

**TROWBRIDGE TOWN CENTRE**  
**REVIEW OF EXPERIMENTAL TRAFFIC ORDERS**

**Purpose of Report**

1. To review the appropriateness of the Experimental Traffic Orders currently in force in Trowbridge Town Centre and to recommend whether they should be made permanent, amended or deleted.

**Background**

2. A number of experimental traffic orders have been in force in Trowbridge town centre as part of the enhancement works. With the works in Market Street having been substantially completed in June it is now opportune to review the suitability of the experimental Orders and decide whether they should be made permanent, amended or deleted. Experimental Orders can be made permanent without further statutory procedures being undertaken.

3. The experimental Orders to review are:-

- Silver Street – North layby – loading/unloading only
- Market Street/Castle Street – prohibition of left turn
- Roundstone Street – No entry westbound except buses, taxis and cycles
- Church Street/Castle Street/Wicker Hill – taxi ranks

In addition a temporary order was made to allow the Silver Street southern layby to be used as a bus stop/taxi rank whilst the construction works in Market Street were underway. This order has now lapsed and the underlying no waiting at any time is in force.

4. A number of other suggestions have also been made during the period of the experimental orders and it would be appropriate to include these in the overall review. The suggestions are:-
  - (i) That at the junction of Church Street, Roundstone Street and Silver Street zebra crossings be provided from the Halifax to Tattoo World and from the Halifax to Spellbound amusements;
  - (ii) That the experimental taxi ranks in Church Street, Castle Street and Wicker Hill are under used in the day and should be made available for disabled use.
  - (iii) That the existing ramp at the entrance to Silver Street be enhanced with coloured surfacing to make it more visible.
  - (iv) That taxis be allowed to turn right from Dursley Road onto County Way. Currently only buses are allowed to make this movement
5. A plan showing the locations of the experimental orders together with other relevant information is attached at **Appendix A**.

6. In order for Members to be fully informed in their decision-making local stakeholder groups were asked for their comments on the experimental orders. A copy of the letter requesting comments is attached at **Appendix B**.
7. A number of letters and telephone calls have been received during the experimental period and these are summarised in the Table contained in the consultation letter attached at **Appendix B**.

## **Main Considerations for the Council**

### Experimental Orders

8. A decision whether to implement each of the experimental orders is required. The reasons for the experimental Orders, the views expressed, together with officer comments, are set out in the Table at **Appendix C**. Members are asked to note that no response has been received from the Chamber of Commerce. Furthermore, a number of taxi operators' comments were made through the Town Council and differ from those received from West Wiltshire District Council who were consulted as the taxi licensing authority.
9. A copy of the comments received and supporting information is available in the **Members' Room** and from the Director of Environmental Services prior to the meeting.
10. From the responses received it is considered that there is consensus support for three of the Orders but that one shows a divergence of views, namely the use of the northern layby in Silver Street. Similarly a divergence of view is apparent in the future use of the southern layby in Silver Street now that the temporary order on this layby has lapsed. It is apparent that the consultees' views of the use of the laybys are dependent on who they are representing. For example, the Access Group would like to see disabled parking whilst taxi operators would like to see taxi ranks. It also needs to be recognised that the laybys are required for shop servicing and this has been raised verbally by a number of retailers. Whilst the Town Council's suggestion of time limited use of the northern layby by disabled users and servicing vehicles is of some merit this would only be workable with effective enforcement. Similarly the suggestion of sole use of the southern layby by taxis ignores the need for servicing to retailers in this area.
11. It should be noted that the various uses suggested for the laybys differ from the existing and experimental orders and as such would require a full Traffic Regulation Order process to be followed to allow their introduction. Given the divergence of views expressed and the lack of formal comment from the Chamber of Commerce on behalf of the retailers, it is considered that further consultation is required before a formal Traffic Order process could commence with any confidence of a consensus being achieved. In the meantime it is considered that the experimental order should be abandoned on the northern layby and the underlying no waiting at any time order would then be the active restriction as currently exists in the southern layby. Shop servicing and disabled parking are permitted with this restriction and would go some way in meeting the demand for these activities in Silver Street.

### Other suggestions

12. The other suggestions made with supporting information and officer comments are set out in the Table in **Appendix D**.

