STREET, LEATHERHEAD – EXTENSION OF PEDESTRIAN ZONE HOURS & PERMITTING USE BY CYCLISTS

DIVISION/S: LEATHERHEAD & FETCHAM EAST

SUMMARY OF ISSUE:

On 9th May 2020, the government announced that funding would be available to local governments to provide temporary measures to support social distancing and active travel as part of the COVID19 recovery. Surrey County Council was granted £848,000 by the government to support the roll out of the first phase of active travel schemes, with Surrey County Council providing match funding.

As part of the active travel measures in Leatherhead town centre, a temporary (18 month) traffic regulation order (TTRO) was implemented to extend the hours of operation of the pedestrian zone from Monday to Saturday 10am to 4:30pm to Monday to Sunday 10am to 4:30pm. This TTRO also extended the parking restrictions within the pedestrian zone, from 8am to 6pm Monday to Saturday to 8am to 6pm Monday to Sunday, and temporarily permitted cyclists to cycle within the pedestrian zone as long as the cyclist follows the existing one-way system in Church Street and High Street, Leatherhead.

This TTRO is now coming to an end and following the results of consultation carried out by Surrey County Council and Mole Valley District Council, this report seeks approval for the existing temporary changes to be made permanent.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Local Committee (Mole Valley) is asked to:

- i) Note the results of the consultation set out in section 2, Annex 2 and Annex 3.
- ii) Agree that, based upon the results of the consultation, changes be made to the pedestrian zone as follows;
 - a) That the hours of operation of the pedestrian zone be extended from Monday to Saturday 10am to 4:30pm to Monday to Sunday 10am to 4:30pm and that the parking restrictions within the pedestrian zone be extended, from 8am to 6pm Monday to Saturday to 8am to 6pm Monday to Sunday

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- b) permit cyclists to cycle within the pedestrian zone as long as the cyclist follows the existing one-way system in Church Street and High Street, Leatherhead.

iii) Authorise the advertisement of a notice in accordance with the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, the effect of which will be to implement the proposed changes to the pedestrian zone, revoke any existing traffic orders necessary to implement the change, and, subject to no objections being upheld, that the order be made;

iv) Authorise delegation of authority to the Area Highway Manager in consultation with the Chairman, Vice-Chairman of the Local Committee and the local divisional member to resolve any objections received in connection with the proposal.

v) That funding from the “Stage 3 Road Safety Audits/Accessibility Improvements/Small safety and improvement schemes/signs and road markings” allocation within the Integrated Transport Schemes budget be used for the Traffic Regulation Order.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:

To enable permanent changes to be made to the operation of the pedestrian zone within Church Street/High Street, Leatherhead.

1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND:

- 1.1 On 9th May 2020, the government announced that funding would be available to local governments to provide temporary measures to support social distancing and active travel as part of the COVID19 recovery. Surrey County Council was granted £848,000 by the government to support the roll out of the first phase of active travel schemes, with Surrey County Council providing match funding. The focus of this funding was within town centres and shopping areas, to give people confidence to return to the shops and restaurants and to support the high streets.
- 1.2 As part of the active travel measures in Leatherhead town centre, a temporary (18 month) traffic regulation order (TTRO) was implemented to extend the hours of operation of the pedestrian zone from Monday to Saturday 10am to 4:30pm to Monday to Sunday 10am to 4:30pm. This TTRO also extended the parking restrictions within the pedestrian zone, from 8am to 6pm Monday to Saturday to 8am to 6pm Monday to Sunday and permitted cyclists to cycle within the pedestrian zone as long as the cyclist follows the existing one-way system in Church Street and High Street, Leatherhead.
- 1.3 The TTRO has helped to enable social distancing by extending the period during which vehicles could not enter and park in the pedestrian zone to include Sundays. It also helped to encouraged cycling at a time when there was reduced passenger capacity on public transport to enable social distancing.
- 1.4 Prior to the 18-month TTRO coming to an end, Surrey County Council and Mole Valley District Council consulted with residents and businesses, as well as other consultees such as Surrey Police and Leatherhead Residents Association, to find out if there was support for making the existing TTRO permanent. The results of these consultations are shown in section 2 of this report.