13. The most commented upon suggestion is that of the provision of zebra crossings in the area of the Church Street, Roundstone Street, Silver Street junction. Zebra crossings were previously provided in this area. The original premise of the overall enhancement scheme was that, with the anticipated reduction of traffic in the Town Centre and the reduction in carriageway width, formal crossing facilities would not be required. However, given the high level of concern received and on the basis of recorded pedestrian movements, the provision of a zebra crossing would seem to be appropriate.
14. It is not possible to provide zebra crossings at both locations suggested as their close proximity could cause confusion and road safety concerns. In particular, vehicles stopping for the proposed crossing from the Halifax to Spellbound would potentially overhang a crossing from the Halifax to Tattoo World. Pedestrians using this crossing, on facing stationary traffic would attempt to cross when drivers are unprepared for this movement. The options are, therefore, to provide a zebra crossing from Halifax to Tattoo World with an enhancement to the ramp at the entrance to Silver Street, or to provide a zebra crossing on the Silver Street ramp. Given that the pedestrian counts in this area indicate that the greatest pedestrian flow is between Halifax and Tattoo World, it is considered that this should be the location for the zebra crossing. This location also has a positive benefit in that the zig-zag markings associated with the zebra will help control the errant parking activities which are occurring at the top end of Church Street.
15. It has also been suggested that the former triangular island to which the previous zebra crossings connected be reinstated together with the zebras. Unfortunately this is not possible as the widening of the footways around the junction and the alignments of the new kerblines mean that there is insufficient room to accommodate an island and cater for all vehicle turning movements.

### **Environmental Impact of the Recommendation**

16. The overall works in Trowbridge town centre, of which the experimental orders form part, are intended to improve the environment of the town centre by removing extraneous traffic and providing enhanced facilities for pedestrians and public transport users. The Orders are intended to help achieve these aims.

### **Risk Assessment**

17. There is no additional risk to the County Council

### **Financial Implications**

18. There is an allocation in the current approved Local Transport Plan Integrated Transport budget to cover these works, as approved by this Committee in March 2004.

### **Options Considered**

19. Experimental Orders – To make permanent, amend or delete the experimental Orders.
20. Other suggestions – To recommend that the suggestions are taken forward for action or abandoned.

## **Reasons for Recommendation**

21. It is considered that the proposed recommendations offer a balanced way forward.

## **Recommendation**

22. That:-

- (i) The experimental Orders supporting the prohibition of left turn from Market Street to Castle Street, the no entry westbound except buses, taxis, and cycles in Roundstone Street, and the taxi ranks in Church Street, Castle Street and Wicker Hill be made permanent.
- (ii) The experimental Order on the northern layby in Silver Street be abandoned.
- (iii) That further consultation with traders and users of Silver Street is required to establish if a consensus view on the use of the laybys can be achieved.
- (iv) A Zebra crossing in Church Street from the Halifax to Tattoo World be formally advertised.
- (v) The existing ramp at the entrance to Silver Street be enhanced with coloured surfacing to make it more visible and to aid pedestrian movement.
- (vi) An amendment to the existing prohibition of turn Order at the junction of Dursley Road with County Way be promoted to allow an exemption for taxis.
- (vii) The requests to allow disabled parking in the experimental taxi ranks and to allow all traffic to turn right from Dursley Road onto County Way be not acceded to.
- (viii) The suggestion by the Town Council for changes in Church Street be put forward for discussion with the Town Development Partnership.

**GEORGE BATTEN**

Director of Environmental Services

Report Author

**DAVID THOMAS**

Integrated Transport Manager

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**The following unpublished documents have been relied on in the preparation of this Report:**

None

## APPENDIX B

George Batten BSc (Hons) C.Eng FICE FIHT  
Director of Environmental Services

To consultees

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Your ref :

**March 2004**

Dear

### **Trowbridge Town Centre - Review of experimental Traffic Orders**

As you will be aware, a number of experimental traffic orders have been in force in Trowbridge town centre as part of the ongoing enhancement works. With the works in Market Street due to complete shortly, it is now time to review the appropriateness of the experimental orders and decide whether they should be made permanent, amended or deleted. A number of other suggestions have also been made and I outline these below for inclusion in the review. To enable the County Council to reach appropriate decisions on the way forward I would request your formal written views at this time.

### **Experimental Orders**

The experimental orders to review are:-

- Silver Street – North layby – loading/unloading only
- Silver Street – South layby – temporary bus stop/taxi rank
- Market Street/Castle Street – prohibition of left turn
- Roundstone Street – No entry westbound except buses, taxis and cycles
- Church Street/Castle Street/Wicker Hill – taxi ranks

### **Received Comments**

A number of letters and telephone calls have been received during the experimental period and I summarise these below:-



Location	Comment	No. of times comment made
Market Street/Castle Street Prohibition of left turn	That disabled access to shops in Castle Street is restricted.	1 letter
	That customer access to private car park is restricted.	1 letter
	That the restriction causes a longer journey for legitimate town centre users who wish to go to the south of the town particularly in the evening rush hour.	3 letters
	Suggests that the operational hours of the restriction be amended to 9 am to 5.30 pm to help reduce traffic congestion on Wicker Hill in the evening rush hour.	1 letter
Silver Street	Concern at loss of disabled parking.	2 letters plus 6 telephone calls
Church Street	Concern over the removal of Zebra crossings by the 'Halifax' building.	3 telephone calls
	That the taxi rank obscures the view of the shop front.	1 letter

Given the extensive package of change brought about by the experimental Orders it is pleasing to note that the numbers of adverse representations is very small.

### Other suggestions

Through the weekly open meetings and comments given directly to personnel involved in the enhancement project a number of other suggestions have been made. I summarise these below:-

1. That zebra crossings be provided from the 'Halifax' to Tattoo World' and from the 'Halifax' to 'Spellbound' amusements.
2. That the experimental taxi ranks are under used in the day and should be made available for disabled use during the day.
3. That the existing ramp at the entrance to Silver Street be enhanced with coloured surfacing to make it more visible.
4. That taxis be allowed to turn right from Dursley Road onto County Way. Currently, only buses are allowed to make this movement.

### Monitoring

Pedestrians and vehicle counts were undertaken at the Church Street/Roundstone Street/Silver Street junction over a 12 hour period on Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> December, 2003 and repeated on Monday 26<sup>th</sup> January, 2004. I include copies of the survey notes appended to this letter. Of most concern are the variety of illegal parking activities recorded as taking place and the loss of the formal zebra crossing facilities in this area. Of great significance is the volume of vehicles continuing to use Silver Street and the fact that the number recorded during each survey was stable at 673. Although no comparable before survey data is available, it is estimated that this is a significant drop compared to the previous traffic volumes.

## Consideration

**Silver Street** – Upon completion of the Market Street works the southern lay-by will no longer be required for daytime bus and taxi use. The underlying traffic order in both laybys is a no waiting at any time restriction which permits loading/unloading activities and disabled blue badge holders to park for up to 3 hours. The availability of kerb space is on a first come first served basis and I am aware that this has caused some frustration in the past. However, given the concerns raised I could seek to allow some disabled parking to take place in Silver Street. The activities could be formalised by the use of loading/unloading and disabled bays. Options to consider are splitting both laybys so they are both part loading, part disabled, or to have one layby as loading and the other as disabled. It is also worth considering constricting the use of the southern layby to a taxi rank in the evening and overnight to service Chicago Rock customers. Your views on the above are invited.

**Market Street** – I am aware that when first introduced a high proportion of motorists ignored the left turn prohibition. However, now that traffic patterns have settled down and the Police have undertaken some enforcement, I believe that the restriction is having a significant positive impact on the reduction of overall traffic volumes in Silver Street. This is borne out both by the recorded vehicle flows and on site observation in Silver Street. I do not consider that a reduction in the time of operation of the restriction will be helpful at this time, given that the proposed improvements around the old bus station will address the concern about longer journey times in the evening rush hour. Further, any reduction in the operational hours could lead to higher levels of abuse. One of the longer term plans is to close Castle Street to all traffic except for access and to give higher levels of access now, only to take them away again in the future, does not send out a clear message. I would therefore recommend that the prohibition of left turn be made permanent.

**Roundstone Street** – It is disappointing to note that the take up of use by bus operators has not been as high as anticipated, however, taxi use has been witnessed as a regular occurrence. Unfortunately, on site observation and the monitoring figures indicate that a high level of abuse by non permitted motorists has occurred. It is recognised that this may in part be due to the type of signing used, namely the prohibition of motor vehicles sign rather than the no entry sign, but the rules governing this type of entry prohibition specifically exclude the use of the no entry sign. Consideration could be given to removing the experimental order and reverting to the previous arrangements or to making the experimental order permanent with enhanced signing.