2. ANALYSIS:

Results of consultation

- 2.1 Surrey County Council carried out consultation in the form of a letter drop to residents and businesses within the pedestrian zone of Church Street and High Street, Leatherhead. The letter drop included a letter outlining the reasons for the consultation, a questionnaire and a plan showing the area of the pedestrian zone in question as shown in Annex 1. The letter, questionnaire and plan were also placed on Surrey County Council's website and signs were installed on lamp columns in Church Street and High Street, informing general highway users of the consultation.
- 2.2 A summary of the results of the consultation carried out by Surrey County Council is shown in Annex 2.
- 2.3 82 responses to this consultation were received with over 85% of respondents supporting the proposal to permanently extend the hours of operation of the pedestrian zone to include Sundays 10am to 4:30pm (including no parking from 0800-1800 on Sundays). However, there was slightly less support to continue to let cyclists use the pedestrian zone, with 45.12% in support and 54.88% against.
- 2.4 The questionnaire also included a section for respondents to provide general comments regarding the proposals, Table 1 below provides a summary of the main comments that were received.

General comments received	Number of respondents providing such comment
The increased pedestrian zone timings, provides a much safer and more pleasant environment.	15
It is not safe for cyclists to use the pedestrian zone, because they may collide with a pedestrian, wheelchair or mobility scooter users.	11
The pedestrian zone should always be for pedestrians only except for limited loading hours.	6
More free parking should be provided in Leatherhead town centre/free parking in Swan Centre.	5
Allowing cyclists to use the pedestrian zone will help promote more walking and cycling and will encourage cycle groups to use the cafes/restaurants.	2

Table 1: Example of general comments received within questionnaire responses

- 2.4 As can be seen from Table 1 above, those who responded to the questionnaire felt that the extension to the pedestrian zone in Church Street/High Street had resulted in a more safe and more pleasant environment. However, respondents were concerned that allowing cyclists to continue to use the pedestrian zone would result in pedestrians being more at risk.

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- 2.5 It is appreciated that respondents to the questionnaire are concerned that allowing cyclists to continue to use the pedestrian zone will result in collisions occurring between cyclists and pedestrians. Surrey County Council holds personal injury collision data for traffic collisions that have occurred over the most recent 5-year period. This information is provided by Surrey Police and shows that there has been one personal injury collision in the pedestrianised area of Church Street and High Street over the most recent 5-year period for which data is available (from 01/09/2016 to 31/08/2021). This collision occurred in the High Street in 2017, outside of the pedestrian zone hours and resulted in a slight injury. However, this collision did not involve a cyclist or a pedestrian. There have been no recorded collisions occurring between cyclists and pedestrians during the hours of operation of the pedestrian zone during the most recent 5 year period for which data is available. This includes a year of data when the temporary traffic regulation order has been in place permitting cyclists to cycle within the pedestrian zone.
- 2.6 Mole Valley District Council carried out consultation with 82 businesses located within Leatherhead town centre, including those located in the Swan Centre, Church Street, High Street, North Street and Bridge Street. Their questionnaire was also shared via their Transform Leatherhead and Mole Valley District Council's social media channels.
- 2.7 A summary of the results of the consultation carried out by Mole Valley District Council are shown in Annex 3. 26 businesses (32%) responded to the consultation. The results of the survey show that 50% of businesses that responded to the consultation, thought that the temporary extension to the pedestrian zone to include Sundays, had been beneficial for their business, with 23.1% thinking that is hadn't. 73% of businesses that responded also thought that it had been beneficial overall to the town centre.
- 2.8 50% of businesses that responded to the consultation thought that making the High Street accessible to cyclists during the pedestrian times had been beneficial to their business, with 19.2% thinking that is hadn't been beneficial. Similarly, 50% of businesses that responded to the consultation thought that making the High Street accessible to cyclists during the pedestrian times had been beneficial to the town centre, with 34.6% thinking that it hadn't been beneficial.
- 2.9 Overall the majority of businesses that responded to the consultation (69.2%), thought that the temporary changes to the pedestrian zone, and allowing cyclists to access the High Street during the pedestrian hours, should be made permanent.

3. OPTIONS:

3.1 Option 1

Make the temporary traffic regulation order for the pedestrian zone in Church Street/Leatherhead permanent. This will permanently extend the hours of operation of the pedestrian zone from Monday to Saturday 10am to 4:30pm to Monday to Sunday 10am to 4:30pm. As well as extend the parking restrictions within the pedestrian zone, from 8am to 6pm Monday to Saturday to 8am to 6pm Monday to Sunday, and permit cyclists to cycle within the

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pedestrian zone as long as the cyclist follows the existing one-way system in Church Street and High Street, Leatherhead.