**Church Street/Castle Street/Wicker Hill – Taxi Ranks** – Given the reduction in available taxi parking in Market Street, a commitment was given to provide alternative kerbside space in the Town Centre. I am, therefore, keen to retain the additional taxi ranks as their locations were agreed with representatives of the taxi operators, and are partly intended to help with inappropriate public behaviour in the evenings. The option of using some or all of the ranks for disabled use during the day has been raised and I would welcome your thoughts on this. I do not consider the concern raised about the rank in Church Street to be sufficient reason for the alteration or deletion of this rank.

**Church Street/Silver Street area – Zebra Crossings** – The original premise of the overall enhancement scheme was that with the anticipated reduction of traffic in the Town Centre and the reduction in carriageway width that formal crossing facilities would not be required. However, given the high level of concern received and on the basis of recorded pedestrian movements, the provision of a zebra crossing may be permissible. It is not possible to provide zebra crossings at both locations suggested as the close proximity to each other on the Halifax side is likely to cause confusion and, in my view, raises road safety concerns.

The options are, therefore, to provide a zebra crossing from Halifax to Tattoo World with an enhancement to the ramp at the entrance to Silver Street, or to provide a zebra crossing on the Silver Street ramp. Given that the pedestrian counts in this area indicate that the greatest pedestrian flow is between Halifax and Tattoo World, I would recommend that this be the location for the zebra crossing. This location also has a positive benefit in that the zig-zag markings associated with the zebra will help control the errant parking activities which are occurring at the top end of Church Street.

**Dursley Road to County Way right turn movement** – As you will be aware, a prohibition of turn with an exemption for buses currently exists at this junction. I am aware that the request to allow taxis to also turn right is a long running request from operators and one which I am minded to recommend for approval.

I hope that the above is helpful and sets out sufficient detail for you to comment upon. It is recognised that by the nature of what we do, we normally invite objection rather than support, but I would remind you that we are keen to hear positive as well as negative responses. I look forward to hearing your views in due course.

Yours sincerely,

David M. Thomas  
Integrated Transport Manager  
Traffic & Road Safety Team



**TROWBRIDGE TOWN CENTRE**  
**REVIEW OF EXPERIMENTAL TRAFFIC ORDERS**

RECEIVED COMMENTS											
Location	Experiment al Order	Underlying Order	Reason for Experimental Order	Town Council	Police	West Wilts District Council	Taxi operators	Disabled Access Group	WCC Passenger Transport	County Councillor	Officer comment
Silver Street North layby	Loading/unloading only	No waiting at any time	To provide an adequate loading area whilst the southern layby was being used by buses and taxis	Disabled only 10am – 4pm. Loading only 4pm – 10am	Loading only	No comment	No comment	Request disabled parking	Parking needs to be controlled to prevent buses being delayed/ blocked	Maximise disabled parking in the town centre	See main report
Silver Street South layby	Temporary bus stop and taxi rank  (Note temporary rather than experimental )	No waiting at any time	To provide facilities for buses and taxis whilst the works in Market Street were undertaken	Taxi rank at all times	Disabled daytime. Taxi evening & overnight	No comment	Taxi rank at all times	Request disabled parking	Allow disabled parking	Maximise disabled parking in the town centre	See main report
Market Street Castle Street	Prohibition of left turn except for buses, taxis and cycles	None	To prevent the use of Church Street, Silver Street, Market Street and Castle Street as a rat run and reduce the amount of traffic circulating in the town centre	Retain prohibition	Support	No comment	Retain prohibition	Remove	Enforceme nt is required	Retain prohibition	It is recognised that when first introduced a high proportion of motorists ignored the left turn prohibition. However, now that traffic patterns have settled down and the Police have undertaken some enforcement, the restriction is having a significant positive impact on the reduction of overall traffic volumes in Silver Street. This is borne out both by the recorded vehicle flows and on-site observation in Silver Street. <b>Recommendation:</b> That the experimental order be made permanent

RECEIVED COMMENTS											
Location	Experimental Order	Underlying Order	Reason for Experimental Order	Town Council	Police	West Wilts District Council	Taxi operators	Disabled Access Group	WCC Passenger Transport	County Councillor	Officer comment
Roundstone Street	No entry westbound except buses, taxis and cycles	No entry westbound except cycles	To provide buses and taxis with an advantage over private cars and encourage their greater use.	Retain prohibition but consider alternative option (see <b>Appendix D</b> )	No comment	Support	Support with enhanced signs and markings	Remove	Support with enhanced signs and markings	No comment	After a slow initial start bus use of this facility is shortly due to increase with the rerouting of services via Roundstone Street. Taxi use has been witnessed as a regular occurrence. Unfortunately, on-site observation and the monitoring figures indicate that a high level of abuse by non permitted motorists has occurred. It is recognised that this may in part be due to the type of signing used, namely the prohibition of motor vehicles sign rather than the no entry sign, but the rules governing this type of entry prohibition specifically exclude the use of the no entry sign. A review of the signing would be beneficial in seeking to prevent unauthorised use. <b>Recommendation:</b> That the experimental order be made permanent and that a review of the signing be undertaken
Castle Street/ Church Street/ Wicker Hill	Taxi ranks	No waiting at any time	To provide additional kerbside space for taxis in light of the reduction in Market Street.	Remove rank in Church Street. Convert Wicker Hill to disabled use. Keep rank in Castle Street by Kings Arms	Supports rank in Church Street. No comments on other ranks	Support retention of all ranks	Temporary ranks are not well used as they are too far from the town centre. Would prefer rank in Silver Street	Support use of ranks in the daytime by disabled users	No comment	No comment	Given the reduction in available taxi parking in Market Street, a commitment was given to provide alternative kerbside space in the Town Centre. The locations were identified and agreed with taxi operators and the Police and are partly intended to help with inappropriate public behaviour in the evenings. <b>Recommendation:</b> That the experimental order be made permanent



## TROWBRIDGE TOWN CENTRE REVIEW OF EXPERIMENTAL TRAFFIC ORDERS

### Other suggestions

Location	Suggestion	Made by	Officer comments
Church Street/ Roundstone Street/Silver Street	Zebra crossings	Public Town Council Taxi operators Police	See main report
Castle Street/ Church Street/ Wicker Hill	Allow disabled use of the experimental taxi ranks	Public	Whilst it would be feasible to split the rank in Wicker Hill the other ranks are considered to be too short a length to allow adequate provision for both taxi and disabled use to occur concurrently. It has also been suggested that the ranks be available for disabled use during the day and taxi use in the evening and overnight. However the view of the District Council, as taxi licensing authority, is that the ranks should be retained as at present. Given the reduction in the size of the taxi rank in Market Street and the recommended action on the Silver Street southern layby, which was temporarily available for taxi use, it is considered that the ranks remain solely for taxi use. <b>Recommendation:</b> That this request not be acceded to
Silver Street	Enhance the existing ramp with coloured surfacing to make it more visible	Public	See zebra crossing comments in main report.
County Way/ Dursley Road	Allow taxis to turn right from Dursley Road onto County Way  Allow all vehicles to turn right from Dursley Road onto County Way	Taxi operators  Town Council	A prohibition of turn with an exemption for buses currently exists at this junction. An amendment to the order to permit taxis to turn right has been a long standing request and would provide consistency in providing both buses and taxis an opportunity to gain an advantage over other motorists. <b>Recommendation:</b> That an amendment to allow taxis to turn right is pursued.  The banned right turn is provided to prevent the opportunity for traffic coming into Trowbridge on Bradley Road to make use of Wiltshire Drive, Holbrook Lane and Rutland Crescent as an alternative route to the Town Centre. Given the delays that can occur on Bradley Road the potential availability of these alternative routes would be attractive to a high number of motorists. However as these routes pass through residential areas, particularly Wiltshire Drive where speeding problems are known, it is considered inappropriate and undesirable to make them available to greater volumes of vehicles who would use them as through routes. <b>Recommendation:</b> That this request be not acceded to.
Roundstone Street/Church Street area	Change traffic flow in Church Street between Duke Street & Roundstone Street so that it is one-way from Roundstone Street – access only. No entry signs from junction with Duke Street. Take away the taxi rank and provide disabled parking. Provide one zebra crossing from Halifax to Spellbound.	Town Council	This suggestion is outside the scope of the current works and would require a separate feasibility study and consultation. <b>Recommendation:</b> That this request is assessed and is subject to further discussion with the Development Partnership.

APPENDIX D