Option 2

Do not make the temporary traffic regulation order permanent, which would mean that there would be no pedestrian zone in operation on Sundays, cars could park within Church Street/High Street at anytime on Sunday and cyclists would not be permitted to cycle within the pedestrian zone at any time.

4. CONSULTATIONS:

- 4.1 Consultation to make the existing temporary TRO permanent has been carried out by Surrey County Council and included the following:
- County Councillor
 - Local Committee Chair and Vice Chair
 - District Councillors
 - Surrey Police
 - Surrey Fire & Rescue Service
 - South East Coast Ambulance Service
 - Mole Valley Cycle Forum
 - Mole Valley Chamber of Commerce
 - Leatherhead Residents Association
 - Mole Valley Access Group
 - Mole Valley Conservation officer
 - General Highway Users (signs were put up in the High Street and Church Street advising road users to go to the SCC website for further information and to complete the questionnaire)
 - Seeability
 - Joint Waste Solutions/Amey – who do the Street Cleaning
 - Leatherhead Community Association
- 4.2 Mole Valley District Council's Economic Development team also carried out consultation with the following;
- 80 town centre businesses
 - Swan Centre managing agent
 - 1,600 subscribers via Spotlight (Mole Valley newsletter for Economic Development).
 - Posts on TL Facebook and twitter and @mvdcbusiness twitter
 - Hague Investments (owners of Church Street)
 - The Chamber of Commerce
 - Ward/SCC members
- 4.3 Surrey County Council also consulted with Surrey Police, who have no objection to making the temporary traffic regulation order permanent.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

- 5.1 The cost of making the existing temporary traffic regulation order permanent includes legal advertisement costs associated with the statutory process.

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- 5.2 The cost of these works will be in the region of £1,500, and could be funded from the “Stage 3 Road Safety Audits/Accessibility Improvements/Small safety and improvement schemes/signs and road markings” allocation within the Integrated Transport Schemes budget for this financial year.

6. WIDER IMPLICATIONS:

Area assessed:	Direct Implications:
Crime and Disorder	No significant implications
Localism (including community involvement and impact)	No significant implications, the local community and businesses have been consulted on the proposals.
Sustainability (including Climate Change and Carbon Emissions)	No significant implications. Permitting cyclists to use the pedestrian zone could increase the use of sustainable transport to access the town centre.
Public Health	No significant implications. Permitting cyclists to use the pedestrian zone could encourage people to use more sustainable, healthier transport options such as cycling.

7. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 7.1 This report sets out the results of consultation that has been carried out with residents, businesses, and other consultees regarding the possibility of making the existing temporary traffic regulation order within the Church Street/High Street, Leatherhead pedestrian zone permanent.
- 7.2 The results of the consultations that were carried out by Surrey County Council and Mole Valley District Council show overall support for extending the timings of the pedestrian zone permanently to include 10am to 16:30pm on Sunday.
- 7.3 There was no overall support for continuing to permit cyclists to use the pedestrian zone, with 45% responding to SCC’s consultation in support of cyclists continuing to use the pedestrian zone, and 50% of businesses in support. The greatest concern from respondents regarding permitting cyclists to use the pedestrian zone was the possibility of cyclists colliding with pedestrians as well as wheelchair and mobility scooter users. However, no personal injury collisions involving pedestrians, wheelchair users or mobility scooter users have been recorded by Surrey Police during the most recent period for which data is available (from 01/09/2016 to 31/08/2021). This includes a year of data when the temporary traffic regulation order has been in place permitting cyclists to cycle within the pedestrian zone.
- 7.4 Due to the results of the consultation and the most recent collision data available, it is recommended that Option 1 is implemented.

8. WHAT HAPPENS NEXT:

- 8.1 Should the Local Committee decide to proceed with Option 1, the permanent traffic regulation order will be advertised in the local press. If there are no objections to the Order the Order will be made.
- 8.2 Should the Local Committee decide to proceed with Option 2, the temporary traffic regulation order will end in March 2022 and the timings of the pedestrian zone and parking restrictions will revert back to what was in place prior to September 2020. The signs will also be changed back to what was in place prior to September 2020.

Contact Officer:

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Consulted:

See section 4.

Annexes:

Annex 1 – Surrey County Council consultation documents

Annex 2 – Summary of the results of the consultation carried out by Surrey County Council.

Annex 3 – Summary of the results of the consultation carried out by Mole Valley District Council.

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